



EDUCATION FOR ALL

NATIONAL REVIEW REPORT

2001-2015



Government of Nepal
Ministry of Education



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Kathmandu Office

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Kathmandu, Nepal
July 2015



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This Report is prepared by a team of experts, including Hriday Ratna Bajracharya, Hari Prasad Lamsal, Ram Balak Singh, Prasana Bajracharya and Tap Raj Pant based on substantial contributions from the theme-wise report by Kishor Shrestha (ECCE), Lok Bilas Pant (Universal Primary/Basic Education), Aslesha Subba Sharma and Tanka Prasad Sharma (Appropriate Learning and Life Skills), Laxaman Khanal and Gambhir Tandukar (Adult Literacy), Sushan Acharya (Social Equality and Gender Parity), Ganesh Bahadur Singh (Quality of Education), Yogendra Prasad Yadav (Teaching and Learning through Mother Tongue) and Sambedan Koirala (statistical tables and figures).

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Government of Nepal
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION



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Singh Durbar
Kathmandu, Nepal

Message from Honourable Minister for Education

Guided by the 1990 World Education Conference in Jomtien, Thailand and the 2000 World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, Nepal has made a visible progress towards achieving the Education for All (EFA) goals, particularly for providing universal primary/ basic education and literacy for all in the country.

The achievements made in the education sector for ensuring children's universal access to quality education are remarkable. Enrolments of girls and disadvantaged children in schools and people's engagement in education are truly impressive and have been inspiring to all of us. We have succeeded in laying a firm foundation for creating an enabling environment and for setting an agenda for learning in both formal and non-formal channels of education. We now need to do extra efforts to ensure the quality of education and make our children's stay in schools meaningful and rewarding.

The School Sector Reform Programme (SSRP) has been a major intervention for attaining the EFA goals in the country. Preparations are underway for embarking on a learning, focused on sectoral programme as part of the post 2015 agenda for educational reform and restructuring.

Nepal has proved to be a model country in the region and across the globe for developing a comprehensive data-base on the Education Information Management System (EMIS). Further efforts are also being made to strengthen the system and enhance the use of data for local level planning and improving the accountability framework.

The EFA review report has recognized the achievements made and has identified crucial issues and challenges, and has highlighted trends in the implementation of the programmes towards attaining the EFA goals. On the basis of the critical understanding gathered, it has outlined a way forward with particular focus on a holistic approach to development in the education sector including early childhood to tertiary education.

We are developing a comprehensive and holistic education policy framework and are working on an education sector plan, encompassing early childhood development, free and compulsory basic education, accessible secondary and tertiary education, with focus on continuous education and life-long learning.

My special thanks are due to the UNESCO Office in Kathmandu for providing technical and financial support while preparing this review report. I also would like to express my deep and profound appreciation to the UNESCO Bangkok Regional Office, the UNICEF Bangkok and the UNICEF Regional Office, Kathmandu, Nepal for their contribution, support and feedback for the improvement of this report. Finally, I would like to appreciate the efforts of the expert team members for their immense contribution to producing this valuable document.

Hon Chitralekha Yadav
Minister for Education
Singh Durbar, Kathmandu



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Kathmandu, Nepal

Foreword

Nepal has made enormous progress in increasing children's access to primary and basic education and has attained visible success in adult literacy. We have achieved gender parity in schools and have reduced dropout and repetition rates significantly. Inspired by the global vision on the Education for All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), our focus has been on how we ensure children's equitable participation for quality education. Nepal's national consensus for and commitment to EFA and Millennium Development goals have yielded rewarding results and have proved instrumental in mobilizing all sectors and sections of society for giving priority to education and for setting national agenda of education. Nepal's success in girls' enrolment has been exemplary in the entire region. The recent figures show that the numbers of girls in School Leaving Examinations have been higher than that of boys for the first time in Nepal's educational history. Likewise, the participation of children who faced exclusions has been remarkably impressive in our schools.

Our community based approach to education has recognized the role of local people in education and has offered opportunities to build a firm foundation for reforms in the education sector. The School Sector Reform Programme (SSRP) has been a flagship for implementing EFA and Millennium Development goals through formal and non-formal channels of education in the country.

The National EFA Review Report has been prepared through a broad based consultation across the country. The report charts out the progress against each of the six EFA goals and targets. In addition, an extra goal has been enshrined in Nepal's EFA programmes with focus on the medium of instruction through mother tongues in primary education. The report highlights Nepal's policy response, strategic interventions and achievements, challenges and opportunities in the education sector. This review report makes meticulous analyses of the on-going programmes, initiatives taken and efforts made for setting agenda of education, articulating the vision beyond 2015.

The agenda for education beyond 2015 is how we enhance our children's learning in schools. Quality has been the key concern in the education sector. Our focus has thus geared towards children's retention and success in school education. The post 2015 will mark a clear departure in its form and function for ensuring quality in our educational institutions. The Government is fully committed to offering opportunities and creating environment conducive for students' learning.

Finally, I highly appreciate the efforts made by the team of experts for producing such a high quality document and for providing rich inputs to make informed policy decisions in the education sector.

Bishwa Prakash Pandit
Secretary

Foreword

Nepal has achieved considerable progress with regard to reaching the goals and targets of Education for All: great strides have been made towards expansion of early childhood development and pre-primary education, universal primary and basic education, increased participation in secondary and tertiary education, contributing to significant advances for the right to education. Progress is also notable in adult and youth literacy rates. The youth literacy rate (85%) is higher than the adult literacy rate (60%) by almost 25 percentage points, reflecting increased access to primary and secondary education among younger generations. While gender disparity remains a concern in literacy rates, gender parity has improved throughout the school education system (K-12).

The key message of this National EFA Review Report is to concentrate on evidence-based strategic planning, to enhance quality and equity in the entire education sector, with a particular focus on schools. Schools do not only impart literacy and set the foundation for productive lives, they also play a crucial role in promoting human rights, inclusion, citizenship, peace and harmony between various social groups as well as in combating all kinds of discrimination. The Report calls for action in order to address disadvantaging and marginalization in education. The government, the local communities and, above all, the schools and the higher education institutions, have a decisive role in supporting efforts to protect, expand and strengthen the national education system.

As the country is succeeding through 2015, we have a long way to travel. With a little more efforts and determination, really fulfilling the promises with regard to EFA made at Jomtien, Thailand, and reaffirmed at Dakar, Senegal, combined with a new vision for the future is possible.

It has been most heartening to work with the Nepali Ministry of Education, development partners, UN agencies, INGOs and civil society organizations. UNESCO is firmly committed to support more vigorously the ongoing efforts of the government in building a sound national education system, to guarantee the accomplishment of the present and future EFA goals. UNESCO will direct all efforts towards the fulfillment of quality and equity in all aspects of education, including literacy for all, universal access, participation and completion of comprehensive school education.

The world community is going to meet at Seoul, Republic of Korea, in May 2015, with a view to shaping a vision for the post 2015 global sustainable development agenda to "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all", with comprehensive targets and strategies.

I would like to take this opportunity to highly appreciate the Secretary of Education Ministry of Education Nepal, for his leadership, guidance and contribution to the entire process of preparing the present report. The Ministry of Education, its institutions and education officials at all levels, deserve special mention for their engagement and valuable inputs in shaping and enriching the report. My grateful thanks are due to the UNESCO Regional Bureau of Education and the AIMS, the UNESCO Institute of Statistics of the UNESCO Bangkok Office, for their technical inputs and guiding support. My particular thanks go to my colleagues of the Education Unit of the UNESCO Office in Kathmandu. The UNICEF Country Office also deserves deep appreciation for its support in organizing regional consultations on sharing the draft EFA review report and with constructive discussions on the post 2015 EFA agenda, which contributed to further enriching the report. I would also like to deeply acknowledge the contributions of Nepal National Commission for UNESCO which has organized meetings and was coordinating with the Ministry of Education and many other institutions. The EFA National Review team has greatly benefitted from this support. Finally, I would like to commend and thank the writers of this comprehensive report.



Christian Manhart
UNESCO Representative to Nepal



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Acknowledgements

Nepal's engagement in the EFA review has been a great learning experience for the MoE system and has offered opportunity to develop in-depth insights and to make critical reflections on the sectoral programmes. The review process has been an intense in-country undertaking, providing new thoughts into the entire system, engaging a wide range of stakeholders in consultations and deliberations. The collaborative approach taken to accomplish this task has proved rewarding for both policy analysis and practice level understanding.

The National EFA Review Report has been prepared through an engaged consultative process in the country. A number of experts and practitioners have made significant contributions to making the review truly rewarding and reflective. My first and foremost thanks therefore go to the UNESCO Office in Nepal for offering this opportunity and making the Ministry of Education feel rewarded for the gains we have made through this exercise. The team of experts involved in this assignment deserve credit for their hard work and meticulous engagement.

The participants including senior education officials of MOE, Regional Education Directors, District Education Officers, teachers, and representatives from their professional organizations as well as the representatives of local NGOs/CBOs, who participated in the central, regional and local level workshops deserve our sincere appreciations. We acknowledge their support and contribution to the review process. Our sincere appreciations are also due to the experts who provided their comments and suggestions while finalizing this report.

The technical inputs and support received from the UNESCO Regional Bureau of Education and the AIMS, UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) at Bangkok Office have proved extremely rewarding to the report writing team. My sincere thanks also go to the UNESCO Office in Kathmandu, Nepal for the technical and financial assistance provided to review the EFA implementation in Nepal from 2001-2015. The head and the members of the UNESCO Office in Kathmandu deserve my deep appreciation for their support, engagement and full cooperation to accomplish this task. Likewise, the UNICEF Country Office deserves sincere appreciation for its support in organizing regional consultation meetings and for sharing the draft EFA review report.

I also would like to take this opportunity to appreciate the efforts and engagements of the MoE colleagues and all team members in central level units/divisions as well as line agencies for their support and valuable contributions to producing, (re)shaping and bringing out this valuable document.

Dr. Lava Deo Awasthi
Joint Secretary (Planning Division)

ACRONYMS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
APP	Agriculture Perspective Plan
ASIP	Annual Strategic Implementation Plan
BPEP	Basic and Primary Education Project
CAS	Continuous Assessment System
CBO	Community Based Organization
CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
CDC	Curriculum Development Centre
CERID	Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development
CLC	Community Learning Centre
COPE	Community Owned Primary Education
CRC	Camera Ready Copy
CSIDB	Cottage and Small Industrial Development Board
CSSP	Community School Support Project
CTEVT	Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training
CWIN	Child Workers in Nepal Concerned Centre
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DCSI	Department of Cottage and Small Industry
DDC	District Development Committee
DEP	District Education Plan
DFA	Dakar Framework for Action
DFID	Department of International Development
DG	Director General
DOE	Department of Education
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECED	Early Childhood Education and Development
EF	Employment Fund
EFA NPA	Education for All National Plan of Action
EFA	Education for All
EFAP	Education for All Plan
ERO	Education Review Office
EVENT	Enhanced Vocational Education and Training
FCGO	Financial Controller General's Office
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
GIR	Gross Intake Rate
GMR	Global Monitoring Report
GNI	Gross National Income

GNP	Gross National Product
GoN	Government of Nepal
GPI	Gender Parity Index
HDI	Human Development Index
HDR	Human Development Report
HIV/AIDS	Human Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome /Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
HSEB	Higher Secondary Education Board
HT	Head Teacher
I/NGO	International/National Non-Governmental Organization
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IEMIS	Integrated Educational Management Information System
IG	Income Generation
IGP	Income Generation Program
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
JICA	Japanese Assistance for International Cooperation
LINEM	Literacy Nepal Mission
LRC	Lead Resource Center
MDA	Mid-Decade Assessment
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MEC	Minimum Enabling Condition
MEDP	Micro Enterprise Development Programme
MLE	Multilingual Education
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOHP	Ministry of Health and Population
MPhil	Master in Philosophy
NAR	Net Attendance Rate
NASA	National Assessment of Student Achievement
NATHM	Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hotel Management
NCED	National Center for Educational Development
NDHS	Nepal Demographic and Health Survey
NEFIN	Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NESP	National Education System Plan
NFDIN	National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities
NFE/MIS	Non-formal Education Management Information System
NFE	Non Formal Education

NFEC	Non Formal Education Centre
NFPEP	Non-Formal Primary Education Programme
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIR	Net Intake Rate
NLFS	Nepal Labour Force Survey
NLSS	Nepal Living Standard Survey
NNLPI	Nepali National Languages Preservation Institute
NPA	National Plan of Action
NPC	Nepal Planning Commission
OSP	Out-of-school programme
PAF	Poverty Alleviation Fund
PhD	Doctor in Philosophy
PMEC	Prioritized Minimum Enabling Condition
PPE	Pre Primary Education
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
PTR	Pupil Teacher Ratio
RC	Resource Centre
RED	Regional Education Directorate
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation
SESP	Secondary Education Support Programme
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SLC	School Leaving Certificate
SMC	School Management Committee
SOP	School Outreach Program
SSR	School Sector Reform
SSRP	School Sector Reform Plan
STR	Student Teacher Ratio
SWAP	Sector Wide Approach
T&ESP	Private Sector Training and Employment Service Providers
TA	Technical Assistance
TECS	Technical Education in Community Schools
TEP	Teacher Education Project
TEVT	Technical Education and Vocational Training
TITI	Training Institute for Technical Instruction
TOT	Training of Trainers
TPD	Teacher Professional Development
TSLC	Technical School Leaving Certificate
TTC	Teacher Training Centre
TU	Tribhuvan University

TV	Television
TYIP	Three Years Interim Plan
UBE	Universal Basic Education
UGC	University Grants Commission
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	US Dollar
VDC	Village Development Committee
VEP	Village Education Plan
VTCD	Vocational Training or Community Development
VTSDTC	Vocational Training and Skills Development Training Centre
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

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1

INTRODUCTION

Development Context and Priorities

Nepal is a landlocked country located between China on the North and India on the east, south and west. It has 147,181 square kilometer area located between 26°22' to 30°27' latitude north and between 80° 04' and 88°12' longitude east. Geographically, it consists of three layers of distinct ecological zones: 1) the Himalayas, the high mountain range with snow-covered peaks, 2) the hill areas with lush high hills and valleys, and 3) the Terai, a strip of fertile plains. All these geographic belts of Nepal run from east to west. According to the National Population Census 2011, the country has total population of 26.5 million, with almost 50.3 percent residing in the Terai, 43.0 percent in the hills and 6.7 percent in the mountains¹.

Nepal is a mosaic of social diversities – it is inhabited by people of diverse social, cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds. The national census 2011 revealed that there are 125 caste/ethnic groups and 123 languages spoken as mother tongue in Nepal. Addressing this issue has enormous implications for the education sector to reach out the diverse ethnic groups to provide education and literacy for all, especially with regard to provisions of curriculum, textbooks and teacher training in their mother tongues.

Nepal is a secular country with 81.34% Hindu, 9.04% Buddhist, 4.38% Islam, 3.04% Kirat and 1.41% Christians. While these five religions constitute more than 99% of the total population, the remaining less than one percent comprises Jain (0.01%), Prakriti (0.46%), Bon (0.04%), others (0.007%) and unspecified (0.23%)². It is interesting to mention here that Prakriti and Bon are registered in the 2011 census only.

Culturally, Nepal is a very rich country with more than a dozen sites listed as the world cultural heritage. Moreover, in its long history cultural tolerance has been one of its foremost features and it continues to celebrate and sustain the cultural diversity that combines spiritual values, mythologies and wonders of nature through numerous festivals. The Interim Constitution of Nepal (2007) enshrines the common aspiration of multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-religious and multi-cultural characteristics of the Nepalese people with a bond of allegiance to national independence, integrity, national interest and prosperity of the country. Politically, Nepal is a federal republic with a multiparty system of government and the sovereignty vested in people. For administrative purposes,

¹ Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), Nepal. 2012. National Population and Housing Census 2011 (National Report). National Planning Commission Secretariat. CBS, Kathmandu, Nepal.

² Ministry of Health and Population. 2013. Nepal Population Report 2013. Ramshah Path, Kathmandu, Nepal.

the country is divided into 5 development regions, 14 zones and 75 districts with 3,915 Village Development Committees (VDCs) and 58 municipalities. Restructuring the State with three tiers of government at local, provincial and central levels is being considered following the change in 2006. The allocation of responsibilities and mobilization of resources to provide comprehensive quality education for all from pre-primary to higher education between local, provincial and central governments is a huge challenge.

Figure 1: Nepal in Map



Source: GIS Unit, Participatory District Development Programme (NEP/95/008), NPC, 2000.

Nepal has been undergoing through significant political changes since 1951 marked by conflicts, referendum and elections. The country remains divided on the ways and means of facilitating socio-political transitions. The most significant change of 2006 abolished the monarchical system and declared the country a federal republic. Following this change election for constitutional assembly was held to draft a new constitution in the changed context; however the assembly failed to come up with the draft. Very recently fresh election was held and new assembly formed with the promise of coming up with new constitution within a year.

Demographic and Economic Context

Since the mid-1950s, Nepal started planned approach to development in various areas, including the education sector. Since the Tenth National Development Plan (2002-2007), the country underwent through a very rapid political transformation, contributing to the focuses of the plans on the need for sustainable and inclusive development and poverty alleviation.

Despite 60 years of implementation of various plans and programs, the country is yet an agro-based economy with GDP per capita at USD635.8 at basic prices (USD717 at current prices) at an exchange rate of NRs 87:1USD for the fiscal year 2012/13³. The economic growth of the country measured by GDP is 3.56 percent in the year 2012/13. About one fourth of the population (25.16%) lives below poverty lines as indicated by the

³ Ministry of Finance (MOF), 2013, Economic Survey 2012/13, Kathmandu, Nepal

Nepal Living Standards Survey – III, 2010/11 and the Gini-Coefficient; which indicates inequality in income distribution, is 0.328.

According to the 2013 Human Development Report (HDR) (UNDP, 2013) entitled “The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World”, based on composite Human Development Index (HDI)⁴ countries are categorized among four groups: very high human development, high human development, medium human development and low human development. With HDI of 0.463, Nepal is categorized among low human development countries and is ranked at 157 among 187 countries. Life expectancy of the people in the country at birth⁵ is 69.1 years, the mean years of schooling⁶ is merely 3.2 years against 8.9 years of expected schooling⁷ years. Its gross national income (GNI) per capita at PPP 2005 is recorded as USD 1,137.

The census 2011⁸ revealed that population growth continued but with lower rate of 1.35 percent during 2001-2011 compared to 2.25 percent during 1991-2001. Urban population had been on gradual increase: in 1971 census it was 4%, which increased to 13.9% in 2001 and 17% in 2011. The average household size in the country is 4.9. In other words, a household has 5 persons on the average, with the highest in the western rural Terai (5.7) and the lowest in the urban Kathmandu valley (4.1).

Furthermore, the census showed that with 51.50 percent share of population, women outnumbered men. The overall sex ratio i.e. number of males per 100 females was 94.16 compared to 99.80 in 2001. There is a significant migration of people, particularly among adult males; about two thirds have been away from home, half of them to urban areas in Nepal, the rest go to other countries including India, middle east countries, Malaysia, South Korea and others. The migration is mainly for employment. While on the one hand, there is a need to provide relevant education for rural development, on the other, it is extremely important to manage appropriate provisions of education for those who are to work abroad, equipping them with adequate knowledge and skills useful for gainful employment as skilled labourers.

The NLSS-III (2010/2011)⁹ listed the distribution of population percentage in terms of income quintiles based on urban/rural and ecological zones as follows:

Table 1: Distribution of Population by Nominal Per Capita Income Quintile and Eco-zone, %

Residence/ Eco Zone	Poorest First	Second	Third	Fourth	Richest Fifth	Total
Urban/Rural						
Urban	6.7	11.0	15.4	23.9	43.0	100.0

⁴ Human Development Index (HDI): A composite index measuring average achievement in three basic dimensions of human development—a long and healthy life, knowledge and a decent standard of living.

⁵ Life expectancy at birth: Number of years a newborn infant could expect to live if prevailing patterns of age-specific mortality rates at the time of birth stay the same throughout the infant's life.

⁶ Mean years of schooling: Average number of years of education received by people ages 25 and older, converted from educational attainment levels using official durations of each level.

⁷ Expected years of schooling: It shows numbers of years of schooling that a child of school entrance age can expect to receive if prevailing patterns of age-specific enrolment rates persist throughout the child's life.

⁸ CBS. 2011. National Census 2011, Summary Findings, CBS, NPC, Thapathali, Kathmandu, Nepal.

⁹ CBS. 2011. Nepal Living Standards Survey, 2010/2011, CBS, NPC, Thapathali, Kathmandu, Nepal.

Residence/ Eco Zone	Poorest First	Second	Third	Fourth	Richest Fifth	Total
Rural	23.1	22.1	21.1	19.1	14.6	100.0
Ecological Zone						
Mountains	27.4	21.0	19.1	20.1	12.5	100.0
Hills	20.8	17.8	17.2	19.3	25.0	100.0
Terai	18.3	21.8	22.6	20.6	16.6	100.0

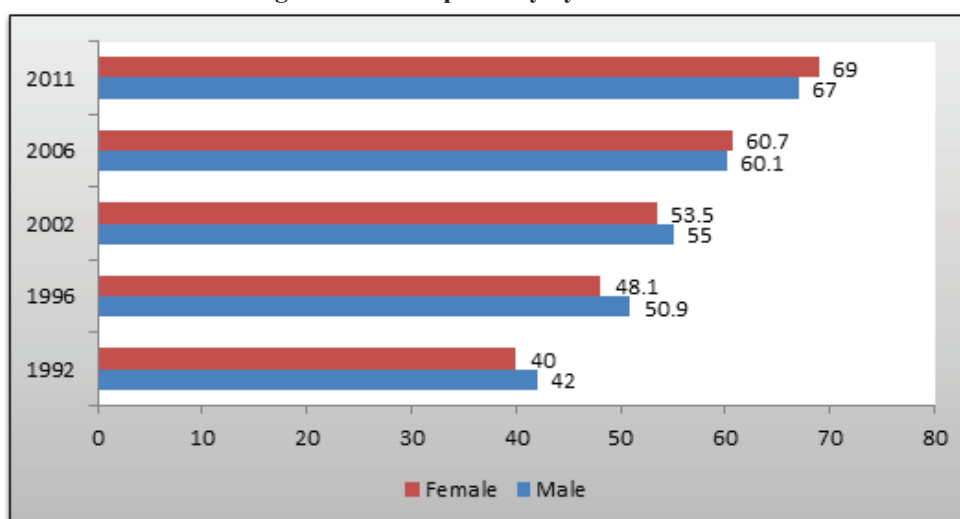
Source: CBS. 2011. NLSS-III, Volume Two. Thapathali, Kathmandu, Nepal

Table 1 reports the distribution of population by ecological zone and nominal per capita income quintile. Almost 43 percent of the urban population is in the richest quintile while the corresponding proportion in rural areas is only 14.6 percent. There are stark differences among ecological zones regarding the proportion of population in the richest quintile. Compared to the hills zone, the mountains and the Terai zones have relatively lower proportion of population in the richest quintile. This situation has an enormous connotation for adequate and relevant education policies and planning including resource allocation and monitoring.

The lowest quintile roughly corresponds to the extreme poverty i.e. below the poverty line. Reaching out to the children, youths and adults who belong to the lowest income groups with lifelong learning programmes linked to literacy, livelihood, agriculture and life skills has been a constant challenge for the education system in Nepal.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) 2011, the life expectancy is around 68 years, 67 years for males and 69 years for females. A number of factors including awareness raising and capacity development at community level have contributed to the improved life expectancy in Nepal. It appears the improvement in the current life expectancy has been gradual over the past two decades as the following table shows:

Figure 2: Life Expectancy by Sex and Year



Source: CBS 2003, Ministry of Population and Environment and CBS 2003 in NDHS, 2006, WHO 2011.

The NDHS 2011 reports that 89% of the households have access to water from improved sources – 93% in urban areas and 88% in rural areas. Adult women are mostly responsible both in rural and urban areas for fetching water. In many cases, particularly in rural areas water sources are not so near (for about 7% of the households it takes 30 minutes or more to access water). About 36% of the households still do not have any toilet facilities, which is an improvement of 50% from 2006.

Access to public or private communication has changed quite drastically – 50% households have radio, and similar numbers own a TV set, 75% use mobile telephone which is a sharp increase from around 6% in 2006 and 9% have non-mobile telephone. Large section of the people (39%) rely on bicycle for transportation, followed by motorbike/scooter 10.9%, animal drawn cart 3%, and motor vehicle 2.3%.

The above factors in relation to the availability of clean drinking water, toilets at home, and separate toilets for girls in school as well as the availability/use of mobile by all have vast potentials for non-formal education.

Context of Educational Development and Education Sector Challenges

The popular movement for democracy overthrew the absolute Rana oligarchy from Nepal in 1951, contributing to school education being open for general public. The schools developed since then followed the structure and pattern of schooling prevailing in the region, mainly in the Indian subcontinent. In 1952, the Ministry of Education was established for the development of education in the country, mainly school education.

In 1954, a National Education Commission was formed to review the situation of education in the country. The Commission suggested policies and strategies for the overall development of education in the country. It was realized at that time that the country lagged far behind in respect to development of education. The literacy percentage at that time was estimated about 5.3% only (6years and above; 9.5% for males and 0.7% for females)¹⁰. The commission report recommended for the first time to take responsibility for financing of education in order to make primary education available for all children. The report emphasized on civic education and suggested for the development of adult literacy and technical and vocational education programmes. This was the first ever commission to recommend the strong role of the government for meeting the educational expenses.

The government realized the diversities in the country in terms of social and educational status. Female education, education for the rural people, education of people with different vocational needs was realized. Some girl schools were opened; special schools for people with disabilities, mainly blind and deaf, were started; and vocational training programs were initiated. In the subsequent development period vocational education became the central theme of educational reforms. The National Education System Plan (NESP) was initiated in 1971 to reform school curriculum with vocational education as the focus. Education system with an extensive structural provision was developed with District Education Office (DEO) and supervision system in all the districts. Gender focused educational programmes were started in late 1970s and early 1980s. Educational

¹⁰ Ministry of Health and Population (MOHP), 2013, Nepal Population Report 2013, Ramshah Path, Kathmandu, Nepal.

development needs of disadvantaged communities came under the purview of policies and programmes since late 1980s and early 1990s.

Male-female gender gap though decreasing is still noticeable and prevails across almost all castes and ethnic groups, rural and urban areas, eco-zones, development regions, and income groups. Huge gaps exist in educational access in terms of gender, social groups, location, disabilities and level of income. Quality of education and students' learning achievements at all levels of education (from kindergarten to higher education) remain one of the foremost challenges of the education sector in Nepal.

According to the NLSS 2010/11¹¹, almost 39.1% people in the age group 6 years and above and 43.5% people in the age group 15 years and above are still deprived of opportunity to be literate. Nearly 55.5 percent females compared to 28.4 percent males lack knowledge and skills to read and write a simple sentence. The existence of over 27 percent gap between male-female literacy in spite of manifold efforts of NFEC/MOE and I/NGOs to address the issue of female illiteracy indicates the inadequacy of targeted and focused interventions. The persistent issue of female illiteracy appears to be a critical challenge at present and beyond EFA 2015.

The magnitude of the problems of illiteracy, non-enrolment and school dropout varies by gender, region and different social groups. There are variegated gaps between rural and urban, males and females as well as ethnic and social groups. People (6-24 years) living in remote rural areas, females, ethnic minorities, Dalits (so called untouchable castes according to the old tradition) and the poor are extremely disadvantaged in terms of educational attainment.

Females are comparatively more disadvantaged than their male counterparts in terms of other crucial indicators as well. For instance, never-attendance rate is 23 percent for male population compared to 44 percent for females; past-attendance rate is 36 percent for males whereas this rate is only 22 percent for female population; and current-attendance rates, on the other hand, are 41 percent and 34 percent for males and females respectively. The proportion of population that never attended school among consumption quintiles ranges from 44 percent in the poorest quintile to 21 percent in the richest quintile (CBS, *ibid*).

Overall, the mean years of schooling for the adults is estimated to be 8.1 years. There is no significant gender gap in mean years of schooling. However, disparities across urban and rural areas are quite wide. Relative to rural areas, urban areas have higher mean years of schooling (9.6 versus 7.5 years) (CBS, *ibid*).

Although the current situation is a vast improvement upon the situation that existed over six decades ago when the schooling of children was rare and limited to the children of elite class, and literacy was confined to certain sections of the society, the situation still poses challenges. The development trends show a rapid growth of school enrolment of school age children in the past few decades and then the growth has become stable despite

¹¹ CBS, 2011, Nepal Living Standards Survey 2010/11, Statistical Report, Volume One, Thapathali, Kathmandu, Nepal.

intensive efforts. It is presumed now that this relates to the challenge of taking school education to the unreached sections of the people who are the poorest and seriously disadvantaged.

Education commissions constituted at different times ever since 1954 emphasised that there is a need for providing basic and primary education for all citizens and that school curriculum design and practice should be linked to the social and economic contexts to bring about effective development. The basic policy focus regarding education in Nepal has remained the same: universal quality basic and primary education, work oriented technical and vocational secondary education, and academically competent and economic development-oriented tertiary education.

Since the Tenth Plan (2002-07) the important areas focussed included:

- *Human resource development*, in view of the situation that a large number of populations are illiterate and unskilled.
- *Sustainable development, poverty alleviation and reduction of regional disparities* in view of the existing subsistence agriculture based economy, lack of alternatives, and disparities between males and females, geographical regions, income levels and social groups.
- *Enhancing gender and social equity* regarding access to quality basic education.
- *Enhancement of quality of education* in view of the still weak and undeveloped educational provisions at all levels, particularly at the pre-primary, primary and secondary level, including technical and vocational secondary education.
- *Developing functional literacy for adults* contributing to poverty alleviation.
- *Higher education in the areas of applied science and technology.*
- *Meeting the appropriate learning and life skills needs of all young people and adults* to enable them socially and economically.

Adopted in the changed political context, the Interim Constitution of Nepal (2007) explicitly decrees basic education as a fundamental right. It clearly states that it is the responsibility of the government to provide universal quality basic and primary education to all in all circumstances. Education up to secondary level will be free. Three year interim plans (2007/8-09/10; 2010/11-2012/13) have been developed and implemented. The interim plan reflects the spirit of the political change – inclusive democracy-- which is to ensure social justice, social inclusion, and meeting the educational needs of vulnerable communities. The national education policies and plans are implemented through a system of schools, higher education institutions, universities and non-formal education provisions.

Key education policies, strategies and interventions to address education sector challenges with regard to education and learning are discussed under the ‘Review of EFA Strategies and Sector Management’.

Institutional Arrangements

The structure of educational provisions in Nepal basically consists of a) pre-primary education (PPE) or early childhood development (ECD), for children reaching 4 years of age b) primary level of grade 1 to 5, the minimum age of children for admission at grade 1 is 5 years old, c) basic education level of grade 1 to 8, including five years of primary and three years of lower secondary, d) secondary level of grade 9 to 10, e) higher

secondary level of grade 11 to 12 and f) higher education level after grade 12 (Bachelors in general stream 3-4 years, professional/technical programmes 4-5 years; Masters level programmes 2 years).

Early Childhood Development and Pre-primary Education (ECD/PPE)

The concepts and practices regarding the provisions of early childhood development and pre-primary education in Nepal have emerged as an important development, in any case from the perspective of quantitative expansion; however, its overall quality and level of funding are a serious concern. In this respect, it is worth mentioning that the School Sector Reform Plan (SSRP, 2009-2015) underpins one year (age 4) of early childhood education and development (ECED) for all, especially the disadvantaged.

Basic Education

The minimum entry age for this level is 5 years (5 years completion). Earlier primary education or the first level of education comprising of five years of schooling has currently been extended to additional three upper grades to make 8 years (grade 1-8 and ages 5-12) as basic education. It should be noted here that both Interim Constitution of Nepal and SSRP enshrine basic education as a human right as provisioned in the law and stresses on mother tongue as the medium of instruction in early grades of primary education. Overall, despite significant improvement in net intake as well as net enrolment rates (NIR/NER) in primary/basic education, it has been a massive challenge to improve the internal efficiency of school education to ensure five/eight years of quality primary/basic education to all eligible children of Nepal.

Secondary Education

The second official level of education is secondary level which comprises of two sections, secondary (grades 9-10) and higher secondary (grades 11 and 12). A national level centralised examination is conducted at the end of grade ten. This examination is popularly known as the School Leaving Certificate (SLC) examination. Furthermore, higher secondary education examinations at the end of grade 11 and 12 are organised by the Higher Secondary Education Board (HSEB) at the national level. Higher secondary education is a modern development in Nepal, initiated in 1994. Earlier, universities used to provide 2 years of proficiency certificate level education to SLC graduates.

There is also a provision of higher secondary level technical education under the Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT). Currently, technical schools affiliated to the CTEVT offer skill training courses either to tenth grade¹² pass students or to those having Technical School Leaving Certificate¹³. The technical and vocational education is offered through the nine CTEVT constituent technical schools and 118 private technical training institutes. The courses offered are mostly of 2-year duration. These technical schools also offer courses of as low as one year and as high as two and half years' duration.

¹² Tenth grade pass students are academically lower level than those who have passed the School Leaving Certificate examination. Students take sent-up examination at the end of grade ten and those who pass the examination become eligible to take the SLC examination.

¹³ Students having Technical School Leaving Certificate are the ones who have taken vocational stream after eight grades and completed two years of vocational training. The practice of admitting such students in vocational schools has been abolished after the enforcement of new policy related to technical and vocational education.

Higher Education

In Nepal there are currently nine universities and four autonomous, specialised institutions of higher education. Tribhuvan University (TU) is the first university in the country that started in 1959 as a teaching and affiliating university. It has constituent and affiliated campuses all over the country. Almost 90% of the higher education students as well as the faculties are with this university. HSEB graduates are eligible to apply for general or professional Bachelor's Degree courses. Bachelor Degree courses in technical institutes like Engineering and Medicine are of 4-year duration. The Master's Degree follows the Bachelor's Degree and is of two-year duration. The universities also run MPhil and PhD programmes. The University Grants Commission (UGC) of Nepal co-ordinates the universities with the national plans and programmes.

Non-formal Education

Besides the formal education, there are provisions of non-formal education at primary, lower secondary and secondary level education with policy and planning frameworks for reaching all the unreached. Out of school adolescents, youths and adults who could not attend primary school due to various reasons join the Out-of-school programme (OSP). There are also provisions for flexible/open school programmes with condensed courses for those who could not join regular hour schools and School Out-Reach Programme for those who do not have access to regular schools in their vicinity. Various forms of adult education programmes, such as basic and functional adult literacy and open school programmes are organised by Non Formal Education Centre (NFEC) with provision of equivalency to school education up to secondary level (grade 1-10). According to the national census 2011, the contribution of non-formal education in the overall educational attainment of people in Nepal is 4.15 percent, with 3.49 percent for males and 4.95 percent for females.

Relevance of EFA within the Country Context since 2000

The World Conference on Education for All (Justine, Thailand, March 5-9, 1990) put immense impetus on the development of education in the country. The current trend of educational development in Nepal with regard to primary/basic education is continuation of the decade-long campaign for EFA. The country assessment of EFA in 2000 indicated that Nepal remained far from attaining the EFA goals.

In the World Education Forum on EFA (Dakar, Senegal, 26-28 April, 2000), Nepal adopted the Dakar Framework for Action (DFA) for Education for All: Meeting Our Collective Commitments. The DFA included six major EFA goals along with twelve strategies to achieve fully by 2015. It is worthwhile to mention here that Nepal added a seventh goal to address linguistic diversity in the country with a view to ensuring the right of indigenous people and linguistic minorities to basic and primary education through mother tongue. It was envisaged that by 2015 almost all youths and adults should get literate in their mother tongue, including transition to the official language i.e. Nepali and the international language English, with the provision of continuous learning through Community Learning Centres.

As pointed out above, the DFA focused on collective commitments, nationally as well as internationally, to ensure that no country must be left behind because of lack of technical

capacity and resources. This international commitment brought forth both inspiration as well as funding support for the development of education in Nepal. Nepal adopted continued EFA campaign as the core strategy for educational development. It also adopted the goals of EFA as the goals of education in the country.

The EFA mid-decade assessment in 2007 revealed that all stakeholders, including the government have been consistently making efforts towards achieving the goals of EFA with financial and technical support by a consortium of development partners, including UN agencies, bilateral and multilateral donors. A satisfactory level of progress was noted towards achievement of the goals in terms of 18 key indicators. With the target year 2015 for achieving the EFA goals, it is now time for taking stock of where the country stands now and to plan for the holistic development of education in Nepal post-2015.

Data Collection, Sources and Quality Assurance/Approach for EFA Assessment 2015

Following the approach taken for the mid-decade assessment in 2007, this review report is an outcome of the thematic reports prepared by the seven thematic groups constituted to undertake thematic assessments corresponding to six EFA goals outlined by the Dakar Framework of Action and an additional seventh goal adopted by the country to address its unique issue of language diversity. The seventh goal is to ensure basic and primary education in mother tongue to numerous language groups, adopting bi-and multi-lingual approaches to deliver teaching and learning.

The data and information used in this report are based on: (i) school census twice a year at the beginning and end of the school year, which is reported every year in the form of Flash Report I, Flash Report II and Consolidated Report of School Level Educational Statistics of Nepal; (ii) national population censuses, which are undertaken every 10-year at the end of each decennium, the most recent being the census 2011; (iii) national surveys such as the NLSS, the Nepal Labour Force Survey (NLFS) and the Nepal Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) undertaken periodically by the Central Bureau of Statistics between the national censuses; (iv) various research reports including the formative and other relevant researches undertaken by the Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development CERID/TU for BPEP II (1999-2004), EFAP (2004-09) and SSRP (2009-2015); (v) technical review of school education supported by DANIDA in respect to EFA implementation, and (vi) Red Books published by the Ministry of Finance (MOF) each year for data on the national annual budgets for various sectors, including the education sector budget.

Data from these sources are used for preparing the seven thematic reports as well as this report. The data quality relates to the level and extent of quality of these various publications by the related official agencies. Overall, the sources are considered authentic by all concerned in the country. Besides several interaction sessions at district, regional and national levels were also conducted to generate as well as verify the information used in this document.

2

PROGRESS TOWARDS ACHIEVING EFA GOALS

EFA Goals and Targets

The Nepal EFA National Plan of Action (2001-2015) has outlined its framework according to the following six major goals set by the Dakar Forum for the year 2015. It also includes one additional goal adopted by the country in order to address the right of indigenous people and linguistic minorities to basic and primary education through mother tongue.

- Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.
- Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities have access to free and compulsory primary education of good quality.
- Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills Programmes.
- Achieving 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.
- Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in, basic education of good quality.
- Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.
- Ensuring the right of indigenous people and linguistic minorities to basic and primary education through mother tongue.

In view of the ethno-linguistic diversities that the country is endowed with, the seventh goal was considered in the EFA NPA.

Description of EFA Goals and Specific National Targets

The EFA goals are targeted to achieve gradually phase by phase by 2015. In order to assess the progress towards achieving EFA goals, it is important to consider what Nepal has set and adopted as the core EFA monitoring indicators.

The table in Annex 3 sets the targets by different time limit, particularly in view of the national development plan period.

The EFA baseline data of 2000 clearly indicated challenges that the country faced towards achieving the EFA goals. Nevertheless, the country set its targets audaciously, strategically listing the targets in terms of important dates – 2005 for mid-decade, 2007 for the end of the 10th plan, 2012 for the interim plan period and 2015 as the end year with regard to achieving the EFA goals recorded in the Dakar Framework of Action (DFA) as well as education related goals of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Achievements in terms of EFA Indicators

EFA progress shows that Nepal is going to achieve EFA goals 1, 2 and 5 in terms of important EFA indicators. Although still far behind the set targets, progresses made with respect to youth and adult literacy are noticeable. It appears adult literacy (Goal 4, 15 years and above) remains far from the set target; however, literacy of youth (15-24 years' age group), which also relates to Goal 3, has come close to the target. Goals 6 and 7 remain a formidable challenge, although some breakthrough has been made in many aspects, including constitutional provision of curriculum and textbook development in mother tongues of some of the minority language groups, ensuring minimum enabling conditions for quality education, etc. The following table lists the indicator wise progress towards achieving the EFA goals from 2001 to 2012 in view of targets set for 2015.

Table 2: Achievements by Indicators, 2001-2012

Indicators		Achievements (in years)			Targets 2015
		2001	2006	2012	
1	Gross Enrolment Rate of Early Childhood Development/ Pre-primary Education	12.8	41.4	73.7	80
2	Percentage of New entrants at Grade 1 with ECD/PPE experiences	7.8	18.3	55.6	80
3	Gross Intake Rate at Grade 1	122.9	148	137.7	102
4	Net Intake Rate at Grade 1	-	86	91.2	98
5	Gross Enrolment Rate of Primary Level	124.7	138.8	130.1	105
6	Net Enrolment Rate of Primary Level	81.1	87.4	95.3	100
7	% GNP channeled to Primary education	1.8	2.0	2.0	2.5
8	% of Education Budget channeled to Primary education	56.7	60	60	65

Indicators		Achievements (in years)			Targets 2015
		2001	2006	2012	
9	% of teachers with required qualification & training	15	60	98.4	100
10	% of Teachers with required certification/ license	-	100	100	100
11	Pupil Teacher Ratio	39.9	46.0	26.9	30
12	Repetition Rate:				
	Grade 1	38.7	29.8	19.9	10
	Grade 5	9	10.4	5.3	8
13	Survival Rate to Grade 5	65.8	80.3	84.1	90
14	Coefficient of Efficiency	60.0	-	-	80
15	Percentage of Learning Achievement at Grade 5	40	-	-	80
16	Literacy Rate				
	Age Group 15-24	70	-	84.7	95

Source: DOE (2012/13; 2007/08 – 2001/02); UNESCO (2003; 2007); EFA NPA Nepal (2001-2015); CBS, 2014¹⁴

The above table shows that the EFA status of Nepal has come close to the target indicators relating to GER of ECD, NIR at grade 1, NER of primary education, percentage of teachers with required qualification and training, teacher certification, pupil teacher ratio, reduction of repetition rate at grade 5 and survival rate to grade 5. In this respect, the following section discusses the progress with regard to each of the EFA goals.

¹⁴ CBS, 2014, Annual Household Survey 2012/13, CBS, Thapathali, Kathmandu, Nepal

GOAL 1

EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION

Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

Targets and Challenges

EFA/NPA 2001-2015 had targeted 80% gross enrolment rate (GER) for early childhood care and education (ECCE) for children aged 3 to 5 years, with a similar percentage of new entrants in Grade 1 with ECD/PPE experiences. It envisaged establishment of adequate ECD centres and pre-primary classes (PPCs) with a minimum of 1:20 to a maximum of 1:25 pupil teacher ratio (PTR). The targets were very ambitious at the time because GER in 2000 was only 11.7%.

Expansion of ECD Centers and PPCs and Increase in GER

The development trend of ECD/PPCs shows that fast changes are possible with appropriate strategies and initiatives. The enrolment of children in ECD/PPCs increased rapidly over the years from 38,000 in 2000 to 1,047,117 (girls 501,288 and boys 545,829) in 2012/13. Because of the mobilization of NGOs and the private sector, ECD centres increased rapidly from fewer and unaccounted situation in 2000 to 34,174 including community-based and school-based ECD/ PPCs in the country in 2012-13. An equitable progress for both girls and boys is reflected in the GER increase from 11.7% in 2000 to 73.7% in 2012/13 (73.1% for girls and 74.3% for boys).

The table below reveals that the achievement in GER for early childhood care and education (ECCE) is higher than the set targets in the years 2006/2007 and 2012/13. With Gender Parity Index (GPI) at 0.98 in the academic year 2012/13 and fairly balanced progress in development regions, it is likely that the target set for 2015 will be achieved (Table 3).

Table 3: Gross Enrolment Rate in ECCE by Region and Sex, %

Region	2006/2007			2012/2013		
	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total
Total	40.9	41.9	41.4	73.1	74.3	73.7
Eastern	35.4	35.3	35.4	70.7	71.4	71.1
Central	44.2	46.9	45.6	68.8	71.4	70.1
Western	50.6	50.2	50.4	82	83.2	82.6
Mid-Western	33.5	33.4	33.5	79.5	79.4	79.4
Far-Western	34.3	35.3	34.8	67.3	66.2	66.8

Source: DOE 2006/07; 2012/13

The data reveal that with GER at 82.6 percent (girls 82 percent and boys 83.2 percent) the Western Development region is already ahead of the target set for 2015 i.e. 80%. The Mid-Western Development region is close to the target. It shows that with more concerted efforts in the far-western, central and eastern regions, the target is likely to be achieved in all development regions.

Discrimination however exists in terms of urban and rural, education of parents, especially mother's education and economic background of households. A comparison of children, attending some form of organized ECD programme in Midland Far-Western Regions (MFWR), shows the disparity (CBS, UNICEF, 2010). Around one third (32 percent) of children aged 36–59 months in the MFWR were attending early childhood education at the time of the survey¹⁵, with little variation by region (Mid-western 34.5% and Far-western 29.7%) or gender (girls 33.3% and boys 31.4%). Sub-regionally, the highest percentage was in the Mid-Western Terai (48 percent) and the lowest was in the Far Western Mountains (20 percent).

Children living in urban areas (40 percent) were more likely to attend early childhood education than those living in rural areas (32 percent). Mother's education level and the household's wealth status influenced the likelihood of attendance in early childhood education. Only 26 percent of children whose mother had no education attended compared to 42 percent of children whose mother had primary education and 47 percent of children whose mother had at least secondary education. Only 16 percent of children living in the poorest households attended early childhood education compared to 50 percent of children from the richest households (CBS and UNICEF, *ibid*).

Percentage of New Entrants at Grade 1 with ECD Experiences

The following table presents achievements with regard to new entrants in Grade 1 with ECD experiences as envisioned in the plan (Table 4) by different periods.

The percentage of new entrants at Grade 1 with ECD experience was below the set targets in the EFA National Plan of Action both for the years 2007 (40 percent) and 2012(65percent). However, with three more years to the target year, rapid progress made indicates that the target set for 2015 is achievable. While the intake rate at grade 1 with ECD experience in 2007 was 18.3%; in 2012 it increased to 55.6%, with 55.9% for girls and 55.2% for boys.

Table 4: Percentage of New Entrants in Grade 1 with ECD experience by Region and Sex, %

Region	2006/2007			2012/2013		
	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total
Total	18.1	18.4	18.3	55.9	55.2	55.6
Eastern	14.5	14.3	14.4	56.6	55.4	56
Central	20	20.4	20.2	52.6	51.6	52.1
Western	24	25.5	24.8	58.1	57.7	57.9
Mid-Western	12.3	12.0	12.1	60.3	59.2	59.7
Far-Western	18.3	17.8	18.0	55.5	56.2	55.8

Source: DOE, *Flash Report 1*, and *Consolidated Report of relevant years i.e. 2007 and 2012*.

¹⁵ CBS and UNICEF, 2012, Nepal Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey Survey (NMICS) 2010, Mid- and Far Western Regions, Final Report, CBS Thapathali, Kathmandu and UNICEF, UN House, Lalitpur, Nepal

The above table shows a very little variation among development regions regarding the progress in the percentage of children in grade 1 with ECD experiences in the school year 2012/13. The data reveal that with 59.7% (girls 60.3% and boys 59.2%) children with ECD experiences in grade 1 in 2012/13 from its lowest position of 12.1% (girls 12.3% and boys 12%) in 2006/07, the Mid-western Development region has made remarkable progress. Surprisingly, the Central Development region lags behind the others to the lowest level (52.1%), which might be due to lack of reporting by schools.

A comparison of the percentage of new entrants to primary education in Grade 1 by sex shows that the percentage of girls is slightly higher compared to boys in all development regions except in the Far-western region. Further analysis of the Flash Report (2012/13) data shows that there are differences by geographical belts, namely, mountains, hills and Terai with respect to new entrants in Grade 1 with ECD/PPC experiences in 2012/13. The data show lower progress in hills (51.7%) and mountains (52%) zones compared to the Terai (58.1%) and the Valley (64.1%).

Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR)

The following table depicts the status of pupil teacher ratio in the ECCE programme in the country. It shows that the PTR for ECCE/PPE is highest in the Central Development region and the lowest in the Far-Western region.

Table 5: Pupil Teacher Ratio in ECCE/Pre-primary Education, 2012/13

Region	Total (2012/2013)
Total	30.81
Eastern	28.22
Central	34.37
Western	31.94
Mid-Western	30.83
Far-Western	25.04

Source: DOE, 2012, Flash Report 1, 2012/13

As it is usually expected to enrol a maximum of 25 children in a centre, PTR seems higher in all development regions except in the Far-western region. The ratio can also be interpreted as a proxy indicator to the quality and efforts made in the provision of ECD. Further, the qualification and training of ECD teachers/facilitators remains a concern, so is the provision of their low remuneration.

GOAL 2

ENSURING FREE AND COMPULSORY PRIMARY EDUCATION

Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities have access to free and compulsory primary education of good quality.

Targets and Challenges

The term ‘all children’ signifies children within 5 to 9 years of age living in the country, irrespective of their gender, caste, ethnicity in any circumstances. The EFA NPA 2001-2015 targeted to achieve 98% NIR and 102% GIR at grade 1; almost 100% NER and 105% GER in grades 1-5; 90% survival rate to grade 5 by 2015 with 80% efficiency and 80% average learning marks in core subjects at grade 5. Likewise, it aimed to reduce repetition rate to 10% and 8% at grade 1 and 5 respectively. The national development plans adopted the targets of intake rates and enrolment rates accordingly as listed in the annex 3.

Increase in Access to Primary/Basic Education

Home to School Distance: There has been a considerable expansion in the number of schools in Nepal during the past 15 years. Access to early childhood development and pre-primary, primary and secondary education has increased tremendously as indicated by the low distance to reach the nearest school for different levels of schooling.

Data from Nepal Living Standards Surveys revealed the proportion of households having access to the nearest primary schools within 30 minutes travel time as per government policy. Overall, percentage of households by time taken to reach the nearest primary schools increased from 88.4% in 1995/96 to 91.4% in 2003/4, and to 94.7% in 2010/11 (Table 6). Almost all households (99.25%) in the urban area and 93.43% households in the rural area have primary schools within 30 minutes distance. The richest households have lesser mean time (7 minutes) than the poorest households (13 minutes) to reach the nearest primary school.

Table 6: Duration of Travel from Home to the nearest Primary School

Year	<30 Minutes	30-60 Minutes	60-120 Minutes	120-180 Minutes	>180 Minutes
1995/96	88.44	7.95	2.81	0.34	0.47
2003/04	91.4	6.5	2.0	0.1	0.1
2010/11	94.7	4.4	0.9	0	0.1

Source: CBS (1996, 2004 and 2011). NLSS –I, NLSS-II and NLSS -III

It is worth mentioning here that in addition to primary school, the NLSS-III (2010/11) for the first time provides data on households by time to the availability of the nearest ECD/PPE, secondary and higher secondary schools in the country. It shows almost 88.8%, 71.5% and 56.3% households can access ECD/PPE, secondary and higher secondary schools respectively within half an hour. An additional 7.4%, 16.1% and 19.9% can access these facilities within an hour (Table 7).

Table 7: Distribution of households by time taken to reach the nearest facilities for Nepal, %

Nepal	Up to 30 minutes	30 minutes to 1 hour	1 - 2 hours	2 -3 hours	3 hours and more	Total
ECD Center	88.8	7.4	2.8	0.4	0.6	100.0
Secondary School	71.5	16.1	9.0	2.3	1.1	100.0
Higher Secondary School	56.3	19.9	14.3	5.1	4.4	100.0
Source: CBS, 2011, NLSS-III, 2010/11	24	25.5	24.8	58.1	57.7	57.9
Mid-Western	12.3	12.0	12.1	60.3	59.2	59.7
Far-Western	18.3	17.8	18.0	55.5	56.2	55.8

Source: CBS, 2011, NLSS-III, 2010/11

In view of the constitutional provision to provide free education for all up to secondary level, obviously the table highlights the need of more secondary and higher secondary schools, especially for girls and disadvantaged children due to all sorts of disabilities, level of their socio-economic situations and location i.e. children from rural and remote areas of the country.

Schools Offering Education up to Grade 5 and Grade 8

The DOE Flash Report 2012 shows that an overwhelming number of schools in the country (76.2%) offer primary education from grade I to V. The share of schools offering basic education from grade I to VIII recorded at 36.0% in 2012, which was an increase by 6.8% compared to 2010 and 3.5% compared to 2011. This rise in the number of schools offering primary/basic education contributed to reduce the duration of travel time between home and schools.

Table 8: Percentage of Schools that Offer Primary/Basic Level of Education, 2012/13

Region	Total Schools	Primary Level (up to grade 5)	Basic Level (up to grade 8)	Share of Primary Level %	Share of Basic Level %
Total	34782	26495	12531	76.2	36.0
Eastern	7449	5761	2513	77.3	33.7
Central	10284	7752	4008	75.4	39.0
Western	7649	5718	2714	74.8	35.5
Mid-western	5405	4148	1747	76.7	32.3
Far western	3995	3116	1549	78.0	38.8

Source: DOE (2012). *Flash Report 2012/13*

The regional disaggregated data shows that the mid-western region (32.3%) has the lowest numbers of schools offering basic education followed by the eastern region (33.7%). The data also indicate that based on school mapping all regions need more schools upgraded to grade 8 for ensuring basic education to all children, especially girls and children in difficult circumstances and from disadvantaged groups.

Gross Intake Rate and Net Intake Rate in Grade One

Gross Intake Rate in Grade One: The table below (Table 9) shows the status of Gross Intake Rate (GIR) and Net Intake Rate (NIR) in Grade One in the school years 2008/09 to 2012/13, disaggregated by gender. It throws light on the trend of progress with regard to GIR in grade one between 2008 and 2012. It shows the GIR was 147.7% in the school year 2008/09, which gradually and consistently decreased to 137.7% with small difference between girls and boys (141.2% for girls and 134.4% for boys).

Table 9: Gross and Net Intake Rates in Grade One by Gender, 2008-2012, %

Nepal	2008/09			2009/10			2010/11			2011/12			2012/13		
	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total
GIR	150.6	145.0	147.7	148.2	139.9	144.0	147.0	138.0	142.4	144.2	137.3	140.7	141.2	134.4	137.7
NIR	81.4	84.7	83.1	85.5	87.3	86.4	88.4	89.5	89.0	90.2	91.2	90.7	90.6	91.9	91.2

Source: DOE Consolidated Report 2008/09 and 2010/11 and Flash Report 1, 2011/12 and 2012/13

A high GIR demonstrates a high degree of access and capacity to intake at the primary level education. It also indicates that large numbers of older age children are getting admitted in grade one. The minimum age for admission at grade one is five years old. High GIR is likely due to joining of the school by those who missed enrolment on time. As the above table shows, the GIR is on decreasing trend, but still very high in 2012. It has implications in lowering the internal efficiency of primary education.

Net Intake Rate in Grade One: Table 9 above explicates Net Intake Rate (NIR) in grade 1 in the school years 2008/09 to 2012/13 by gender. Overall, NIR is 91.2% with 90.6% for girls and 91.9% for boys, revealing little difference in admission to grade one between

girls and boys. The trend of progress in the NIR in grade one shows steady and constant improvement from 83% in 2008/09 to 91% in 2012/13.

NIR in Nepal indicates new entrants in grade one at officially eligible age of five years old expressed as a percentage of the population of the same age. It also shows the level of compliance to pupil admission in grade one education at the officially designated primary school entrance age.

Gross Enrolment Rate and Net Enrolment Rate at Primary Level

Gross Enrolment Rate at Primary Level: Consistent to GIR trend, GER decreased to 130.1% in 2012/13 from 142.8% in 2008/09. There is a sharp drop in GER in 2012/13 compared to 135.9% in 2011/12 and 139.5% in 2010/11. Nevertheless, table 10 below shows the status of GER at primary level by gender in the school years from 2008/09 to 2012/13. The data indicate improved enrolment in primary level with under-and over-age children.

Table 10: Gross and Net Enrolment Rates at Primary Level by Gender, 2008-2012, %

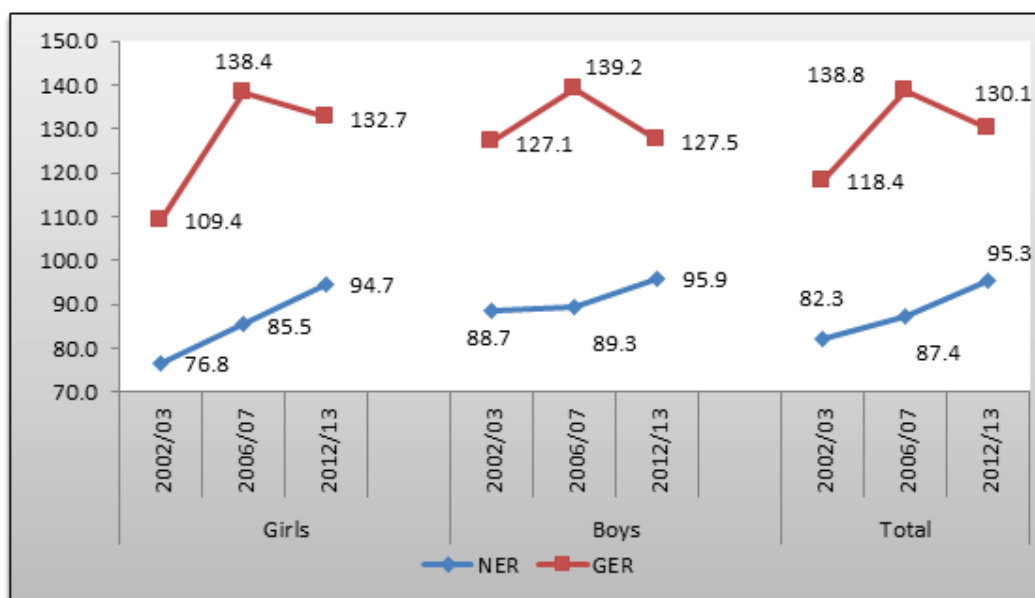
Nepal	2008/09			2009/10			2010/11			2011/12			2012/13		
	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total
GER	145.6	140.2	142.8	146.1	137.1	141.4	144.8	134.5	139.5	141.2	131.0	135.9	132.7	127.5	130.1
NER	90.4	93.2	91.9	92.6	94.7	93.7	93.6	95.3	94.5	94.5	95.6	95.1	94.7	95.9	95.3

Source: DOE Consolidated Report 2008/09 and 2010/11 and Flash Report 1, 2011/12 and 2012/13

Net Enrolment Rate at Primary Level: Table 10 above shows constantly increasing trend in NER to 95.3% in 2012/13 from 91.9 % in 2008/09. It is encouraging to note fairly equal progress in the NER of girls compared to that of boys, with GPI at 0.99 at primary level in the school year 2012/13.

NER has increased consistently, indicating more and more children enrolled at correct age in primary grades (1-5) for both girls and boys at the national level. In addition to the above, Figure 3 below illustrates the progress with regard to NER in primary education in the school years 2002/03, 2006/07 and 2012/13.

Figure 3: NER 2002/03 – 2012/13, %



Source: DOE, *ibid* and CBS (2010/11)

However, contrary to the data from the school census as illustrated above (NER 95.3% total, (94.7% for girls and 95.9% for boys), data from the NLSS - III (2010/11) demonstrated a much lower NER at primary level i.e. 78.4% total, with 80% for girls and 76.6% for boys. Even so, in view of GPI at 1.04 and 0.99 in the context of NER in primary education as per the household survey and the school census respectively, data from both sources indicated a relatively equal progress between boys and girls, more so in favor of girls. The data from the household survey revealed that the children most deprived of education were from families in the poorest consumption quintile (poorest 76.2% against the richest 83.3%). There was a minor difference in NER for children living in rural areas (78.3%) compared to those in urban areas (78.7%). Children in the Terai (71.7%) were more disadvantaged than children in the mountains (88.4%) and hills (84.8%).

GOAL 3

APPROPRIATE LEARNING AND LIFE SKILLS

Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills Programmes.

Targets and Challenges

The major issues and concerns with respect to ensuring the learning needs of all young people and adults relate to three major aspects:

1. Presence of a significant population never enrolled to school,
2. Higher proportion of the population who dropped out from school without meaningful learning, without life skills learning including health, nutrition, communication, planning, working/adjusting to work needs, entrepreneurship, and
3. Large numbers of unemployed/underemployed young adults, including those graduated with traditional formal degrees as well as uneducated.

These issues in the past were left to the traditional social and economic practices where people learnt by participation and apprenticeship. In the changed world scenario, this has not only become inadequate but also outdated. However, Nepal has to struggle in transforming its way to address the issues in the current world context almost with new beginning. It has adopted following important strategies to deal with the issues and concerns:

1. Flexible schooling, alternate schooling and open schooling to support those who never enrolled to a school or could not complete school education,
2. Curriculum reform and teacher training to incorporate relevant life skills/appropriate learning in school education,
3. Different NFE programmes for youths and adults covering wider needs –basic literacy, functional literacy, and literacy integrated to income generation, social mobilization (e.g., mother's group), etc., and
4. Job oriented technical and vocational education.

Flexible schooling, alternate schooling and open schooling as means of non-formal education

The government adopted Non-formal education policy (NFEC, 2006) outlining comprehensive guidelines and development thrusts for enhancing literacy, life skills education and continuous learning in an integrated way. It used Community Learning Centers (CLCs) continuously as the core structural strategy to address life skills/appropriate learning needs of youths and adults. Besides, it emphasized on the expansion

and mobilization of schools, NFE resource centers and technical vocational schools. The policies and directives concerning CLC spelled out the provisions for continuing education and lifelong learning through non-formal means. In order to link formal and non-formal education, equivalency policies and practices were undertaken. In collaboration with UNESCO, efforts were also made by the NFEC for the establishment of Equivalency Programmes with regard to non-formal education in the country.

Literacy Programme

The Government of Nepal through NFEC under MOE has launched Literacy Nepal Mission (LINEM) 2012- 2015 as one of the fundamental Programmes with the main objective of making every community free from illiteracy. In order to fulfill the objective, NFEC has adopted an integrated approach. In order to undertake this mission NFEC has received support from different ministries, development partners, financial institutions, industries, I/NGOs, CBOs, journalists, teachers and students, including the entire civil society. Through this mission, NFEC has aimed to ensure literacy for all Nepalese by 2015. However, although improved significantly compared to adult literacy, it appears the country will achieve or remain very close to the set target of youth literacy (95 percent) by 2015 from its present level (85 percent) in 2010/11.

Table 11: Youth Literacy Rates (15-24 Years) by Sex, 1995/96, 2003/4 and 2010/11 as per NLSS, %

Sex	NLSS-I, 1995/96			NLSS-II, 2003/04			NLSS-III, 2010/11		
	15-19 years	20-24 years	15-24 years	15-19 years	20-24 years	15-24 years	15-19 years	20-24 years	15-24 years
Male	74.5	72.2	73.4	82.5	78.2	80.6	94.8	89.8	93.0
Female	48.8	32.4	40.6	66.2	53.4	60.2	84.1	73.1	79.4
Total	61.3	49.7	55.5	74.3	65	70.0	88.9	79.5	84.7

Source: NLSS (I, II and III, 1995/96, 2003/04 and 2010/11).

Youth literacy rates are estimated based on data of relevant population age groups i.e. 15-19 and 20-24 age groups in NLSS I, II and III.

Flexible Schooling Programme

Another programme of NFEC is the Flexible Schooling Programme (FSP) for primary level. This programme is for the children of 8-14 years of age, who are not able to attend formal schooling due to various reasons like home responsibility and other socio-economic problems (NFEC, 2012). The programme runs at flexible time suitable to the students. Also, the formal primary education curriculum of five years is condensed into three years' duration: Level I, level II and level III respectively. Completion of level III is considered equivalent to grade five of formal schooling.

Open School

NFEC has been conducting open school for grade 6, 7 and 8 since 2007 in 37 districts. The lower secondary school's 3 years' curriculum is condensed into two years and two levels

are defined. After completing the level II, students are recognized as qualified for grade eight of the formal school (NFEC, 2013). Similarly, the National Center for Educational Development (NCED) has prepared one year of condensed curriculum for open school for grade 9 and 10. NCED has opened 85 schools in 75 districts and implemented this condensed curriculum since 2007. Upon completion of this course, students are eligible for the School Leaving Certificate (SLC) examination.

Life Skills Curriculum Development

NFEC has focused on life skills in non-formal education. Recently, NFEC from the support of UNESCO has prepared and implemented the Training of Trainers' (TOT) Guideline on "Life Skills Curriculum Development". Integrating life skills training makes education more relevant to the lives of learners as they help young and adult people to develop capacity with regard to appropriate knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to improve their professional skills, enabling them to take control of their life, make informed decisions and participate fully and confidently in public life. The TOT Guideline focusing on life skills and livelihood has been designed primarily to face the challenge of integrating life skills in teaching and learning in NFE curriculum, learning materials and training manuals.

Community Learning Centres (CLCs)

Community Learning Centers (CLCs) have been contributing to achieve the EFA goal 3. Non-Formal Education Center has established CLCs across the country as a viable approach to plan and implement non-formal education and literacy for all at community level. The establishment of CLCs started in Nepal in 2002 with 5 pilot programmes from the financial and technical support of the UNESCO Office in Kathmandu. The 10th national development plan had stipulated to establish 205 CLCs, one in each electoral constituency. By 2012/13, nearly 2,199 CLCs have been established and are in operation. Besides, different organizations such as NRC-NFE are also running CLCs from the financial support of various organizations.

Community Learning Centers provide basic literacy and life skills related education, disseminate information with regard to development activities to adolescents, youths and adults in the community, develop necessary human resources to carry out developmental works in the community and work as a link agency between developmental agencies and local people. CLCs, having capacity to offer Programmes and services, are carrying out more Programmes and attracting more participants each year. Income generation and adult literacy Programmes are most popular Programmes of CLCs.

Curriculum Reform and Teacher Training

The Curriculum Development Centre revised its curriculum in 2003, incorporating life skills/appropriate learning in school education as a response to its commitment to achieve the goals of EFA. Knowledge, skills and attitude related competencies were integrated into the primary school level curricula of health education. The grade-wise curricular objectives were revised, including relevant knowledge, skills, and attitudes

level objectives. Contents related to life skills were incorporated throughout the curricular scope such as personal hygiene, environmental sanitation, nutrition, diseases, first aid, health services, etc. The revised curriculum and textbooks were introduced at the national level from 2006. In the academic year 2013/2014, text books up to grade 6 have been further revised. Primary level teachers and students activity books have been developed in collaboration with UNICEF/Nepal.

CDC has also published text books for primary grades in different mother languages. Till date CDC has published text books of different grades in 21 mother languages. In addition, NCED has prepared a teacher training manual and undertaken teacher preparation activities for life skills education in consonance with the objectives of the school curriculum. Cascade modality is the training strategy adopted by the NCED to reach out to teachers in all schools through Teacher Training Centers (TTCs) and Lead Resource Centers (LRCs).

Alternative NFE Programmes for Youths and Adults

The Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT), established in 1989 under the Technical and Vocational Education Act of 1988, is responsible for managing 15 public technical schools across the country, 2 Vocational Training for Community Development (VTCD) centers in Khudi (Lamjung) and Bhimad (Tanahun), and Training Institute for Technical Instruction (TITI) in Madhyapur Thimi (Bhaktapur). There are also over 160 private technical institutions, which operate in affiliation with the CTEVT. The levels of training Programmes include short-term training, Technical School Leaving Certificate (TSLC) and Diploma equivalent to secondary and higher secondary level of schooling respectively.

The entry requirement for TSLC programme for SLC pass is 15 months course, whereas for students with grade 10 pass the course is offered for 29 months. The entry requirement for 3 years' diploma/certificate level is SLC pass (CTEVT, 2013). CTEVT system has capacity to provide education and training to 12,811 for TSLC and 12,502 for diploma level respectively in engineering, health and agriculture trades (CTEVT, 2011 a).

Apart from the above Programmes of CTEVT, Department of Labour, Department of Cottage and Small Industries and Cottage and Small Industry Development Board offer TEVT courses for appropriate works and jobs in the local labour market. As annual outputs of these Programmes, nearly 99,000 people acquired these courses in 2012 (CTEVT, 2012). Many government and non-governmental organizations also provide skills training to unemployed youths and adults, contributing to self-and local employment.

Expansion of School ANNEX Programmes and Government Supported TEVT Institutions

CTEVT has developed an Annex Programme attached to general secondary schools. Using the secondary schools' existing physical and human resources, and managed by the School Management Committee, the programme provisions technical education

in regards to civil engineering, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering and agriculture. Successful trainees are awarded a Technical School Leaving Certificate (TSLC). In addition to long-term courses, each school conducts short-term or modular training courses of 1 to 6 months' duration according to local employment demands.

The Annex programme is continued under the SSRP. Its operation in schools is based on local initiatives by the school and community and cost sharing between the government and the local community. CTEVT has successfully organized such courses in selected schools in 75 districts.

Integration of TEVT Soft Skills in Schools

Piloting of TEVT soft skills in 100 schools has been planned to be consolidated with reviewing and developing curriculum, teacher training, classroom delivery processes and competency based assessment system.

A Separate TEVT Stream in Secondary Schools

The SSRP provides policy direction for both general and vocational components in secondary education so that opportunities for skills development can be expanded across the country. According to the SSRP, the Department of Education in collaboration with CTEVT started technical education programme in 100 community schools of 71 districts in grade 9 and 10 on piloting basis from April 2013. If the pilot programme on Technical Education in Community Schools (TECS) succeeds, CTEVT aims to expand this programme in annex schools after 2 years.

Enhanced Vocational Education and Training (EVENT) Programme

The Ministry of Education (MOE) with the support of the World Bank has initiated the EVENT Project. The project development objective is to expand the supply of skilled and employable labour by increasing access to quality training Programmes, and by strengthening the technical and vocational education and training system in Nepal. The project consists of the following four components: (1) Strengthening TEVT Regulatory Activities and Capacity Building; (2) Strengthening Technical Education; (3) Support for Short-Term Training and Recognition of Prior Learning and (4) Project Management and Monitoring and Evaluation. The ultimate outcome of the project is to make TEVT services accessible to poor and disadvantaged youths residing in Mid-western and Far western regions. Ultimately, the project aims to help raise the capability of the TEVT sector to produce skilled, employable and productive labour for both domestic and international markets.

The primary beneficiaries of the project are approximately 75,000 Nepali youths, who have been getting access to short-term skills training, technical education and opportunities for certifying their existing skills. Institutions providing TSLC/Diploma courses benefit from capacity development through structural reforms, such as; improved facilities, trained instructors, use of high quality teaching and learning materials, improved delivery processes, research, monitoring and evaluation. In order to increase access to information related to employment, the project supports strengthening labour market information system.

Sector other than Educational Sector

In addition to the education sector, a number of other governmental departments and authorities, such as; Cottage and Small Industrial Development Board (CSIDB), Department of Cottage and Small Industry (DCSI), Vocational Training and Skills Development Training Centre (VTSDTC) and Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hotel Management (NATHM) have been offering various vocational training Programmes aiming at job occupations. VTSDTC, CSIDB and DCSI primarily offer training Programmes, which are livelihood related, such as; candle making, bamboo crafts, bag making, aloe-fiber processing, hosiery, food and fruit processing, etc. (CTEVT, 2011 c). In addition to government departments, various private training providers also offer vocational training with the support of bi-lateral and multi-lateral agencies, such as; Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC), Department for International Development (DFID) and the World Bank through Helvetas/ Employment Fund. The training provisions cover various trades and occupations such as agriculture, civil, construction, electrical, electronic, mechanical, and automobile, computer, hospitality, printing, renewal energy, handicraft, health and others.

Following are some of the major Programmes:

Poverty Alleviation Fund

Poverty Alleviation Fund (PAF) has undertaken various sectoral as well as targeted poverty reduction Programmes through a coordinated and integrated approach. PAF has substantial participation of local communities and government, the central government, I/NGOs and CBOs as well as the private sector. The Fund has adopted a demand-led community based approach to alleviate poverty and it encourages poor communities to take initiatives to improve their livelihood. The Fund is autonomous and its work culture is to work with poor population as closely as possible.

Youth Self-Employment Programme

This Fund was established in the fiscal year 2008/09 with an objective of undertaking self-employment and vocational training Programmes for unemployed youths by providing them collateral free periodic loans at concessional interest rate through banks and financial institutions. The implementation of self-employment and vocational training Programmes with the optimum utilization of productive labour aim to bring about change in the traditional production system for speedy growth of the country. The primary objective of the youth self-employment programme is to provide Rs. 200 thousand per person at the maximum as collateral free loan in an easy manner. Overall, the purpose is assist economically deprived groups, women, Dalits, ethnic and conflict affected people, unemployed youths and adults by providing opportunities to get engaged in agricultural, vocational and service oriented activities, thereby making their lifestyle much easier through their increased income.

Micro Enterprise Development Programme (MEDP)

The development of micro enterprises plays an important role in the creation of employment opportunities in rural areas, poverty alleviation and inclusive development.

The main objective of MEDP is to develop industrialism among backward and poor target groups and create meaningful self-employment. The Ministry of Industry since 1998 has been conducting this programme with the assistance of donor agencies.

MEDP has been implementing Programmes, such as; establishment of micro industries and social mobilization of micro industrialists for creating more job opportunities by upgrading the existing micro industries, development of industrialism and technical skills, development of inter-relationships amongst micro-entrepreneurs, their micro-enterprises and micro-finance institutions, development of proper technology and access to market, support and service for upgrading micro-industries for their sustainability, capacity development of the concerned parties and consolidation of monitoring and evaluation system, etc. MEDP has been implementing its Programmes mainly by targeting women, indigenous groups, Janajati, Dalit, Madhesi and backward classes.

Rural Employment Promotion Programmes of Ministry of Agriculture

The comprehensive 20-year Agriculture Perspective Plan (APP), which has been under implementation since 1997, is the principal programme vehicle, contributing to the broad-based growth strategy. Programmes under the APP address the bulk of rural underemployment and unemployment by increasing cropping intensity, augmenting the area under irrigation, increasing livestock heads and their quality, crop diversification, enhanced commercialization of agricultural products and expansion of agro-based industries. The utilization of labour-intensive technologies in infrastructure projects and cottage and small scale industries, including in the private sector is expected to expand non-agricultural employment opportunities.

Employment Fund, Nepal (DFID/SDC)

Employment Fund (EF) focuses primarily on providing short term market oriented skill trainings, as well as business and life skills training to unemployed, disadvantaged young women and men in order to link them to gainful employment after completion of the training. The project has national coverage and is implemented through private sector Training and Employment Service Providers (T&ESPs).

The primary stakeholders of EF are unemployed, out-of-school youths and adults from disadvantaged groups aged 16 to 40 years (women) and 16 to 35 years (men). EF promotes private sector T&ESPs throughout the country to provide occupational skills training to young people from poor and marginalized groups, leading and guiding them into gainful employment in national (and international) labour markets. EF enhances the training and management capacity of the T&ESPs so that they are able to deliver quality trainings and achieve the intended outcomes. EF follows an outcome-based post-financing payment system. Since its establishment, EF has trained nearly 55,000 youths out of whom around 80% are placed in gainful employment after the training.

GOAL 4

ADULT LITERACY AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

Achieving a 50 percent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.

Targets and Challenges

The World Education Forum on EFA had adopted the Dakar Framework for Action (DFA), in the backdrop of nearly 862 million adult illiterates in the world, of whom two-thirds were women, most of them living in developing countries and more than 412 million in South and West Asia, including 7.9 million in Nepal, with 63.9% women being illiterate. Keeping in view the education related MDGs and the EFA goals, the EFA National Plan of Action (EFA NPA) targeted to achieve 95 percent with regard to youth literacy (15-24 years' age group), 90 percent literacy among 6+ and 75 percent in regard to adult literacy among 15+ age groups with literacy gender parity index of 1.0 by 2015.

Table 12: Achievements towards EFA Goal on Literacy, %

Indicators	1995/96			2003/04			2010/11			Target 2015
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	
Youth Literacy (15 -24 years)	73.4	40.6	55.5	80.6	60.2	70.0	93.0	79.4	84.7	95
Literacy (6 years and above)	52.2	24.4	37.8	63.5	38.9	50.6	72.2	51.4	60.9	90
Adult Literacy (15 years and above)	53.5	19.4	35.6	64.5	33.8	48.0	71.6	44.5	56.5	75
GPI (Adult Literacy)			0.36			0.52			0.62	1.0

Source: CBS (1996, 2004 and 2011). NLSS-I (1995/96), NLSS-II (2003/04) and NLSS-III (2010/11).

Youth literacy rates are estimated based on data of relevant NLSS I, II and III and population of 15-19 and 20-24 age groups. As per the NLSS III (CBS, 2011), overall, 60.9% of the population aged 6 years and above was literate. There were noticeable gender differences in literacy rates of males and females: 72.2 percent males aged 6 years and older were literate as opposed to 51.4 percent females.

Disparities in literacy rates (6 years and above) existed across the urban/rural residence, development regions, ecological zones and consumption quintiles. Literacy rates were substantially higher in urban areas (76.9%) than in rural areas (56.9%). Regional disparities also existed, with the highest literacy rate in the western development region (65.9%), and the lowest in the central development region (57.3%). Among ecological zones, the hills zone with literacy rates at 68.5% (78.8% males and 59.9% females) had the highest overall literacy rate. The mountain with literacy rates at 57.2% (70.7% males and 45.8% females) was far behind. The Terai zone with literacy rates at 54.4% (66.4% males and 44.3% females) was the lowest. There was a clear association between literacy rate and household consumption quintiles. Almost 79.3% of the population in the richest quintile was literate compared to only 45.3 percent in the poorest quintile.

Overall, 56.5 percent of the adult population aged 15 years and over was literate. Again, there was a wide gap between male and female literacy rates. The literacy rates of males and females were 71.6 percent and 44.5 percent respectively, implying that females were far behind males i.e. by over 27 percentage points. Gender and regional differences in adult literacy were similar to those seen in literacy rates for population 6 years and above.

The administratively conducted regular annual school census statistics (Flash-I), 2012/13 reported that NER at primary level (Grade 1-5) was 95.3% with 94.7 percent for girls and 95.9 percent for boys. The youth literacy in the 15-24 years' age group was estimated at 84.9%, with literacy rates at 93% for males and 79% for females. It appears the youth literacy is approaching the target and likely to be achieved by 2015 with support and contribution of the school sector. With reduced literacy gap between males and females (14 percentage points) and gender parity at 0.85, it seems to come closer to the set target of 95 percent in the EFA NPA. However, the overall literacy targets for 6+ years (90 percent) and 15+ years (75 percent) seem unlikely to be achieved by 2015.

There are many hurdles towards fully achieving the goal of universal literacy; however it is to be noted that making everyone literate has been taken as a national concern. The government is committed to accelerating national development by utilizing NFE and Literacy Programmes for poverty reduction. Currently, NFEC is undertaking Literate Nepal Mission (LINEM) as a mass literacy campaign for children, youths and adults who, due to whatsoever reasons, missed access to formal education. Three major policy strategies have been considered towards achieving meaningful development in literacy:

1. System of non-formal education, with provisions of outside formal educational settings has been developed to address adult literacy, basic education for out-of-school children, life skills, income generation related education activities and culture.
2. National policy framework of NFE/Literacy to incorporate NFE/Literacy component of the education sector in the main (educational) policies as well as in national level plans and also to establish literacy as priority among I/NGOs and CBOs that work at local level.
3. NFE has been included in the legislative framework through article 17 in the Interim

Constitution of 2007 that (i) each community shall have the right to get basic education in their mother tongue as provided for in the law; and (ii) each citizen shall have the right to free education up to secondary level as provided for in the law. It refers to the fact that the state regards education as a human right of every citizen.

As discussed earlier in the life skill education section, the policy framework comprehensively addresses literacy, life skill education and continuous learning with common set of priorities. The first priority is to ensure literacy for all, especially for girls and women, persons with disabilities and disadvantaged castes and ethnic groups. The second priority is to go beyond the traditional notion of literacy and equip participants with relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes to ascertain quality in life. This includes establishing linkages in income generation Programmes in other sectors as well to address root causes of deprivation and illiteracy. In addition, alignment of these Programmes with other Programmes and subsectors in the education sector, as well as strengthening alignment and coordination of efforts undertaken by GOs, I/NGOs and CBOs are considered crucial. The third priority as reflected in this policy framework is to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Non-formal Education Center (NFEC) and Community Learning Centers (CLCs) with a view to planning and monitoring the non-formal education and literacy Programmes across the country.

Literacy/NFE Programme Strategies

NFE covers various Programmes that aim to bring about positive changes in people's quality of life, such as short-term awareness Programmes in respect to adult literacy, IG skills training, alternative basic education for out-of-school children, life skills, and Programmes that contribute to lifelong learning. Consequently, the following Programmes are currently in place for catering the non-formal education and literacy needs of the population:

Alternative Schooling Programmes

The School Outreach Program (SOP) is a 3-year programme for 6 to 8 years age groups children who are not able to attend schools due to geographic remoteness and various socio-economic reasons. After completion of the programme the child transits to grade 4 in formal school. In addition, the Government implements flexible schooling programme for children of 8 to 14 age groups who are out-of-school, poor, disadvantaged, street dwellers, labourers in rural, urban and semi-urban areas. Children complete primary education in three years through condensed courses. After completing the programme the child transits to grade 6 in formal school. These provisions have helped improve the literacy rates, especially youth literacy rates (15-24 years' age group).

Open School Programme (OSP)

The OSP is targeted for the school dropout children and the neo-literates with an objective of providing lower secondary level education through contact sessions. This is a two-year programme. After completion of the programme, participants are eligible to appear in the grade 8 examination. Reaching beyond the school sector, the Government implements

Adult Non-formal School Programmes to educate adults (especially women) who could not continue their education earlier due to various reasons. It is a fast-track scheme in which participants are awarded certificates equivalent to formal school grades within short duration.

Literacy Programmes

The Government has rolled out both Basic and Post Literacy Programmes: Basic literacy to eradicate illiteracy and post literacy to impart functional skills to neo-literates through continuing education aiming to sustain literacy. The target groups of this programme are neo-literates who became literate through the Basic Literacy programme. Earlier the government had launched National Literacy Campaign in the year 2009/10 with a target to eradicate illiteracy from the country within two years of time frame. The campaign is continuing under the banner of "Literate Nepal Mission 2012/15 - (LINEM)" with a target of reaching 1,035,150 illiterates throughout the country in the years 1012-13. Under this programme classes are conducted two hours a day, 6 days a week for three months and with a minimum of a total 150 hours of sessions.

Income Generation (IG) and Skills Training Programmes

The IG program is designed to help poor segments of the population who have completed the Post Literacy Course through government sponsored literacy Programmes. Depending upon the nature of skills required participants are involved in training for certain period of time to acquire entrepreneurship skills so that they can start their own micro-business in a group. In addition, the Government is piloting the integration of soft (enabling) skills into the formal and non-formal curriculum.

Community Learning Centers (CLC) as a Community-based Organization

The concept of CLC gained ground when the Government of Nepal (GoN) introduced the Tenth Plan (2002-2007), with the idea of establishing one CLC in each constituency (205) as a powerful means of empowering local people through the delivery of non-formal education and literacy. The CLC is defined as a local educational institution or a learning center outside the formal education system, which is generally established and managed by the local people in villages or in urban areas. Main objectives of the CLCs are to capacitate deprived people and bring about qualitative changes in their lives. The target groups are the deprived, disadvantaged and marginalized people who are given opportunity to learn to be creative, analytical and productive, and also to be able to make their own choices and decisions.

GOAL 5

SOCIAL EQUALITY AND GENDER PARITY

Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in, basic education of good quality.

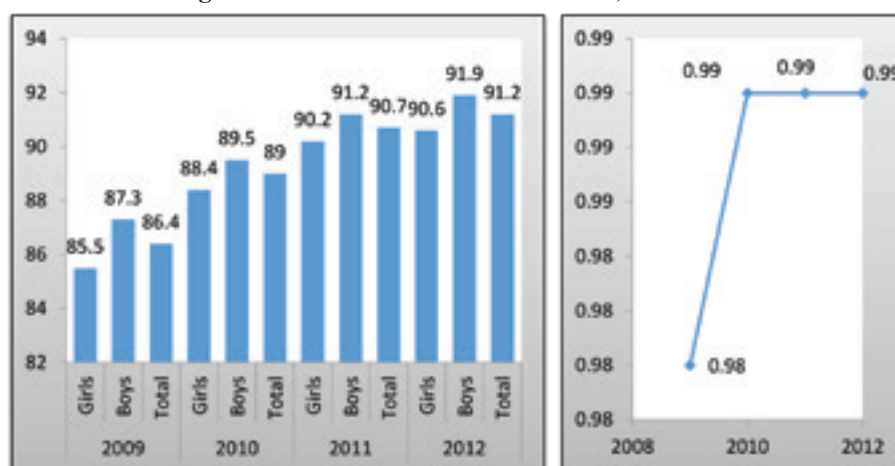
Targets and Challenges

There has been significant improvement nationwide towards greater social equality and gender parity at all levels of education, particularly in primary/basic education. This chapter explores progress towards the realization of gender parity and equality since 2001. It reviews policies and practices that have successfully increased the girls' equal participation in education, with enhanced internal efficiency of school education system, including higher rates of survival, promotion and completion; reducing drop outs and repetition; improving school infrastructure; and creating equitable school and classroom environments. The emphasis on girls' education has improved the fundamental understanding that all children, girls and boys, have a basic right to education opportunities that equally enable them to reach their full potential in life. However, many challenges remain, and this chapter highlights the need of eliminating disparities in the entire education sector, including pre-primary, primary/basic, secondary and higher education.

Parity in NIR, NER and GER

Gender disparities in primary and secondary education have now been eliminated in school intake and enrolment; GPI values have reached almost 1.0 in terms of NIR, NER and GER.

Figure 4: NIR in Grade One 2009-2012; GPI in NIR



Source: DOE (2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012). Flash Report 1 of relevant years

As discussed in regard to universal primary education (UPE) on progress towards achieving EFA goals, gender difference has narrowed down due to girls' participation and performance at par with boys at primary level, in some cases even surpassed the boys. The data in Figure 4 shows that the NIR has been gradually increasing almost at equal pace for girls as well as boys, although boys' NIR is slightly higher than that of girls.

Analysis of equity with respect to enrolment at all levels of school education, including ECD/PPE, primary and secondary education (Kindergarten to Grade 12) reveals encouraging trend during 2005-2012, enrolment of girls increased by 2.5% per year whereas enrolment of boys increased by 1.4%. As reflected in the previous chapter on ECCE, girls' GER in ECD, which was 40.9% in 2006, increased to 73.1% in 2012. GPI in NER is between 0.99 and 1.06 at primary, lower secondary as well as secondary level indicating that the target of gender parity has been met in terms of school enrolment. Since 2002/03, girls' primary level NER increased by 18 percentage points in 2012/13. In 2006, the gap between boys' and girls' NER at primary level was 3.8%, but by 2012 this gap decreased to 1.2%. At lower secondary and secondary levels as well, girls' NER has shown gradual progress.

Table 13: NER, GER and GPI at Different Levels of School Education

Indicators/Level		2002/03			2006/07			2012/13		
		Total	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys
NER	Primary	82.4	76.8	-	87.4	85.5	89.3	95.3	94.7	95.9
	L. Sec	40.4	35.8	-	52.3	47.8	57.1	72.2	71.8	73.2
	Secondary	27.5	23.9	-	34.7	32.4	37.0	54.3	54.0	54.6
	H. Sec	-	-	-	-	-	-	10.4	10.6	10.2
GER	Primary	118.4	109.4	-	138.8	138.4	139.2	130.1	132.7	127.5
	L. Sec	57.5	51.2	-	71.5	65.4	77.9	100.6	105.5	96.1
	Secondary	44.8	38.7	-	56.7	53.1	60.2	71.7	73.6	69.9
	H. Sec							31.6	32.6	30.7
GPI (NER)	Primary	-			0.96			0.99		
	L. Sec	-			0.84			0.99		
	Secondary	-			0.88			0.99		
	H. Sec	-			-			1.04		
GPI (GER)	Primary	-			0.99			1.04		
	L. Sec	-			0.84			1.1		
	Secondary	-			0.88			1.05		
	H. Sec	-			-			1.06		

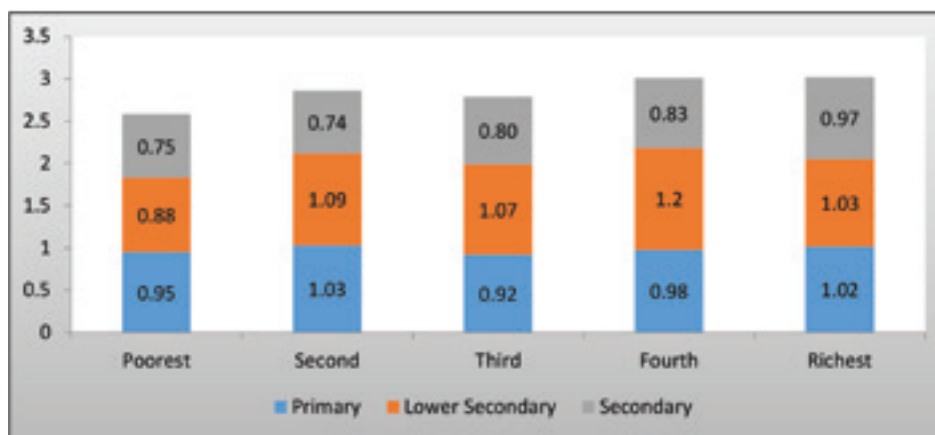
Higher GER of girls at primary, lower secondary and secondary level indicates that more girls older than official age groups are enrolled in school than that of boys. There are more girls than boys at school level as indicated by the higher GPI in GER. It is however to be noted that there are more girls in community (public) schools than institutional (private) schools, showing preference of parents for boys over girls.

Data of institutional schools shows the GPI of Basic Level (Grades 1 to 8) at 0.77 only (DOE, 2012). This denotes the reflection of priority given by parents to send their sons to private schools compared to daughters.

Social Inclusion in Access through Gender Lens

From equity and inclusion perspective there is huge disparity in school education, especially in secondary education between consumption quintiles at national level. Situation of gender disparity in school enrolment across consumption quintile is significant at all levels of school education. More disparity is pronounced among poorer quintiles.

Figure 5: GPI at Various Levels by Consumption Quintile, 2010/2011



Source: CBS, 2011

The total GER of ECD has increased from 41.4% in 2006 to 73.7% in 2012 (DOE, 2006 and 2012). Dalit children's representation in ECD/PPC is considerable with about 19% for girls and 17.6% for boys (DOE, 2012). This is higher than their population proportion at around 13 percent. Janajati children's participation is 39.5% for girls and 39.1% for boys (DOE, 2012), which is almost proportional to their population recorded by the census 2011.

In 2012 Dalit children's share in the total enrolment at primary, lower secondary and secondary increased to 20.3, 14.6 and 10.6 percent respectively compared to 17.7, 9.5 and 5.3 in 2006 (DOE, 2006 and DOE, 2012). In ECD/PPE GER, the Dalit children's GPI is 1.0 and the Janajati children's GPI is 0.94 which is higher than the national average of GPI at 0.93. While Dalit children's GPI in secondary level is 0.91, it is 0.84 in higher secondary level; which are less than the national average (DOE, 2012). Janajati students' GPI in higher secondary (1.10) is higher than the national average (1.02).

NAR (Net Attendance Rate) varies significantly across wealth quintile. Intra gender disparity across wealth quintile is also significant. For example, in the 6 to 24 years' age group 21.5% women and 10.3% men among the poorest never attended school while 2.9% women and 1.5% men among the richest never attended school (CBS, 2011). However, interestingly the aggregated data of the regions shows that region with higher incidence of poverty is better in primary level enrolment than that with lower poverty incidence. What is true though is the chance of accessing education, which is higher among men than women in all income groups. Apparently, gender disparity widens as the incidence of poverty increases.

Access of Children with Disabilities through Gender Lens

The WHO World Health Survey of 2002-2004, one of the largest global surveys on disability, in which Nepal was also included, has estimated disability prevalence rates at 11.8 percent (Male: 9.1 percent and Female: 14.4 percent) in higher income countries compared to 18.0 percent (Male: 13.8 percent and Female: 22.1 percent) in lower income countries (WHO and The World Bank, 2011). The global scenario suggests that across countries the disability prevalence rate is higher among females than among males. However, in Nepal unlike the global picture only 3.6% of the people have some kind of disability and its prevalence rate among women is lower with 3% and higher among men with 4.2%. Further, NLSS – III found more incidence of physical disability compared to other types of disability¹⁶. Access and equity in terms of disability remains a critical challenge in the country.

Attendance, Promotion, Repetition, Drop-out and Learning Achievement from Gender Perspective

School attendance rate is increasing in general. It has been noted that girls' attendance is better than that of boys. Data on primary level promotion, repetition and dropout situations shows improvement in general for boys' - as well as girls' situation. Girls' survival rate to grade 5 has also improved significantly, surpassing the boys' survival rate. Survival to grade 8 is 69.4 percent, which is higher (71.10%) among girls than boys (68.7%) (DOE, 2012). Similarly, cohort graduation rate of grade 5 is 75 percent, which is higher among girls with 76% compared to 74.5% for boys (Ibid.).

Table 14: Survival Rate to Grades 5 and 8 and Primary Level Cohort Completion Rate

Indicators	2006/2007			2012/2013		
	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total
Grade 5	77.4	83.0	80.3	85.0	83.0	84.1
Grade 8	-	-	-	71.1	68.7	69.4
Primary Level Cohort Completion Rate	-	-	-	76.0	74.5	75.0

Source: DOE, 2006 and 2012

Teacher Composition

Increasing female teachers is the stated policy of the government. At least one female teacher quota per school, preferably more than one female teacher has been a clear policy of the government. Similarly, policy emphasizes on teacher recruitment from Dalits and Janajatis for ensuring inclusion. Consequently, GPI values have increased in accordance with the proportions of Dalit and Janajati teachers. However, enhancement of equity and inclusion is rather slow as the following table indicates.

¹⁶ CBS, 2011. NLSS-III included these types of disabilities – physical, visual, hearing, hearing and seeing, speaking, mental and multiple disabilities. Overall, 3.6 percent of people have some kind of disability. Similarly, the disability rates for males and females are 4.2 percent and 3.0 percent respectively. Of all persons with some kind of disability, 29.2 percent are physically disabled, 22.3 percent have visual related disability, 23.4 percent hearing related disability, 2.4 percent vision/hearing related disability, 8.6 percent speech related disability, 6.8 percent mentally retarded and 7.3 percent have multiple disability.

Table 15: Teacher Composition and GPI

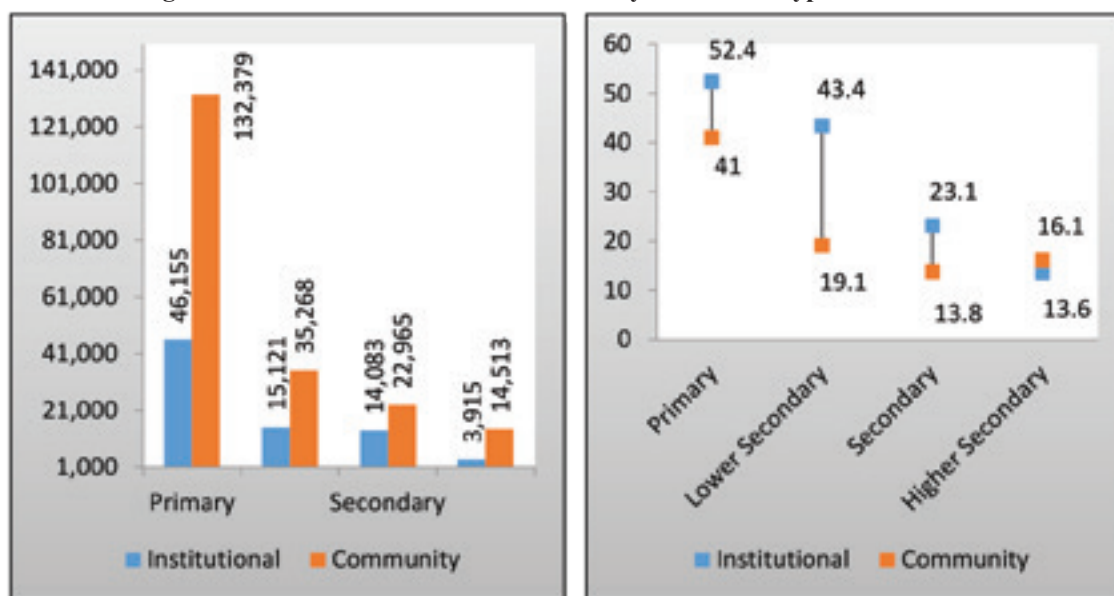
Level	2006/2007						2012/2013					
	Total	GPI	Dalit		Janajati		Total	GPI	Dalit		Janajati	
			%	GPI	%	GPI			%	GPI	%	GPI
Primary	95503	0.61	2.4	0.53	17.8	0.44	178534	0.71	4.4	0.40	29.3	0.60
Lower Secondary	26716	0.26	1.6	0.15	23.4	0.31	50389	0.38	3.1	0.22	19	0.36
Secondary	19386	0.11	0.98	0.17	15.3	0.21	37048	0.21	3.5	0.25	17.2	0.18

Source: DOE, 2006 and 2012

Before making any conclusive remark about low representation of female teachers in all population groups (Dalit, Janajati and Others) at all levels of school education, especially at the secondary level, it is necessary to look into their presence in higher education and their graduation rate. In 30 years women's enrolment in higher education (Bachelor's and Master's level) increased by 23% UGC (2012). But corroborating information suggests that many dropouts before graduating. For example, overall GER in higher education is 14.0%, out of which female GER is 11.9% and male GER is 16.1% (UGC, 2012). Moreover, 0.9% women as opposed to 3.3% men are found to have completed degree above higher secondary level (CBS, 2009). Since teaching is still thought to be a suitable job for women and it requires minimal investment many intend to join this stream (Acharya, 2013).

Women's steady growth in teaching profession has also to be viewed against the job market, which has more choices to offer than before. On the other hand, because of family obligations, security reasons and socialization women seek convenient locations for their occupation. This has resulted in more women in institutional (private) schools, which are mostly located in urban areas (See Figure 6).

Figure 6: Distribution of Female Teachers by Levels and Types of Schools

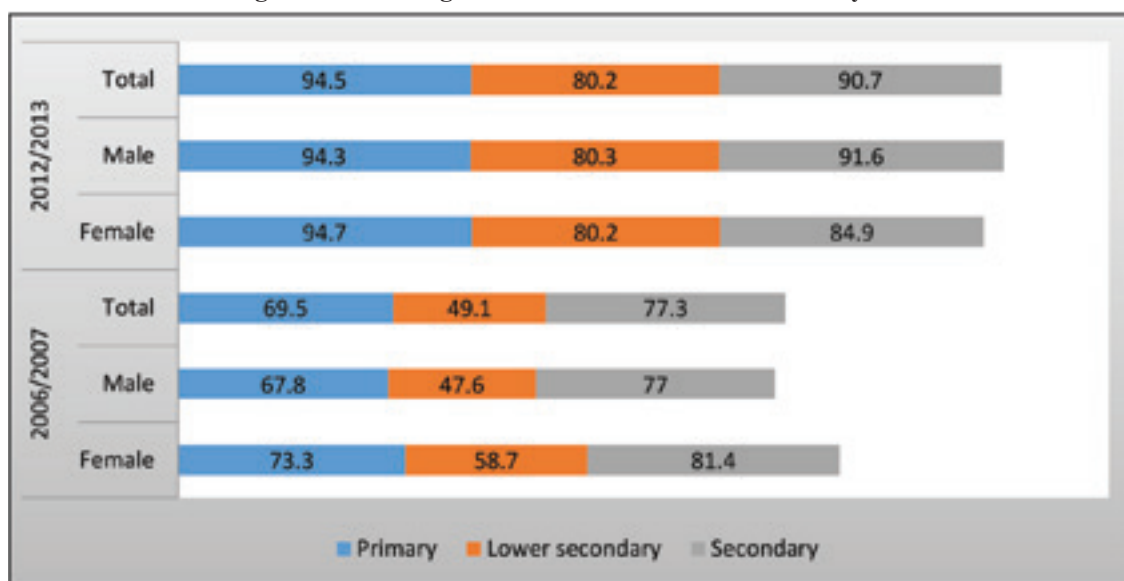


Source: DOE, 2012 (Based on Reporting)

Teacher Professional Development

The available data (Figure 7) shows that most teachers in the system are trained. Currently, among the male and female teachers recruited almost equal proportions are trained at primary and lower secondary level. At secondary level higher proportion of male teachers are trained.

Figure 7: Percentage of Trained Teachers in Community Schools



Source: DOE, 2006 and 2012

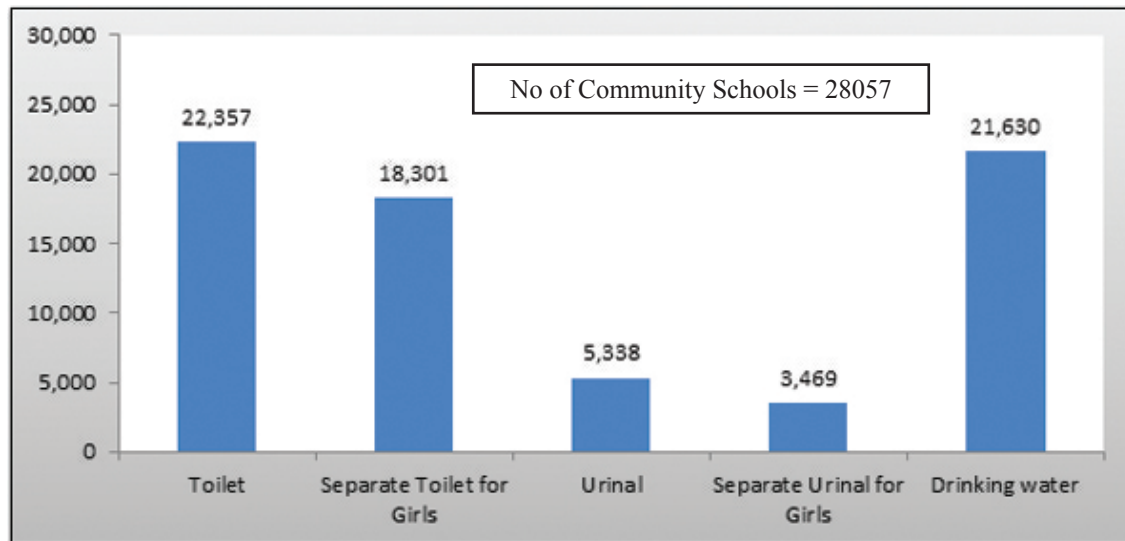
Since most teachers were trained, MOE was successful in clearing the backlog through SSRP initiated Teacher Professional Development (TPD) programme. But how far TPD has been able to impact upon gender equity and social inclusion through female teachers' professional development and classroom practices is yet to be determined.

Physical Facility

School physical facility is one of the key factors that determine the availability of space for every child, contributing to universal access, participation and retention of children, particularly girls and children with all sorts of disabilities. It also contributes to the provision of favorable environment with regard to teaching learning in an enjoyable setting. Available data show that school physical facilities have steadily grown (Figure 8).

In 2009/10 almost 79.7 percent (i.e. 22,357 schools) of the total community schools had toilets, but only 65 percent (18,301 schools) of the total schools had separate toilets for girls (DOE, 2011/12). Similarly, 77.1% of the schools had adequate drinking water facilities (Ibid.). Although overall facility has not grown significantly, it has paved the way for improving suitable learning environment for all children including girls enrolled in school.

Figure 8: Physical Facilities in Community Schools, 2010/11



Source: DOE, 2012, p. 86

GOAL 6

IMPROVING QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

Targets and Challenges

All of the EFA goals as well as the education related goals of MDGs underpin the central need of good quality education for all. This chapter emphasizes not only on the universal access and participation, but also on universal completion with a reasonable level of learning befitting the level of schooling, with adequate knowledge, skills and attitude to transit to the next level of education and/or appropriate job in the world of work. Moreover, it underscores the importance of teachers' professional development and management; child-friendly learning environment and approaches; teaching and learning in mother tongue languages at early grades of primary/basic education; curriculum development; and use of appropriate technology. It also explores the status of learning achievement in view of national assessments and highlights challenges to improve teaching and learning in order to realise this goal.

Background and global context

The key quality concerns of EFA provisions in general and school education in particular, relate to poor infrastructure, poor and unprofessional management, lack of learning resources (even textbooks are not available on time), diversity of student background in terms of culture, language, economic conditions, discriminatory social contexts in terms of caste and ethnicity, and most importantly lack of child friendly environment. Students enrolled in schools or non-formal/literacy classes using various motivations, may find hard to remain and pursue education to succeed and get grade promotion and complete cycle.

Obviously, serious problems and challenges stand in the form of grade repetition, drop out, cycle completion and learning achievement.

In order to achieve better quality Nepal targeted to

- Improve good governance and management by empowering community to take management ownership and involve parents through school management committee (SMC) and parent teacher association (PTA).
- Increase government budget – increase percentage of GNP and national budget
- Provide teachers based on STR level of 30:1
- Ensure all teachers are trained and have passed licensing tests and received license,

- Ensure child friendly environment that is sensitive and supportive to children from different backgrounds: free textbook, day meals in schools in rural/poor areas, school dress and support for stationeries
- Provide primary education, at least early grades (grades 1-3) in children's mother tongue
- Reduce grade repetition: at least to 10% at grade 1 and 8% at grade 5
- Ensure 90 percent of children's intake in grade 1 could move up (survive) to grade 5
- Achieve 80 percent learning achievement on average.

National Policy Framework of Quality Education

In the EFA NPA and SSRP goals and targets that relate to quality education are reflected in view of ensuring *'equitable access to quality education through a rights-based approach and promotion of a child friendly environment in schools for all children in 5-12 age groups'*. The SSRP envisions this, amongst others, through the establishment of Minimum Enabling Conditions (MECs), support mechanisms to cater needy children, teacher professional development and management, learning achievement, establishment of Child Friendly Schools, Early Grade Reading Skills and inclusion of curriculum with regard to linguistic minority groups.

The Interim Constitution of Nepal (2007) has explicitly stated the right to basic education in mother tongue, free education up to secondary level for every citizen and right to remain safe and free from all forms of violence and exploitation for every child. Furthermore, the state has the responsibility of providing special facilities for ensuring a 'well-ascertained future', especially for girls and children who are disadvantaged (Dalits, disadvantaged Janajatis, poor children, children in remote/rural areas, orphans, children whose parents are in jail, children with all sorts of disabilities, children affected from HIV and AIDS, conflict victims, internally displaced children, street children, etc..

The 5th amendment of the Education Act responds to this by stating that, *'it is expedient to promote quality education through improvements in the management of existing and future schools all over Nepal in order to prepare human resource for national development and to maintain good conduct, decency and morality of the people in general in consonance with multi-party democratic system'*. Furthermore, the 6th amendment of the Education Act provisions roles and responsibilities of different personnel and organizations such as DG of DOE and DEO with regard to assurance of quality in education. Role of MOE and its institutions is in the Annex-5.

SSRP and Quality Education Indicators

The SSR core document identifies two main spheres with regard to quality in education; quality improvement and quality assurance or control. Both of these aspects of quality require setting national standards and measures. Also, accumulated sets of standards provide an operational definition of quality. Although such a definition has not been adopted up till now, the meaning of quality education in the context of Nepal can be derived from various policy, plan and programme documents, such as the National Curriculum Framework stating the vision of school education as *'to prepare citizens dedicated to promote and protect democracy and human rights as well as capable to withstand the personal, social and national challenges of the twenty first century'*.

Educational Management

Financial management at the local school level has been strengthened by providing block grants and earmarked budget.

The table 16 shows that although improved, compared to the 2001 level; budget allocation for primary education has remained fixed at 2% of GNP and 60% of the total education budget.

Table 16: Status of Education Financing in view of EFA Targets, 2001-2015

Indicators	Status							
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2012	Target 2015
% of GNP channeled to Primary Education	1.8	2.0	1.9	2.0	1.9	2.0	2.0	2.5
% of Education Budget channeled to Primary Education	56.7	60	60	63	62	61	63	65

Source: Estimated based on relevant years of Red Books of MoF.

Budget allocation has improved but has remained constantly close to the target level. Other management improvement steps are undertaken. This includes strengthening decentralized management with enhanced community participation in school. In this regard management of 12,421 schools has been handed over to the community and programme orientation at regional, district and Resource Centre (RC) level is provided on an ongoing basis to strengthen linkages between policies and practices. At school level, nearly 130,000 key stakeholders have been oriented with regard to the implementation of quality education and over 6,000 Head Teachers (HTs) have been trained. Legal provisions for inclusive participation are in place and the capacity of all 1,053 Resource Persons (RPs) and School Supervisors with regard to monitoring and guiding the schools on needs basis has been strengthened.

Teachers' Professional Development and Management

Each education plan including BPEP, SESP, EFAP and SSRP along with Teacher Education Project (TEP) focused on training, continuous student assessment and capacity development of teachers and head teachers with a view to using methods and techniques for the learner-centered approach and enhanced teaching learning at each school.

As table 17 below shows compared to 15 percent trained teachers in 2001, all teachers have now required qualification and training i.e. ten years of education (SLC) along with ten months of teacher training as the minimum level of qualification for the teaching profession. All teachers are trained in the 10 months' training course and have also been provided professional development follow up training. Every teacher has received teaching license as a mandatory requirement for being teachers.

In general, the total STR in all types of schools has decreased to 27:1 in 2012 compared to 46:1 in 2006, surpassing the EFA target to maintain PTR/STR at 30-40:1.

Table 17: Teacher Training, Licensing and Student Teacher Ratio (STR)

Indicators	Status							
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2012	Target 2015
% of teachers with required qualification & training	15	-	17.4	30.5	44.9	60	98.4	100
Percentage of teachers with required certification / license	-	-	-	--	100	100	100	100
STR	39.9	35.7	35.8	39.7	49.8	46.0	26.9	30

Child- friendly Learning Environment and Approaches

Failures in examinations for grade promotion with consequences of grade repetition and drop out have been the key challenge for achieving EFA goals in Nepal. The repetition rate at grade one was almost 39 percent in 2001, which decreased to 20 percent in 2012, still far behind the set target of 10 percent in 2015. This problem is considered mainly due to lack of quality ECD/PPE provision and exaggerated data, especially in grade one. Though there has been some improvement, the issue still remains serious and persistent.

Table 18: Primary Level Grade Repetition, Survival, Efficiency and Cohort Completion Rate

Indicators	Status							
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2012	Target 2015
Repetition Rate								
Grade 1	38.7	36.8	34	-	28.3	29.8	19.9	10
Grade 5	9.0	11.0	13.5	-	10.4	10.4	5.3	8
Survival rate to Grade 5	65.8	67.6	67.7	76.2	79.1	80	84.2	90
Coefficient of Efficiency	60.0	60	-	-	63	-	76.6	80
Cohort Completion								
Primary Level (Grade 5)	-	-	-	-	-	-	75.1	100
Basic Level (Grade 8)	-	-	-	-	-	-	60.8	100

At the time of the mid-decade assessment the school statistics of 2006 revealed 10.4 percent repetition at grade 5, which reasonably reduced to 5.3 percent in 2012/13. This indicates higher progress than the set target of 8 percent in 2015. Grade 1-5 repetitions remained at around 10.6 percent. Survival of children to grade 5 was 66% in 2001, which increased gradually to 80 percent in 2006 and 84 percent (84.9 percent for girls and 83.1 percent for boys) in 2012/13, which is close to the set target of 90 percent in 2015. The coefficient of efficiency also improved from 60 percent in 2002 to 76.6 percent in 2012 against the target of 80 percent by 2015. The most daunting task is to tremendously

improve the primary cohort completion, which, though, has reached to 75.1% in 2012; however it is far behind the target of achieving cent per cent completion rate for all children by 2015. Similar challenge prevails in respect to the basic level completion rate, which is 60.8 for the same year against its target of cent per cent by 2015.

According to the Flash I Report 2012 the coefficient of internal efficiency was 76.6% (77.1% for girls and 76.6 for boys) compared to 75.2% in 2011. Likewise, the report demonstrated cohort graduation rate at 75.0% (76.0% for girls and 74.5% for boys), implying that out of 100 children enrolled in grade one in 2008, 75 graduated successfully from grade 5 in 2012 compared to 74 in the previous school year.

Grade-wise progression rates of children at primary level by gender at national and sub-national levels in 2006/07 and 2012/13 school years indicate problem at grade 1 promotion at only 49.3%, (girls 52.0% and boys 46.9%). The promotions at higher grades are improved, above 74%. The average grade1-5 promotion is 65.6% (girls 66.1% and boys 65.1%).

Improvements between 2006 and 2012 are significant in regard to increasing promotion rate and decreasing dropout and repetition rates as the following table shows.

Table 19: Primary Level Promotion, Repetition and Dropout Rates

Grade	Promotion				Repetition				Dropout			
	2006		2012		2006		2012		2006		2012	
	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls
One	49.3	52.0	72.5	73.1	29.8	32.0	19.9	19.7	20.9	16.0	7.7	7.2
Two	73.6	73.3	87.8	88.1	16.1	15.4	7.9	7.9	10.3	11.3	4.3	4.0
Three	76.6	76.1	89.4	89.6	13.1	12.8	7.1	7.0	10.3	11.1	3.5	3.4
Four	75.4	74.5	89.4	89.4	13.1	12.9	7.1	7.1	11.5	12.6	3.5	3.5
Five	74.8	74.8	88.7	88.9	10.4	10.2	5.3	5.2	14.8	15.0	6.0	5.9

Source: DOE, 2006 and 2012

Transition from basic to secondary and from secondary to higher education remains a huge challenge. High drop-out and repetition rates persist at higher grades as well. Records of the School Leaving Certificate (SLC) examination, which is held at the end of grade 10 for those who pass the school test, show that only about 25% of the students enrolled in grade one make up to this level. In 2013, less than 47% of all boys and a little over 36% of all girls participating in the SLC examinations passed, revealing lower percent compared to previous years. The exam scores of disadvantaged groups, including girls are disproportionately low.

The issue points out a need for improvement in the learning environment and teaching learning practices. Both physical and social environment are important. Education in mother tongue is one of the crucial needs identified and listed as goal 7. In order to ensure a favorable physical learning environment in line with minimum standards to ensure an

acceptable level of learning for all, the Government has identified and introduced Priority Minimum Enabling Conditions (PMECs). These are: (i) teacher, (ii), classroom and safe school environment, (iii) textbooks, (iv) clean drinking water and separate toilets for girls and (v) a book corner in each classroom. Schools providing basic education have been supported in meeting at least 3 out of 5 PMECs, with the target of accomplishing by 2015. A Framework of Child Friendly School (FCFS) for Quality Education was prepared and endorsed by the Ministry of Education in 2012. The framework provides guidelines for establishing learning environment that is physically, mentally and emotionally safe and healthy for all children, with learning outcomes according to their interest, ability and level. The emphasis is on how to enrich and modify existing educational conditions rather than initiating new Programmes for child friendly education. It outlines that school improvement plan (SIP), working modality of school management committee, management of financial and physical resources, mobilization of community, teaching learning process, extra-curricular activities, etc.; should consider children as a focal point in order to bring about immediate and visible changes. For this the framework has quantified minimum and expected indicators in different aspects of child friendly school. Currently, the FCFS is being rolled out throughout the country.

The Department of Education has developed and introduced school supervision guidelines and established Zone-wise desk in the Ministry, Department, Regional Education Directorates (REDs) and NCED. Monthly, trimester and annual reports of each district are submitted to the Department through REDs. Educational data have been entered in the Integrated Educational Management Information System (IEMIS) to automate Flash data reporting, which is done on a bi-annual basis. Besides, reporting against the Key Performance Indicators, the SSRP has also incorporated additional indicators that specifically focus on quality, such as NASA, EGRS, PMEC and soft skills. A Continuous Assessment System (CAS) and portfolio related manual have been developed and distributed and CAS is currently being implemented at grade 6, and RCs in 5 districts have been developed as models for CAS implementation. NASA tests have been developed based on the curriculum for grade 3, 5 and 8.

Camera Ready Copies (CRCs) of the curriculum for primary level (grades 1-5) are available to private publishers to address the delay in timely delivery of textbooks. About 2,000 copies of piloted curriculum for grades 6-8 have been published. Altogether 66 types of supplementary materials have been developed, printed and distributed. The curriculum is revised and finalized for grades 1 to 8. Structure for the revision of curriculum of grades 9 and 10 is finalized and revisions in line with this are planned for this financial year in the 5 core subjects.

Curriculum and Relevant Skills

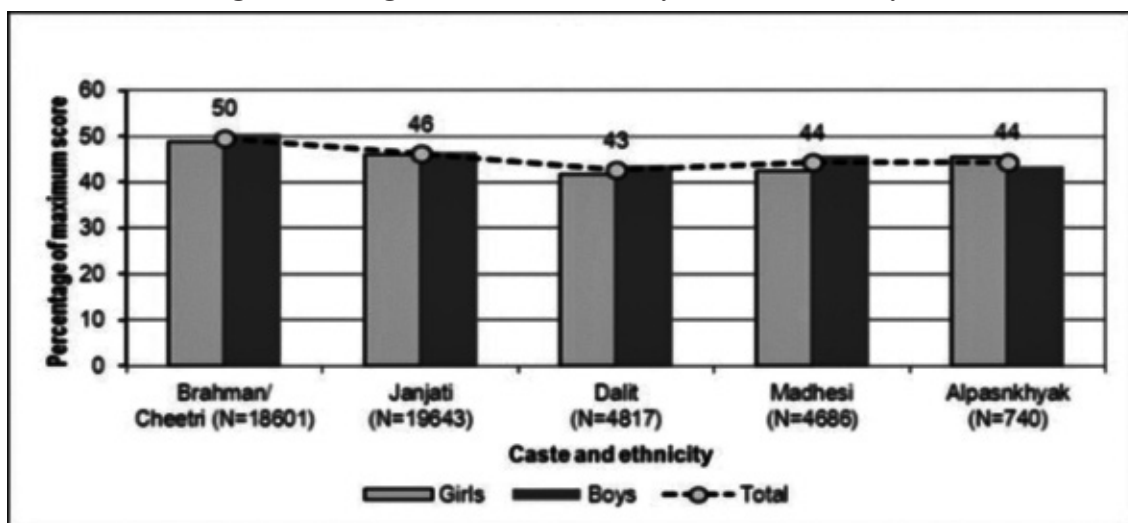
A National Curriculum Framework for School Education has been prepared and adopted with the aim of achieving quality comprehensive school education, completion of universal basic education, enabling the children to live a meaningful life in the modern changing world with required literacy, numeracy and life skills. Curriculum has tried to address the national as well as local needs, literacy and numeracy components.

Measuring Learning Achievement

The average primary level learning achievement score tested in 2001 was about 40%. The target for 2015 is 80%. There is no recent data on learning achievement at grade 5. But a very extensive National Assessment of Student Achievement (NASA) was conducted recently at grade 8 in Mathematics, Nepali and Social Science.

The NASA average results showed that the learning achievement was below 50% in all subject areas. There were significant variations in the achievement between girls and boys, caste and ethnicity, geographical location and types of schools (institutional and community i.e. private and public).

Figure 9: Average Achievement Scores by Caste and Ethnicity



Source: Acharya, Shakya and Metsämuuronen, 2013, p. 238.

The analysis of caste and ethnicity wise average score revealed that Brahmin and Chhetri girls and boys were ahead of girls and boys from other groups. NASA results showed that the socioeconomic status not only influenced enrolment but also learning achievement. The difference between the achievement of the lowest and highest socioeconomic groups was 22 percentage points in Nepali language (MOE/ERO, 2013).

There were high variations in learning achievement by the school type and geographical location as well. While the average score of the highest performing school was over 90%, the average score of lowest performing school was below 15%. Institutional (private) schools scored better than that of community schools. Boys were ahead of girls in all eco-zones (Mountains, Hills and Terai) with a few exceptions.

At the regional level both girls and boys from the eastern development region obtained the lowest average scores with 38.0% and 38.1% respectively; and highest by girls and boys from central development region with 47.6% and 47.8% respectively. Students from the valley surpassed students from other parts of the country. Major differences that NASA

found between the eastern region and the rest were: teachers were less supervised, less supported technically, older and had difficulty in understanding the curricular goals and implementing the curriculum. Teachers and head teachers identified students' behavior as a contributing factor for lower/higher achievement. However, the low STR (38:1) at lower secondary level in the eastern region gave enough room for improving their teaching and engaging students in learning.

GOAL 7

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AND LINGUISTIC MINORITIES

Ensuring the rights of indigenous people and linguistic minorities to quality basic and primary education through their mother tongue.

Targets and Challenges

Government of Nepal (GoN), in line with its commitment to the Jomtien World Conference on Education and the Dakar World Education Forum, has taken initiatives to ensure quality basic and primary education to all children, including children from indigenous and minority language groups. In pursuance of this commitment, Nepal included this additional goal. Inclusion of indigenous people and linguistic minorities as an EFA Goal is a very unique initiative in the world.

The additional goal relates to unique multilingual, multicultural and multiethnic contexts of the country where 123 plus languages of different genetic affiliations are spoken by 125 castes and ethnic groups of 10 diverse religious faiths (CBS 2012; Yadav 2013). Nepal's languages belong to four major language families (Indo-Aryan, Tibeto-Burman, Astro-Asiatic and Dravidian) plus a language isolate, viz. Kusunda. Most of the minority languages are still undocumented or under-documented and confined to preliterate traditions. Only a few of them have literate traditions. Nepal's languages are not immune from the global trend of language endangerment. Nearly 96% of them are spoken by just 4% of Nepal's total population (CBS 2012) and are thus threatened of extinction.

Most of Nepal's languages are confined to their oral traditions. More recently, some of them have taken to develop literate traditions. Initiatives have been taken by various language communities to develop writing systems appropriate to the sound system of their languages, which are practical and acceptable to them. These speech communities include Tharu, Tamang, Magar, Gurung, Rajbanshi and a subset of the Rai group of languages such as Bantawa, Thulung, Chamling, Khaling, Kulung and others. Tharu, Tamang and Gurung use the Devanagiri script but some Gurung speakers advocate the use of the Roman script for their language. Magar has developed its own script, called Akkha. Recently, these languages have begun to develop written literature in the form of newspapers, magazines, textbooks for adult literacy and primary education, as well as folk literature. As in India, Santhalias spoken in Nepal can be written in Roman script. Few publications are available in most of the Non-Nepali languages (Yadava 2003; 2013). Some of the languages such as Nepal Bhasa (Newari), Maithili, Bhojpuri and Awadhi are competitively developed and have all kinds of publications. These languages are of historic prominence; in the past they had been national literary languages.

Despite the intense complexity, the existing primary education system in the country, as in other several multilingual societies, has been persisting to be monolingual, using a dominant language, adopted as Nepali national official language, which is also the medium and subject of instruction in primary education. Nepali is the mother tongue of nearly 44.64 percent of the total population in 2011, which is less than 48.61 percent in 2001.¹⁷

Since languages serve as a fundamental means of communication and interpersonal relationship, linguistic diversity needs to be looked upon as a societal resource to be planned for its full utilization. Robinson as cited in *The Mother-Tongue Dilemma* (UNESCO, 2003) noted that “for a multilingual approach to work, governments must see linguistic diversity as a boon and not a problem to be dealt with”. The most effective medium of instruction at the early grades of education is obviously the language which learners already know, i.e. a home language or mother tongue. It has been widely accepted that all children should have opportunity to receive basic and primary education through mother tongue as their right. If primary education is provided through mother tongue, children can have better learning as they can engage more actively in understanding and learning activities through their greater proficiency in them. Besides, it can also help to attract the out-of-school children from indigenous and minority language groups to join school as they will feel homely with the use of their mother tongues in education. In this connection, the Interim Constitution of Nepal has explicitly stated the right to education through mother tongue. EFA/NPA has also given adequate emphasis on this dimension of providing education to all.

Keeping in view the exigency of mother tongue-based education, some initiatives have been recently undertaken for implementing multilingual education (MLE) in Nepal's formal and non-formal education at basic level. Mother tongue-based MLE is considered significant for achieving quality education, helping cognitive development and materializing other advantages. To achieve the goal of mother tongue education, strategies undertaken include: i) use of mother tongue as a subject of study and the medium of instruction, ii) bilingual/multilingual education, iii) teacher recruitment, training and deployment, and iv) special Programmes for endangered languages and cultures. Different activities are being carried out in line with these strategies.

Progress towards Achieving the Goal

Compared to other South Asian countries, Nepal has made great achievements in the sphere of MLE legal provisions and regulations. These provisions and regulations have been explained and examined in different documents. The MLE practices in Nepal so far represent an early-exit transitional model. They seem to be promising as MLE schools will be expanded both horizontally (more schools and more languages – this is what the cascading plan promises) and vertically (more grades to be included, e.g. grades 4-6; Skutnabb-Kangas and Mohanty 2009). To achieve EFA goals through quality education,

¹⁷ Ministry of Health and Population (2013): Nepal Population Report 2013, Kathmandu, Nepal

the GoN and donors/agencies have been supporting mother tongue education/bilingual education in various ways. Some of the activities undertaken are as follows:

- DoE has completed a study on topics such as “Bilingual Education” (2000) and “Mother Tongue Intervention at Primary Level” (2004). These studies attempt to analyze the existing primary education vis-à-vis the role of learners' mother tongues and suggest for promoting their use for more effective learning.
- DOE with the support of indigenous organizations, Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN), and National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities (NFDIN) selected the pilot schools in six districts. The following criteria were taken into consideration in the final selection: (i) The community wants and requests the project, (ii) High level marginalization and poverty in the school community, (iii) Low academic achievements, and (iv) a balance of communities in mountains, hills and terai zones.
- In pursuance with the constitutional and ensuing legal provisions, Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) has developed textbooks in 22 mother tongues as an optional subject for primary level. Moreover, CDC has developed children’s supplementary readers in 15 various mother tongues. CDC has also developed guidelines for preparing supplementary reading materials for early grades in a few major languages.
- CDC in collaboration with local NGOs has also been engaged in developing and teaching of reading materials in Urdu, Tibetan/Sherpa and Sanskrit languages for Muslim, Buddhist and Hindu children in Madarsas, Gumbas and Gurukuls respectively.
- The Non-formal Education Centre (NFEC) has developed Basic Literacy Primers in six mother tongues (Tharu, Maithili, Bhojपुरी, Tamang, Doteli and Awadhi). The National Centre for Educational Development (NCED) has also developed training materials and provided in-service training to mother tongue teachers.
- The Central Department of Linguistics, Tribhuvan University, is engaged in preparing MLE textbooks in 7 languages (Maithili, Newar, Yakkha, Lapcha, Bhujel, Chepang and Bhote) for grades 1-3. Efforts have been made to adapt the materials to the socio-cultural contexts of the language communities in question. The Department of Linguistics, Linguistic Society of Nepal in collaboration with MLE Resource Centre at CERID, UNESCO, SIL, and others have been organizing conferences and workshops periodically. Also, studies are conducted on non-Nepali speaking children’s learning environment by Expert Team (Bajrachaya et al. 2008; Skutnabb-Kangas and Mohanty 2009; Yadava 2009).
- An MLE Resource Centre at CERID, TU has been set up with support from UNESCO to provide necessary research support and documentation and information resources, networking of various MLE interest groups to optimize multi-pronged engagement in providing quality MLE in Nepal.
- The Nepali National Languages Preservation Institute (NNLPI) has been engaged in introducing mother tongue-based formal and non-formal primary education in a few languages. It has started an MLE project in Rajbanshi as medium of instruction from Kindergarten to Grade 5 in collaboration with SIL Int’l. This project has supported

three schools in Jhapa, an eastern district of Nepal. It has also developed adult literacy materials in Rajbanshi and Sampang.

- Language Development Centre has focused on literacy in some minority languages such as Limbu and Tharu.
- The World Bank and DANIDA have jointly prepared Vulnerable Community Development Plan for Nepal Education for All Programme, which recommends bilingual teaching to facilitate home-to-school transition and academic success of children for whom Nepali is not a mother tongue.
- The Finnish Technical Assistance Support carried out 'Multilingual Education Programme for all non-Nepali Speaking Students of Primary Schools in Nepal' for a duration of 2 years and a half (January 2007 - December 2009). The overall objective of this programme was to enhance quality education for all through the provision of MLE. More specifically, it aimed at: (i) Creating a conducive policy environment for MLE, (ii) Developing an institutional structure to facilitate a bottom-up implementation of sustainable MLE and coordinate MLE activities, (iii) Strengthening the capacity at central, district and community levels to implement MLE, (iv) Creating and establishing models of learning environments to facilitate the non-Nepali speaking students' learning and prepare them to continue their education after the primary level, and (vi) Establishing models of creating support networks of schools implementing MLE (DoE 2009).
- Save the Children Norway supported 17 districts namely, Kavre, Sindhupalchowk, Surkhet, Jumla, Humla, Mugu, Dolpa, Kalikot, Dang, Rukum, Rolpa, Salyan, Udayapur, Banke, Bardiya, Bagalung and Myagdi by providing training to over 142 native language speaking teachers through their District Education Office. Teachers from grades 1-3 were encouraged to be bilingual. Early Childhood Development Centres in the supported districts were capacitated to use native languages as medium of communication and instruction.
- UNESCO jointly supported the project "Literacy programme for ethnic minorities utilizing bilingual/multilingual method". The UNESCO Office in Kathmandu, Nepal completed the translation and adaptation of MLE advocacy kit to Nepali, Maithili, Bhojpuri and Awadhi languages and published them in the book form. UNESCO in collaboration with NFEC supported local NGOs (Aasman Nepal and Namuna Integrated Development Council) to prepare learning materials in Maithili and Awadhi for literacy classes in Dhanusha, Kapilbastu and Rupandehi districts of Nepal. UNICEF supported to carry out situation analysis of Limbu language in Panchthar.
- United Mission to Nepal made an initial effort to develop literacy materials in Awadhi, Tharu as well as Nepali language with focus on local contents. Children were found excited with regard to this venture. This project was implemented in partnership between a school community, an NGO and District Education Office (MoE/GoN) (Jackson 2011: 6).

The various efforts depicted above are helpful in laying foundation towards achieving the goal of basic education in mother tongue. The progresses are however at preliminary stage and need further consolidation and development to attain desired achievement.

3

REVIEW OF EFA STRATEGIES AND SECTOR MANAGEMENT

In the Dakar World Conference on Education for All (EFA) in 2000, all the participating countries pledged to achieve the six EFA goals by 2015 by implementing the Dakar Framework of Action, including the twelve strategies, of which the strategy 11th stated: ‘Systematically monitor progress towards EFA goals and strategies at the national, regional and international levels.’ Nepal has been following this strategy through a system of EFA based indicators imbedded in the annual work plan earlier in the implementation of national EFA plan and currently in the SSRP. Nepal has also followed the major reviews undertaken by EFA participating countries worldwide in 2000 for establishing new baseline and in 2007 for the mid-term, both under the aegis of UNESCO. As the target year 2015 approaches, it is now time for all the countries to conduct a thorough review of EFA achievements and experiences since 2000, identifying the issues, challenges and good practices in the implementation of national EFA strategies, and draw salient lessons and prospects for future. This section reviews the assessment of EFA national strategies in this line.

Assessment of EFA Strategies

From Jomtien to Dakar: Setting Goals and Strategies for Collective Commitment to Achieving EFA

Of the six reaffirmed EFA goals committed to achieve by 2015, the first four goals pertain to the education sub-sectors targeting the age groups¹⁸ of early childhood, school age children, youths and adults, while the others are cross-cutting goals for attaining quantity (all) and gender and social equality in terms of universal access to as well as participation and completion of quality education. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) substantiated to achieve universal primary education (MDG 2) and gender equality in primary and secondary education (MDG 3), thus reinforcing the commitment to EFA.

In view of this, Nepal formed an EFA national coordination committee, various thematic committees and mobilized all related institutions and organizations including NGOs, CBOs, teacher organizations, etc.; to work jointly and make collective efforts to achieve the EFA goals by 2015.

¹⁸ The age groups are 3-4 years for early childhood development and pre-primary education, 5-9 years for primary education (grades 1-5), 10-12 years for lower secondary education (grades 6-8), 13-14 years for secondary education (grades 9-10) and 15-16 years for higher secondary education (grades 11-12). Higher education comprises Bachelor's (four years) and Master's (two years), with ages 17-20 and 21-22 years respectively. Age groups 15-24 are defined as youth while ages 15 years and above are considered as adults and used to calculate/measure youth and adult literacy rates.

In order to measure progress and identify the remaining challenges, Nepal conducted a Mid-Decade Assessment (MDA) during 2006-07 with a particular emphasis on assessing disparities in achieving the goals and targets of EFA at national and sub-national levels aiming to identify and reach the un-reached.

Towards reaching the unreached in the context of Nepal, The EFA/MDA exercise identified various forms of disadvantages. In order to reach the unreached the country needed to deal with the issues relating to disadvantaged castes and ethnic groups (linguistic and ethnic minorities), low income groups, girls and women, persons with disabilities, regions and eco-zones, rural and urban, children affected by conflict, street children, working children, children affected by HIV/AIDS, children whose parents are in jail and refugee children due to internal or external migration (UNESCO and MOE, 2007) ¹⁹.

EFA National Plan of Action (EFA NPA) 2001-2015

Since 1990 Nepal has been undertaking efforts for achieving EFA goals with work out to plan and implement comprehensive national programmes. In the early period basic and primary education project (BPEP-I, 1992-1998) was the major thrust undertaken followed by more consolidated basic and primary education program (BPEP-II, 1999-2004). Meanwhile, following the Dakar EFA World Forum Nepal prepared EFA NPA (2002-2015) with immediate, medium term and long term strategies. It incorporated BPEP II as the core thrust and immediate strategy for until 2004. Subsequently, national EFA core program (2004-2009) and SSRP (2009-2015) guided further development of education Programmes with a view to accelerating progress towards achieving the goals of EFA.

The EFA NPA built upon three premises for its effective implementation: (i) education is a birth right of every child; (ii) it is the duty of the State to ensure that all children in the country have access to quality education, and (iii) the State should mobilize resources and co-ordinate the educational institutions and agencies in the country in the development and implementation of this plan of action.

In pursuance of these premises, the EFA vision of Nepal aimed to ensure that all children in Nepal have quality basic education in their mother tongue in a caring and joyful environment. Besides, the school and educational places must have gender parity in terms of teacher position, student enrolment and learning achievement. It also envisaged that almost all adults got not only literate²⁰ but also engaged in continuous learning through Community Learning Centers (CLCs). It emphasized on developing and making available varieties of education materials to youths and adults for appropriate learning and life skills, contributing to make them functionally literate.

The EFA NPA has been adopted as a key component of the total education strategy in Nepal and integrated in the total national development plans starting from the tenth plan and continued in the interim plans as illustrated in the figure 10 below.

¹⁹ MOE and UNESCO. 2007. Education for All Mid-Decade Assessment National Report, MOE and UNESCO, Kathmandu, Nepal, Author.

²⁰ With regard to ensuring universal literacy, the EFA NPA targeted to achieve adult literacy rate by 75% and youth literacy rate by 95% in 2015.

Steps were undertaken continuously for consolidation of EFA and to make it more effective and encompassing gradually transforming the efforts into a sector wide approach to overall educational development in the country.

Figure 10: Education Plan by Year

		2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Basic and Primary Education Program (BPEP II)				EFA Core Plan						Education for All (EFA) Sector-Wide Approach					
				Sec. Sch. Sup. Program(SESP)											
			Tenth Plan					Interim and Eleventh Plan				Twelfth Plan			
		Education for All - Global Programme													

The Eleventh Three Years Interim Plan (TYIP, 2007-2010) associated with the remaining periods of the Tenth Plan (2002-2007) and the EFAP (2004-2009) constituted the core of the medium-term strategies. The major actions during this period included quality-focused strategies to consolidate the achievements made and achieve a satisfactory level of learning with relevant life skills. The programmes during this period included:

- Integrated approach to ECD: community-based ECD and school-based ECD as well as pre-primary education (PPE),
- Free and compulsory primary education of reasonable quality,
- Open learning opportunities to enhance life-long learning,
- Income generation programme for parents,
- Completion of infrastructure for the initiation of basic and primary education of eight years from grade 1-5 to grade 1-8, and
- Increasing the minimum qualification of teachers from ten years to twelve years of education with 10 months' training.

Some other important initiatives of this period included Teacher Education Project (2002- 2009) focused on strengthening teacher professional development, contributing to enhance teaching and learning and improve education system in the country. Community School Support Project (CSSP) 2003-2007 aimed at bringing and retaining out-of-school children in school, building capacity and transferring management responsibility to local community and School Management Committee. Secondary Education Support Programme (SESP 2003-2009) focused on improving and strengthening secondary education from grade 6 to 10.

School Sector Reform Programme

With the rapid advancement of primary education and the increasing demand for higher levels of school education, it was realized that there is an urgent need to take comprehensive approach to school sector reform. In this regard, building upon previous successful experiences of BPEP and EFAP, the government of Nepal has been implementing the School Sector Reform Programme for the development of a comprehensive school sector reform since 2009, moving towards an integrated education sector approach.

In order to address the EFA challenges of pre-and post-2015 for more coherent and holistic education sector policies, planning and monitoring, the major focuses of the SSR initiatives included:

- Rights-based approach to quality education,
- Ensuring inclusive and child-friendly classrooms and school environment,
- Developing provisions for primary/basic education in mother tongue,
- Developing national framework of norms and standards for quality education,
- Enhancing teacher qualification and training,
- Restructuring school education between basic education (grades 1-8) and secondary education (grades 9-12), with one year of early childhood education and development (ECED, this term instead of ECCE is used in the SSRP),
- Decentralizing school management with a focus on school based management to empower local bodies and ensure participation of the local community in school improvement,
- Improving school management with emphasis on capacity development of head teachers, teachers and members of SMC, and
- Promoting public private partnership (PPP) and linkages with I/NGOs for expanding resource base and ensuring equitable access and participation of disadvantaged and vulnerable children to quality comprehensive school education.

The SSRP (2009-2015) and the Twelfth as well as Thirteenth interim plans (2010-2013; 2013-2016) constituted the core of the long-term plan. It was emphasized that by 2015, all children of primary school age would not only participate in primary education but also complete it, achieving a satisfactory and acceptable level of learning. The preparatory exercises for establishing infrastructure to extend primary education up to grade 8 were included in the SSRP for implementation in the subsequent years. The major actions during the long-term strategies included:

- Extension and implementation of universal basic education (UBE) up to grade 8 (grades 1-8, years 5-12),
- Decentralized curriculum and textbooks with adequate life skills related contents,
- Improvement in the school curriculum practices as per the national school curriculum framework,
- Enhancement of teacher qualification and training,
- Introduction of information technology based education at the basic and primary level, and
- Comprehensive approach to the development of school education including pre-primary, primary/basic and secondary education (kindergarten to grade 12, years 4-16), drawing upon the support of the stakeholders focused on the contextual needs of children's learning.

Although the EFA NPA highlighted the EFA goals and targets for 2015, however it had been envisioned for sustaining and improving the educational development process beyond 2015. It had been anticipated that during the process adequate capacity with respect to human, financial and other resources would enhance the school sector to move towards the comprehensive education sector development.

Effectiveness of EFA NPA lies in the follow up provisions of Annual Strategic Implementation Planning (ASIP) with detailed programme and budget breakdowns, preparation of Annual Status Report (Annual Progress Report) and Report of School Level Educational Statistics. Regular consultations and review meetings of government and development partners are held to monitor the progress and facilitate the implementation of the programme. Formative research for EFA has been provisioned to support MOE in identification and development of critical understanding of key implementation issues and also in developing strategic policy and program options to address the issues.

Strategic Interventions to Achieve the EFA Goals

One of the key strategies of EFA campaign in Nepal is to expand early childhood development centers and pre-primary schools, primary/basic and secondary schools in a participatory way involving community and private sectors. In this connection, though on relatively smaller scale, even traditional religious schools such as Madarasas, Gumbas and Gurukuls have also contributed to expand access to ECD and basic/primary level education.

As the school data presented in the annexes reveal, the share of private schools in Nepal is highly significant in all levels of school education. It is interesting to note that the shares of private schools are 14 percent in pre-primary, 15 percent in primary and over 26 percent in secondary schools in terms of numbers of schools and institutions. In respect to their contribution in the overall numbers of children enrolled in all levels of school education from grade 1 to 12 (total 7.6 million), it is almost 16 percent (1.2 million) in private schools compared to 84 percent (6.4 million) in community schools. NLSS –III indicates that this data may be much higher: there were 7.5 percent children enrolled in private schools in 1995/96, which increased to 16.7 percent in 2003/04 and 26.8 in 2010/11.

Among development regions, the mid-west and the far-west have much lower private school participation rates (16 percent and 17 percent respectively). About 60 percent of the students from the richest quintile are currently attending private schools while 6 percent of students from the poorest quintile are in private institutions. In urban areas, more than one half of the students attend private schools while the proportion in the rural areas is only 20 percent (CBS, 2011, NLSS-III).

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)

Issues and Challenges: The primary strategy towards achieving this goal has been to expand ECD/PPC services in community and school through community- and school-based ECD and PPC with the financial and technical support of DOE. The UNICEF Nepal, the UNESCO Kathmandu, the Embassy of Israel and a number of INGOs and NGOs, including Save the Children and Seto Gurans, among others, also supported in the expansion and quality of ECD with regard to curriculum and training of facilitators, etc. The efforts of institutional/private schools, especially in the urban area have been exemplary in organizing nursery classes through different nomenclatures such as Montessori and Kindergarten.

Another equally important strategy has been to employ only women as facilitators for ECD/PPE, especially from disadvantaged groups. Still another strategy includes stakeholder mobilization and collaboration with NGOs and community.

The strategic interventions with regard to achieving the expansion of ECD/PPC mainly relate to parental awareness and involvement, qualifications and training of ECD facilitators and capacity of the system. However, there is still a need for the development of norms and standards regarding qualifications of ECD facilitators and building partnership with local body i.e. village development committee (VDC), municipality and district development committee (DDC), for implementing ECD programmes at local level.

The quality of ECD provision, which is generally poor in most of the school-based and community-based centers, is a serious concern. DOE has formulated guidelines for establishing ECD centers and provisioned training/orientation for the facilitators. Gaps are however noted in terms of supervision support and funding. Overall, ensuring minimum quality standards remains a challenge.

The other persistent issue relates to the magnitude of the task and disparities by regions. Despite the rapid growth of ECD/PPCs in recent years, challenges remain towards achieving the target of 80% enrolment in Grade 1 with ECD/PPC experiences by 2015. Wide variations in progress among eco-zones are pronounced as the mountain, hill and terai zones have achieved 46.5, 47.0 and 66.0 percent respectively with regard to new entrants in Grade 1 with ECD/PPC experiences. The overwhelming majority of institutional schools with pre-primary classes are concentrated in the urban areas. Being economically and socially advantaged, the Kathmandu Valley has the highest concentration of school provisions including pre-primary schools.

Universal Primary/Basic Education

Issues and Challenges: The goal for UPE/UBE is to ensure that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to disadvantaged castes and ethnic minority groups, have universal access to and participation in a completely free and compulsory primary/basic education of good quality. The term 'all children' signifies all children within 5-9 years for primary and 5 to 12 years for basic education irrespective of their gender, caste, ethnicity or any other circumstances. This goal is addressed in the Interim Constitution of Nepal (2007), the right to basic education through mother tongue is enshrined in the constitution. The constitution also states that school education up to secondary level will be free.

Nepal employed a number of strategies for universal primary and basic education. The first and foremost strategy has been to bring school closer to the habitat, ensuring that a school is within easy walking distance for every child, not more than 30 minutes. Another significant strategy relates to removing economic barriers – schools are free of fees. No regular fees are charged for registration, tuition or school operation, and textbooks are provided free of cost. Although inadequate, it has been really significant to provide incentives/scholarships to all Dalit children, children with all sorts of disabilities, all children of five districts in the Karnali zone with lowest HDI and 50 percent girls to partially meet the costs of school dress and learning materials such as notebooks, pens/pencils, etc.

Another significant strategic intervention has been to ensure that basic needs are met in schools – drinking water, separate toilets for girls, safe environment and mid-day meal in disadvantaged schools. The overall strategy has been to ensure an inclusive environment, physically, socially, culturally and linguistically for making education rights-based

by developing a comprehensive school system and mechanisms to ensure appropriate support for the disadvantaged sections of the population for making education essentially free and compulsory.

With the constitutional provision, strategies of community and private participation in expansion of access, and with the international support there has been a considerable expansion in the number of schools in Nepal in the past 15 years, with almost 95 percent households having access to nearest primary schools within 30 minutes from their homes. Access to lower secondary and secondary schools has also increased as indicated by improved transition rates from primary to lower secondary and from lower secondary to secondary education. The NER trend in primary education from 2001 to 2012 indicates that numbers of children from specific age group population have increased tremendously in schools. Compared to 81 percent of the total primary age group children enrolled in schools across the country in 2001, almost 95 percent of such children were enrolled in 2012. Girls' NER increased from 75 percent to 95 percent during the same period. Similarly, the survival rate of children which may also be used as a proxy indicator of quality shows some improvements. From 2000 to 2012 the overall survival rate of children to grade 5 increased from 66 percent to 85 percent. For girls the increase was from 68 percent to 86 percent (more than boys at 84 percent).

Although there has been a significant improvement in access, survival and transition rates, there are still much to do towards attaining the EFA goal. Retention of children until the last grade of each level of schooling is still a major challenge. High repetition and dropout rates are still major issues. Survival rates to grade 5 for primary education and transition rates to upper levels of education i.e. from primary to lower secondary, from lower secondary to secondary and from secondary to higher secondary are still low, and overall, the internal efficiency of the school education system is very low.

Several factors are considered contributing to these persistent issues: low literacy levels of parents mainly in rural areas, lack of proper and effective teacher preparation, lack of provisions, resources and materials to track and help students in difficulty, and lack of awareness among parents, and inabilities of School Management Committee (SMC) and Parent Teacher Association (PTA) for appropriate interventions.

Apparently, there are still a significantly large number of school age children who have not been able to join school. Children belonging to disadvantaged and deprived communities, girls and special needs children constitute the major proportion of the excluded and require serious attention. The EFA MDA indicated seven categories of children i.e. girls, children in remote rural areas, Dalits, disadvantaged ethnic groups, children of internally displaced persons (IDPs), children with all sorts of disabilities and the extremely poor as deprived of educational opportunity. Further analysis of data from school statistics (DOE, 2012) and household survey (CBS, 2011) revealed from 5 percent to 22 percent children of primary school age as out-of-school. NLSS (2010/11) data has revealed that the children most deprived of education were from families in the poorest quintile (24% against the richest 17%) and children living in rural areas (22% against 21% in urban areas). Children in the terai zone with 28% out-of-school were more disadvantaged than hills with 15% and mountains with 12%.

Targeted and focused strategic interventions need to be continued to address these issues. Incentives for children such as school meal, dress and free textbooks to school children need to be continued. Similarly, functional literacy and income generating activities for parents need to be made accessible for target groups. Effective implementation of policy provisions such as primary education in mother tongue is still far from being realized, its implementation needs to be emphasized with appropriate provisions. Similarly, appropriate provisions still need to be developed to ensure education for children with disabilities.

Life Skills and Lifelong Learning

Issues and Challenges: In response to the Dakar goal to “ensure that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills Programmes,” Nepal EFA NPA included the development of life skills education. National development plans put emphasis on skills based training and learning of life skills. There are however no specific quantifiable targets for life skills and lifelong learning.

The main strategies of life skill education include integrating basic life skills in school education as well as in non-formal education and literacy curriculum; expanding technical/vocational education to prepare out-of-school adolescents and youths for jobs or income generating activities; encouraging stakeholders including NGOs for life skill education provision, expansion and innovation.

The school education based strategies of the Government for the provision of appropriate learning and life skills education included: curricular reform to incorporate important aspects of life skills such as health, sanitation, general knowledge and skills at primary and secondary levels. Accordingly, the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) has revised the school curriculum incorporating knowledge, skills and attitude related competencies integrated in the school curricula of health education. Grade-wise objectives were revised for this. The contents related to life skills are incorporated throughout the curriculum providing scope for topics such as personal hygiene, environmental sanitation, nutrition, diseases, first aid and health services.

Technical/vocational education strategy emphasizes on mainly on mobilization and enhancement of technical education and vocational training for youths through CTEVT and affiliated providers. Another strategy is mobilization of NFE providers, NGOs and CBOs for general training and orientation for youths and adults on contextual issues and topics such as HIV/AIDS, micro-credit and savings, health issues and family planning; and making adult literacy functional and relevant in the context of life skills. There is an emerging trend of private sector involvement in the provision of skills development, particularly in profitable areas such as health, education, computers and small trades. Because of the lack of a comprehensive information/data system covering life skill education, it is difficult to estimate the goal specific progress. One of the challenges is therefore to develop information systems that include needs as well as provisions and trends.

Studies show that a large proportion of youths and adults (about 80%) are not covered by any institutional provision. The current provision of life skills education is very small compared to the needs. There is also a need for the development of specific Programmes and strategies to address specific issue based needs. Particularly, there is a need for the development of life skills education Programmes to meet the learning needs of children

from ethnic minorities and disadvantaged groups and of children with disabilities as well as of children and youths affected by conflict situations. Overall, there is a need for developing and implementing a comprehensive national framework and framework based programmes for life skills education.

Adult Literacy and Continuing Education

Issues and Challenges: Nepal in line with the Dakar Framework of Action had set the target to reduce the adult illiteracy rate (15 years and above) to half its 2000 level by the year 2015, with emphasis on female literacy in order to significantly reduce disparity between male and female. The EFA National Plan of Action aimed to raise adult literacy from 48 percent in 2001 to 75 percent by the year 2015, and 95 percent in the youth literacy rate for the 15-24 age groups, with a particular emphasis to achieve gender parity. Five main strategies have been taken for achieving this goal:

- Supporting local initiatives for running literacy classes at community level,
- Implementing national literacy programme and Literate Nepal Mission,
- Strengthening NFE/Literacy support structure such as CLCs for providing NFE and literacy,
- Developing capacity and empowerment through functional literacy and income generation oriented integrated literacy Programmes, and
- Mobilization of schools, NGOs and local bodies in expanding literacy Programmes for all.

However, the magnitude of the illiterate population is huge, which is projected to about 7.4 million in 2015, of whom almost 67% are females (UNESCO 2012, EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2012). The NLSS-III (2010/11) reported adult literacy rate (15+ years) at 56.5 percent (71.6 percent males and 44.5 percent females); in 2003/04 survey it was 48 percent (64.5 percent males and 33.8 percent females). The two surveys indicate a steady but slow progress of about one percent per year. It is encouraging to note that the progress in female literacy rates has been more (10.7 percent) than that of male (7.1 percent). It is however to be noted that with the current rates of progress the goals of adult literacy set by the EFA NPA for 2015 are not likely to be achieved. Besides, there is a gender gap of over 27 percentage points in the overall adult literacy rate, with GPI at 0.62.

Wide discrepancies in literacy rates are also noted in relation to socio economic status, different castes and ethnic groups as well as economic groups. The literacy rate of economically and socially privileged groups ranges from 60 percent to 94 percent whereas the literacy rates of some of the most disadvantaged castes and ethnic groups are as low as 4 percent²¹ The lowest literacy rates are found among the Dalits in the terai. For instance, the adult literacy rate of Musahar was only 3.7 percent in 2001 compared to Jain at 94 percent. The big gap in literacy rates among different castes and ethnic groups indicates clearly that the existing programmes have failed to adequately reach the deprived groups. Obviously, more accelerating and targeted strategies and initiatives are required to achieve the goal of adult literacy.

²¹ CBS. 2004/05. Women in Nepal: Some Statistical Facts, CBS 2004, Thapathali, Kathmandu, Nepal

The national literacy strategy has been to undertake universal literacy initiatives at the village and district level based on the preparation of Village Education Plan (VEP) and District Education Plan (DEP). With the technical support of UNESCO, GoN prepared 'A-10 Year National Literacy Plan'²² 2007 and launched a comprehensive national literacy campaign. 'Literate Nepal Mission' is a comprehensive strategy undertaken recently. The strategies however need regular critical review and take corrective measures.

Increasing public awareness and active participation of key stakeholders, including potential participants, are considered crucial for the success of non-formal education and literacy for all Programmes. The role of media with regard to mass communication is considered extremely important for this. It is important to develop partnerships with the numerous national and international I/NGOs involved in non-formal education and literacy.

Social Equity and Gender Parity

Issues and Challenges: Equitable quality education for all is a key principle as well as a major policy of education Programmes (BPEP – I, 1992-1998, BPEP- II 1999-2004, EFA 2004–09, SSRP 2009-15). In order to materialize this principle, several strategies and activities have been devised and are being implemented. The strategies include achieving equity in access through bringing school closer to community, school construction and rehabilitation, alternative/flexible schools, free school education, free textbooks, school feeding, and scholarships. Strategies undertaken to achieve equity in quality include curriculum improvement, teacher/facilitator training, professional support, improvement of the school environment and reforms in school examinations. Measures are taken to increase the numbers of female teachers to ensure equity in access and also improve quality. Increasing institutional capacity and enhancing school autonomy are also key strategies, which have a direct bearing on equity in education.

Strategies are also employed at individual student level in the form of motivation and incentives for girls to join and complete primary/basic education; policy and provision of ensuring at least one female teacher per school; priority given to female recruitment in schools, educational institutions and organizations; and emphasis on improved access, gender friendly environment as well as facilities for persons with disabilities of different forms.

The strategies have worked in improving gender parity in school education. The Gender Parity Index (GPI) in NER at primary and secondary levels is 0.99 and 1.00 respectively. Overall, the promotion, repetition and dropout trends of primary education have steadily shown improvement. Girls' share of promotion has increased. Repetition and drop-out rates for both boys and girls have decreased in primary education. However, Dalit children's chances of survival decrease as the grade level increases.

Marked progress has been made in achieving gender parity in primary education enrolments. However, there is still a significant imbalance in some districts and among some marginalized groups. With an adult literacy rate of only 44.5% for females compared to 71.6% for males and a GPI of 0.62, significant gender gap exists in adult literacy,

²² NFEC and UNESCO, 2007

which is a genuine concern for achieving literacy for all. There remains a huge gender gap across the country in all literacy statistics, especially in remote districts and among marginalized groups.

Obviously, there is need for more enhanced and targeted interventions to address the issues of different forms of social inequities. Furthermore, gender issue and social exclusion in education is not just related to numeric challenges but also to perceptual phenomena and social value system, equity is the first step but equality in all aspects is important. For this there is need for comprehensive and holistic perspective in addressing the issues; there is need for concerted and collaborative Programmes persistently for longer term.

Relevance and Quality of Education

Issues and Challenges: The sixth EFA goal expected improvement in all aspects of the quality of education in terms of recognized and measurable learning outcomes with emphasis on literacy, numeracy and essential life skills. The EFA-NPA had broadly categorized the indicators of quality primary education as enhanced efficiency in the management of education, improved school curriculum and assessment system, improved physical facilities and learning environments, and increased education expenditure. Through SSRP (2009-15) the government employed following strategies for the improvement of quality and relevance

- Provision of qualified teachers, assuring qualification through licensing, teacher training and support;
- Curriculum reform making it updated regularly with relevant contents and skills; in order to make school education more relevant to real life situation MOE has adopted flexibility in curriculum to give space for local contexts; life skills and soft skills have been introduced;
- Provision of learning resources including free textbooks for students in community schools;
- Promoting inclusive approach in school and classrooms to address the issues of disadvantaged and disabled/special needs students
- Motivation and empowerment of parents and community to participate in school management, and
- Improvement in school infrastructure and classroom improvement support.

Furthermore, the government of Nepal has promoted and emphasized decentralized management of education services including schools. Strategies are being implemented to establish requirements for teacher accountability, and supervisory services are brought nearer to schools to provide professional support to the teachers and to monitor performance based on agreed standards for quality education.

So far, management of over 12,309 levels of schools, including 8,164 primary levels, 2,804 lower secondary levels and 1,341 secondary levels has been delegated to local communities²³ (DOE, 2013). Teacher management systems are improved to include upgrading the qualifications of teachers, providing 10 months initial training to teachers

²³ DOE, 2013, Flash Report II of School Level Educational Statistics of Nepal 2012/13, Sanathimi, Bhaktapur, Nepal

and instituting a mandatory teacher licensing system. The primary curriculum was revised in 2004 and teachers' guides and teacher support materials based on the national curriculum were developed. A national curriculum framework was developed by the Curriculum Development Centre and approved by the government. National Assessment of Students Achievement (NASA) is in place.

However, serious challenges remain in achieving better quality. The school efficiency still remains low because of the persistent student failures, dropout and repetition even at primary level. The transition from primary to lower secondary and from lower secondary to secondary level remains low. The NASA report findings and suggestions pose a significant challenge to ensure quality education for all, particularly for the disadvantaged. Shifting from the existing practices of textbook based assessment to curriculum based assessment is yet to take place. Construction and rehabilitation of school facilities and ensuring minimum standards for appropriate learning environments remains a prime concern.

There is still a lack of monitoring and reporting systems with capacity to monitor quality improvement Programmes listing implementation progress and providing feedback for identifying the implementation problems and issues and documenting the effects of initiatives to improve quality across the country and in specific locations.

Overall, achieving the goals of quality and excellence in terms of recognized and measurable learning outcomes with emphasis on literacy, numeracy and essential life skills remains as the key challenge for Nepal.

It is clear that those who suffer the most from the poor quality of education are the extremely poor, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. Girls from these groups are most adversely affected. It is recognized that a greater priority associated with increased budgetary provision must be provided to quality enhancement of all schools. Improved monitoring and reporting systems are needed to identify the extent of disparities and document the effects of initiatives to improve quality. The effort should be comprehensive and persistent on long term basis.

Ensuring the Right of Indigenous People and Linguistic Minorities to Basic and Primary Education through Mother Tongue

Issues and Challenges: "Ensuring the right of indigenous people and linguistic minorities to basic and primary education through mother tongue" is the seventh EFA goal, which is unique for Nepal. The GoN added this goal in the light of the country's diverse ethnic and linguistic populations. Nepal is a multilingual, multicultural and multiethnic country with 125 social groups speaking more than 123 languages as their mother tongues²⁴. In 2012/13 of the 4.6 million children at primary level 1.6 million (35.4%) were from indigenous groups. Taking cognizance of this situation, GoN has taken a policy decision to introduce mother tongue as the medium of instruction at the primary level of education. The Interim Constitution of Nepal (2007), which ensures equal status to all mother tongues spoken in Nepal including Nepali, makes a provision for imparting primary education through mother tongue.

²⁴ CBS (2011), National Census 2011: Preliminary Findings

A number of strategies have been identified in order to achieve the goal, which includes the use of mother tongue as the medium of instruction and as a subject of study; bilingual/multilingual education, teacher recruitment, training and deployment; and special Programmes for endangered languages and cultures. Some schools have been identified for mother tongue and bilingual and multilingual approach. Textbooks have been developed in 22 languages. Textbooks for grade one have been translated into various languages and supplementary readers in mother tongue have been developed and distributed. Adult literacy courses have also been developed in a number of languages, such as Nepali, Maithili, Bhojpuri, Awadhi, etc.

Despite remarkable initiatives, the challenges of ensuring primary education in mother tongue remain persistent. The challenges relate to lack of preparedness of the schools to address the issues of language and cultural differences. Most importantly, teacher recruitment and deployment addressing primary education in mother tongue remain yet to be provisioned; it still remains a difficult proposition to come into practice. Moreover, as many parents from disadvantaged groups are illiterate, there is a lack of understanding with regard to the importance of their children's education for overall development including social and cultural advancement. Because of the lack of pedagogic awareness misleading perceptions and shortsighted demands are created to teach children through English language medium and national language medium, causing abandonment of mother tongue.

It is important to note different dimensions of education and accordingly adopt strategies of primary education in mother tongue: firstly, there is the need for the children to feel school and classroom homely, friendly, familiar and communicable with confidence; secondly, there is need to link education with local customs and daily life making it relevant and useful for the community for which local language is a very important aspect; thirdly, there is need to capacitate and prepare schools help develop character and self-esteem of all children individually and socially. It is important to develop positive and harmonious attitudes and ways for respecting one's own culture and language as well as that of others. It has to be noted that a language is heart and soul of culture and identity of a community and individual; one who is made to surrender mother tongue will also lose her/his self-confidence and therefore lose life positive pro-activism for the society.

Overall Barriers and Constraints

Despite the policy and provisions made for ensuring education for all, many school aged children from disadvantaged groups are still not enrolled in school, many of those who are enrolled do not complete school education and many of those who complete do not acquire an acceptable level of learning. The barriers and constraints in this regard relate to i) economic, ii) social and cultural, iii) legal, iv) geographic and v) school factors.

Economic

Economic factor is the most crucial barrier for disadvantaged communities in accessing and completing school education. Both NLSS - II and NLSS - III (2003/04 and 2010/11) indicate that relative to the richest consumption quintile, the poorest households have a much smaller percentage of school net enrolment rates (NERs) at all levels of education. Among consumption quintiles, NER rises sharply to richer quintiles, dropping down from poorer ones. Families living in the poorest quintile are often subsistence farmers and do not have money to spend on school expenses.

Poor and disadvantaged families cannot afford direct and/or indirect school costs. Although the 1990 and 2007 Constitutions of Nepal guarantee access to free basic and secondary education, however government fund is inadequate for covering even basic services and maintenance as well as the costs associated with admission, examination, school supplies etc. Therefore in practice, schools raise various fees. Besides, the parents need to bear the costs of dress, lunch, stationeries, etc. These costs in turn inhibit enrolment of children from poor communities. Moreover, the opportunity cost of attending school, or the time lost that would otherwise have been spent working on or assisting in domestic and agricultural chores, represents a substantial burden to poor families in rural communities.

Scholarship provided by the government, of approximately 400 rupees (ca. USD 4) per year per child from disadvantaged groups is helpful but hardly adequate to cover school expenses, let alone to compensate the opportunity costs. Furthermore, many poor children do not receive scholarship, if they are not girls or Dalits. The allocation of scholarship amount for girls and Dalits is often inadequate to accommodate the entire eligible children i.e. fifty percent girls and all Dalit children. The provision of free textbooks helps towards meeting some of the school costs; however, in some cases, parents have to pay up-front and are reimbursed later. Both scholarships and free textbooks often do not arrive on time or even do not arrive at all.

INGOs and UN agencies such as Save the Children Nepal, UNICEF and WFP have attempted to mitigate these school fees through the provision of school supplies, school lunches, etc. For instance, the World Food Programme (WFP) provides vegetable oil and food through the Girls Incentive Programme and Mid-day Meal programme in selected districts with low HDI; and UNICEF provides school supplies for disadvantaged students²⁵. But such provisions are inadequate compared to the size of the problem; over 25% of the population is under abject poverty.

Social and Cultural

While economic costs of education present a substantial barrier to education, social and cultural factors severely restrict participation in school, especially from disadvantaged groups. Despite the existence of law against discrimination, disparaging social and cultural norms of behavior persist in inter-caste relations, they are real in everyday life in school, village and at work place. Discrimination is especially acute for girls, Dalits, and disadvantaged Janajatis. Dalits face discrimination in the classroom from teachers and from other students and often do not feel comfortable and welcome in school. Janajatis face the language and cultural barriers.

Education for girls is not valued as much as for boys; rather, girls are encouraged to marry at a younger age or to stay home and do household chores or care for younger siblings. Moreover, education is viewed as ineffective for girls who will be married away to another family. Sons are given preference over girls for education—girls are sent to public schools or non-formal classes while sons are sent to private schools²⁶. There are no provisions/ systems that can address the inhibitions and difficulties faced by the children

²⁵ Acharya, S. 2006. The Functioning and Effectiveness of Scholarship and Incentive Schemes in Nepal. Kathmandu, UNESCO.

²⁶ UNICEF. 2006. Situation of Children and Women in Nepal. Kathmandu, UNICEF, pp. 76.

of disadvantaged communities due to poverty, caste status, or their gender, language and cultural differences.

Legal

The main legal barrier to education is the lack of free and compulsory education legislation, mandating that all school age children must attend school and complete basic education. Legal provisions are required to ensure rights of all including poor and disadvantaged children to get compulsory basic and free secondary school education, contributing to proceed to get either tertiary education or job related technical/vocational education. While the right to education is guaranteed in the 1990 Constitution as well as in the Interim Constitution of Nepal 2007, without free and compulsory education legislation, its enforcement remains without substance.

Capacity of the government system to enforce statutory and legal provisions is another constraint. Due to weak structure of local governance and inadequate capacity, especially at village, municipality and district level, most of the poor children whose parents are mostly illiterate are denied the right to registration, the first human right which is the foundation to claim their entitlements from the State. Moreover, there is no government system to help children lacking birth registration, children from poor families, working children, street children, children affected by HIV and AIDS, children whose parents are in jail and children displaced by the internal or external conflict. These children often face discrimination.

Geographic

Geographic barriers also limit access to education. In remote and rural areas, especially in the mid and far west regions, and in the eastern hills, schools (especially secondary) are not easily accessible. Often children must walk for long distances or through difficult terrain. This barrier becomes rather formidable during monsoon period. Every year because of flood many households are submerged or even swept causing health hazards, wounding, and even deaths of affected people including school children. Landslides similarly cause havoc burying homes and even schools and villages.

Availability of schools within reasonable walking distance²⁷ by all is the first step towards achieving universal primary/basic education (UPE/UBE) by the year 2015. The Jomtien decade (1990-2000) combined with the first fifteen years of 21st century with respect to the Dakar Framework of Action (DFA) witnessed remarkable progress in creating sufficient spaces into schools through expanding school systems rapidly not only for the primary level but also beyond it for secondary and higher education levels.

Between 1995/96 and 2010/11, access improved almost universally across all types and levels of schools. Proportion of households having access to primary schools within 30 minutes (of travel time) was 88.4% fifteen years ago, increased to 91.4% and 94.7% in 2003/04 and 2010/11 respectively. However, the pace of development of school systems has been uneven and insufficient as about 7% households (NLSS III, 2010/11) particularly in remote rural areas and 10% poorest households are still denied of the opportunity to accessing the provision of primary schooling within the national average walking distance of half an hour.

²⁷ Not formally defined, but 30 minutes walking distance is considered to be reasonable for 5-12 years children. Households' access to a certain facility is measured in terms of time taken for one-way travel to that facility, irrespective of transport mode (on foot or vehicle). The shorter is the time taken by a household to reach a facility, the higher is the degree of access.

Among the geographical regions, about cent percent of the urban households (99.3%) have primary school within the reach of 30 minutes while in rural areas it is 93.4%, a difference of 6.6% percentage points. The percentage of households accessing the nearest primary schools is the lowest for the rural eastern hills (86 percent) followed by the similar percentage for the rural mid and far western hills (87 percent). In the same way, the richest households have lesser mean time (8 minutes) than the poorest households to reach a similar facility (18 minutes).

Moreover, quality of school infrastructure and resources varies greatly by geographic area. Schools in remote mountain regions have very few female teachers. Schools in the Terai often lack adequate classroom space, teachers and teaching materials to accommodate the large population of students.

School Factor

Various school factors hinder access to education. Poor quality education due to lack of teachers, classrooms, textbooks and teaching materials, prevents children from attending school. Most schools lack adequate learning resources and physical facilities such as, classrooms, benches and desks. Moreover, majority of schools do not have playgrounds, science labs and libraries; some schools do not even have clean drinking water and toilets.

Furthermore, the lack of school capacity to implement the curriculum in a way relevant to daily life is another factor discouraging enrolment and attendance. Many public schools, particularly in rural regions are still not capable to ensure regular attendance of teachers as well as students, especially attendance of female teachers and girl students. Problems related to school environments that are not girl-friendly, lack of separate toilets for girls and female teachers hinder the participation of girls in schools, especially in secondary schools. Not having Dalit or Janajati teachers in a school is a constraint contributing to poor attendance of students from disadvantaged groups.

Armed Conflict

The escalation of a decade-long conflict from 1996 to 2006 undoubtedly had impeded access to school and made the situation worse. Schools were frequently disrupted by the conflict. A report by the Informal Sector Service Centre (INSEC) found that schools were on average only open for 120 out of mandatory 220 school opening days and at least 180 teaching/learning activity days during the 2002-3 school year²⁸.

Students were prevented from taking examinations, such as the School Leaving Certificate (SLC) examination, especially outside of district headquarters. According to a UNICEF study, admission for taking the SLC exam fell almost 20% from 72% in 2002/3 to 53% in 2004/5 in a conflict-affected area²⁹.

In addition, students were often kidnapped, recruited and indoctrinated. According to CWIN, nearly 27,323 students had been abducted since the beginning of the conflict³⁰. Teachers had also been targeted due to their political conviction and affiliation with both Maoists and the government. The National Teacher's Association reported that 160 teachers had been killed since the start of the conflict; the Department of Education

²⁸ INSEC (2004) report from UNICEF. 2006. Situation of Children and Women in Nepal. Kathmandu, UNICEF.

²⁹ UNICEF. 2006. Situation of Children and Women in Nepal. Kathmandu, UNICEF.

³⁰ Child Workers in Nepal Concerned Centre (CWIN). 2005. "Children in Conflict Fact Sheet." Kathmandu, CWIN. www.cwin.org.np/press_room/factsheet/fact_cic.htm. (accessed 24 May 2006).

reported that over 3,000 teachers had to go on forced leave, especially in rural areas due to security concerns.³¹

Private schools were forced to close down; approximately 700 schools were closed by Maoists since 1996³². Both the Maoists and the government forces used schools for barracks, which disrupted school and put the teachers and students in a vulnerable position between the two forces³³.

Education Financing and Donor Coordination

Public and private financing

In Nepal the government financing of education is mainly centralized, with the Nepal National Planning Commission (NPC) framing the overall financing on the basis of national policy and the Ministry of Finance allocating education budget to the Ministry of Education to disburse funds to schools and its various institutions. The government funding, public resource mobilization and private sector investments form the main source of financing of education in Nepal. Private sector investment is in the form of development and management of private schools. Parents pay full fees to private schools, which vary according to the services provided as well as the performance status achieved by the schools. Government financial regulations and public record keeping system do not cover private sector financing of education, which is almost invisible. Private and Boarding School Organizations of Nepal such as, the PABSON is an elected body for the member schools which to some extent provides self-regulating framework. There are no other organizations to closely monitor and keep track of financing of education in the private sector.

Public resource mobilization in education has been a major policy emphasis of the government of Nepal. In the past, most of the educational institutions including schools were developed with the initiative and initial investment by local communities and individuals. The Government has formulated school education regulation for the management of community schools whereby communities have both authority as well as responsibility to develop and operate schools to address the needs of quality education.

The government provides earmarked funds to support school development activities, for teacher salaries and grants for scholarship, free textbooks, etc. Total public expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP is 3 to 4 percent, with around 2 percent to the primary/basic education sub-sector. Total public expenditure on education as percentage of total government annual budget is about 17 percent. Out of the total education budget around 60 percent is allocated for the primary/basic sub-sector, 20 percent for the secondary sub-sector and 10 percent for the higher education sub-sector. Budget on pre-primary education, vocational and technical secondary education and literacy and non-formal education has each between 1 and 3 percent. Administration and supervision support costs are about 4 percent.

³¹ UNICEF. 2006. Situation of Children and Women in Nepal. Kathmandu, UNICEF, p.75.

³² UNICEF. 2006. Situation of Children and Women in Nepal. Kathmandu, UNICEF, p.75.

³³ Timalisina, Nitya Nanda. 8 February 2006. "Sentry post or school?" Kathmandu, the Kathmandu Post.

Household Expenditure on Education

The NLSS-III (CBS, 2011) found that households spent an average of 61.5 percent of their budget on food with wide variation between consumption quintiles. The poorest wealth quintile spent 71.6 percent on food compared to the richest wealth quintile spending on the same at 45.8 percent. This indicates that rises in food prices affect the poor most severely, implying that rises in food prices force the poor to spend less on education in comparison to other non-food items.

Table 20: Household Consumption and its Distribution by Expenditure Category (%)

Consumption Quintile	Consumption (NRs. millions)	Food	Housing/ Rent	Education	Other non-food items
Poorest	81,714	71.6	7.2	3.4	17.8
Second	108,152	70.2	7.4	3.9	18.6
Third	131,337	66.6	8.2	4.6	20.6
Fourth	161,503	61.3	10.6	5.7	22.4
Richest	304,616	45.8	18.1	7.6	28.5
Nepal	170,735	61.5	11.0	5.3	22.2

Source: CBS, 2011. NLSS 2010/11, Volume II, Chapter 10, Table 4, Page 36.

Despite the explicit statement of free education up to secondary level in the Interim Constitution of Nepal, the meaning of free education has remained limited to free tuition fee and that too limited to public schools or fully government supported community schools. For many parents and children, school participation has remained challenging, partly because many poor parents cannot afford the cost of schooling, including learning materials, stationeries, school uniform and transportation for their children in addition to the costs of meeting their essential needs such as food (71.6 percent) and shelter (7.2 percent on housing and rent).

For many poor children and parents even the opportunity cost of joining school education is high to bear, they are compelled to work to supplement the family efforts for subsistence. Schooling, even when it is free, becomes unaffordable for poor families with competing economic interests (DOE, 2007, Annual Strategic Implementation Plan, 2007-08). Similarly, in many cases children are kept to household chores instead of sending them to school because they see it more important and beneficial compared to the benefits of school education in their socioeconomic circumstances. Traditionally, education is perceived as a requirement for jobs, preferably government jobs. Many disadvantaged communities do not feel they can get such opportunity and rather fatefully assume that they are destined to do hard physical work to survive. Inability of linking school to the socioeconomic context of general public people, to their world of work has contributed to low importance given to the school education. This clearly explains the fact why a large number of children remain out of school, and that not all of those who are in school learn well and complete primary education.

EFA Donors and Coordination

Nepal presents a successful example of EFA donor coordination with respect to international assistance in the education sector through planned interventions since 1990 after the World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien, Thailand. The country developed and implemented the Basic and Primary Education Project I (1992-1999),

adopting a sub-sector approach gradually moving towards school/education sector-wide approach (SWAp). In view of the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal in April 2000, Nepal prepared 'Education for All National Plan of Action (EFA NPA 2001-2015)' to provide a co-ordinated approach to improving education provision on a larger scale than previous initiatives.

The formulation of EFA NPA reflected the involvement of EFA partners, including the government of Nepal in the development, implementation and monitoring of BPEP II (1999-2004), EFA Programme (2004-2009) and SSRP (2009-2015), contributing to enhanced coordination and better methods to assess the results of these Programmes with regard to their effectiveness and efficiency in terms of progress and achievements.

The Ministry of Education through its Foreign Aid Coordination Section (FACS) facilitated the inter-agency collaboration resulting in pooled funding from EFA partners to harmonize and maximize the effectiveness of foreign resources towards achieving the goals of EFA as well as the education related goals of MDGs by 2015. The funding modality developed by the country together with EFA partners is called Joint Financing Arrangement (JFA). Under this funding modality, government procedures are followed in spending and reporting with a few exceptions. Besides, there is non-pool financing under separate agreement with the individual donor.

Every year consultation and review meetings are organized, in December and May, for pool as well as non-pool partners to discuss the implementation and achievements of education Programmes and commit on funding and support for the next year. The annual consultation meeting in December takes stock of progress and achievements in the previous year through field visits and monitoring reports based on instruments such as the Flash and Consolidated Reports of School Level Educational Statistics of Nepal and the Status Report (Annual Progress Report) of the DOE. The annual review meeting in May focuses on providing financial assistance for the next fiscal year based on the Annual Strategic Implementation Plan (ASIP) aligned with Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB).

The planning and monitoring instruments form a powerful basis for donor coordination for the present and future support and cooperation in the field of education. It has proved that adoption of a common results framework for monitoring progress on Education for All (EFA) goals, and reliance on government rules and procedures for financial management, procurement, reporting and auditing of pool donors and government funds have helped increase the effectiveness of education Programmes and reduce transaction costs of donors and government, contributing to improved coordination among EFA partners.

This joint funding modality helped pave the way for increased funding by a consortium of EFA partners³⁴ including the government of Nepal. Thus, contributions by development partners account for 24% of total expenditures on education, including recurrent and capital expenditures while the government bears 76% of the education for all pool financing. Donor agencies also provide technical assistance (TA) differently from the pooled funding. However, TA funds are not reflected in the government budgetary system.

³⁴ Pool donors include Australia, Denmark, Finland, Norway, the United Kingdom (UK), UNICEF, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank. Non-pool donors are Japan, the World Food Programme (WFP), UNESCO and Save the Children Nepal.

Education for All programme followed by School Sector Reform Programme with focus on primary/basic education (grade 1-8) receive most of the donor support. It is expected that the new constitution of Nepal will adopt a federal set up, which would have major implications for devolving/decentralizing education. In this respect, it is assumed that education governance will be the shared responsibility of the central, provincial and local governments. Based on EFA experiences, for post-2015 there is scope as well as need to continue the JFA mechanism to cover the whole education sector, including pre-primary, basic, secondary and tertiary education to ensure adequate flows of funds to schools and institutions, contributing to improved funding and effectiveness of financial and technical support from the government and EFA development partners to the comprehensive education sector.

Influence of EFA on Country Education Reforms

EFA particularly after the Dakar World Education Forum (2000) greatly influenced overall educational reform and development activities in the country. The Dakar Framework of Action has been adopted as the basis for national planning process including adoption of the goals, indicators, implementation and monitoring modality.

EFA approach has set precedence of stakeholder mobilization and partnership, with harmonizing cooperation and collaboration with donors in filling the funding gaps and technical support.

Nepal adopted EFA core strategy for a continued school sector wide programme. EFA was the basis for formulation and implementation of major projects and national Programmes, including BPEP I and II, EFAP, Community School Support Programme (CSSP), Secondary Education Support Programme (SESP), Teacher Education Project (TEP) and School Sector Reform Plan (SSRP). It also contributed towards development of holistic approach to school education from pre-primary to higher secondary education (k-12). Moreover, EFA also impacted upon the preparation of higher secondary education support project and higher education project, contributing to the education sector development.

The current SSRP builds on the EFA and SESP achievements and articulates the policy directions within the purview of statutory provisions, the EFA National Plan of Action, and the Three Year Interim Plans by incorporating the main thrusts of EFA and MDGs.

The key reform agenda in the SSRP include reforming school structure for an integrated school system with basic education (grades 1-8) and secondary education (grades 9-12). SSRP aims to strengthen school based management to make schools responsive to address the issue of disadvantages and marginalization in education based on gender, caste and ethnicity, remoteness, level of income, internal/external conflict, etc. Moreover, it underpins free and compulsory basic education with a view to attaining universal access, participation and completion of quality basic education by all, particularly by girls and the disadvantaged. Keeping in view the gross inequality in education, it intends to use evidence-based planning and monitoring to ensure relevance and quality of education through enhanced efficiency and effectiveness of the school education system.

4

EMERGING CHALLENGES AND GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Nepal is progressing steadily towards attaining the EFA goals; indicator-wise some of the important targets such as primary school student enrolment, gender parity in school enrolment are almost achieved. In the process new challenges have been identified and prioritized as crucial. The emerging challenges include reaching the unreached, disadvantaged communities, improving the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of educational provisions, and preparation of youth and adults with relevant life skills education. It has also been realized that there is need for enhancing the education system and reforming the structure to address the changed contexts, particularly to connect with the global development trend. The following is a brief discussion on the emerging challenges EFA goal-wise followed by discussion on priorities.

EFA goal wise emerging challenges and government priorities

ECD and Pre-primary Education

Access to ECD/PPE provisions has expanded significantly; participation in terms of enrolment has greatly increased. However, the quality of ECD provision, which is generally poor in most of the school-based and community-based centres, is a serious concern. The emerging challenge is to address the issues relating to norms and standards regarding ECD provisions including classrooms, care provisions, qualifications, trainings, salaries and incentives of ECD facilitators.

There is need to enhance partnership between local body (village development committee (VDC), municipality and district development committee (DDC) and MOE for the development of criteria, setting roles and responsibilities for implementing ECD programmes at the local level. Monitoring of ECD programmes is very weak. There is still a need to develop an effective system of monitoring, feedback and technical professional support to ECD providers/facilitators. The challenge in regard to this mainly relates to addressing the expanded needs of capacity enhancement of ECD service providers, raising the awareness and involvement of parents and overall capacity of the system for developing an integrated curriculum for ECD/PPE, including social, health and education aspects, with emphasis on joyful approach of learning that includes games, plays and socialization of values, norms and behavioural skills.

Universal Primary/Basic Education

Universal primary education has been guaranteed by the Interim Constitution of Nepal (2007), which explicitly states that it is the right of every child to get basic education in her/his mother tongue. It also states that every citizen has the right to free education from the State up to secondary level. The government has undertaken several initiatives to expand access: provided schools at easy walking distance, provisioned free school education, free textbooks, and various incentives and scholarships for girls and disadvantaged children, and provisioned day meal for the children in poor rural districts. However, a large number of school age children still remain out of school. Children who belong to disadvantaged and deprived groups/communities; girls and children with disabilities and children who are extremely poor constitute the major proportion of the excluded groups. They need serious attention.

In general, school statistics show that retention of children until the last grade of each level of schooling is a key challenge. Analysis of promotion, repetition, dropout, survival and transition rates to upper grades and levels of school indicate gradual but slow progress in improving the internal efficiency of the school education system in Nepal. Overall, the internal efficiency of the education system is very poor and requires appropriate interventions.

Appropriate Learning and Life Skill Education

The NLSS-III (CBS, 2011) survey revealed that out of 23.9 million population aged 5 years and above 16.1 million (67.4%) obtained some kind of education, but the remaining 7.8 million (32.6%) remained untouched by any kind of educational provisions. Besides, a significant number of children who ever got enrolled to a school dropout without even completing primary education cycle and hence remain without basic education, i.e. without basic literacy. The overall capacity of the country is far too short to address the needs of such a large population of youths and adults who remained untouched by the system of educational provisions. Concerted efforts with proactive roles of both formal and non-formal education are crucial to address the challenge of addressing the issue.

Ensuring Literacy for All

The Global Monitoring Report 2013/14 (UNESCO, 2013) indicated 57% adult literacy in Nepal, with 71% males and 47% females as literate. The Report projected the adult literacy rate to reach 66% (79% males and 53% females) in 2015. This means, nearly 7.5 million people would still be illiterate (women 70%) in 2015. An estimated 1 million children, including children not in school as well as children who enroll but drop out without completing basic education add up to illiteracy figure every year. This situation poses an enormous challenge towards attaining universal literacy. The disparities in literacy remain very high between males and females, urban and rural, consumption quintiles, castes and ethnicity, eco-and-development regions, age groups, etc.

The national literacy initiatives remain rather inadequate to address this issue as the government allocation of the budget for NFE and literacy does not match with its stated priority. There is even a decreasing trend in priority in terms of budget allocation (from

about 2.79% in 2008-09 to 0.97% in 2012-13). There is a need to seriously review the situation and plan and implement national programmes following the national framework. The national framework has clearly emphasized on stakeholders' networking and participatory approach, particularly involving local stakeholders.

The programme implementation should focus on the needs of target groups. There is need to develop programmes designed to implement to achieve literacy for all, targeting the priority needs of the unreached populations, including women, Dalits, disadvantaged ethnic groups, and persons with disabilities who require adequate resources. For this, there is also a need to develop an effective Non-formal Education Management Information System (NFE/MIS). A system of effective monitoring, feedback and technical/professional support is also a crucial need in this regard.

Capacity development of NFE system including that of the government institutions, community organizations and NGOs as well as literacy providers is a very crucial need.

Addressing Social Equality and Gender Parity

Although gender parity in school enrolment at both primary and secondary level has increased to almost 0.99, the issue of gender equality in education, especially in regard to internal efficiency and learning achievement is a huge challenge. Succeeding EFA Global Monitoring Reports from 2002 to 2013 have clearly and consistently pointed out the critical situation of many countries including Nepal with regard to fulfilling the 2015 targets of gender and social equality. The quality of gender environment in schools and educational workplaces remains far behind the expected reforms. In many instances gender needs are not adequately reflected in the education development planning. Besides, the inertia of social/cultural values tends to override the legal provisions, especially in the cases of discrimination based on caste, ethnicity and gender. There is a serious need for review of policies, Programmes and their implementation practices in order to address this issue.

It is also important to note that big gender gaps exist in adult literacy and in other important areas such as; vocational and technical education and employment, especially relating to equitable numbers of female teachers as well as teachers from disadvantaged castes and ethnic groups. Achieving gender balance in all these areas requires huge concerted efforts of all key stakeholders.

Improving Quality of Education

Ensuring quality of school education as well as NFE provision has been the most crucial challenge towards achieving the EFA goals in Nepal. Because of poor quality problems of high wastages are recurring in terms of grade repetition, school drop-out, longer time to complete primary and secondary cycles of education compared to their required period, etc. Besides, production of school graduates with poor learning achievement and without proper skills and knowledge is an enormous challenge. Consequently, school graduates are not properly prepared for the next higher level of education, and/or for jobs.

Government has adopted a number of quality provisions, like appropriate Teacher Student Ratio, class size and space per child. However, most of the schools and NFE provisions are still far from the set norms, unable to comply with the identified minimum enabling conditions. Although quality related indicators are mentioned in the EFA/NPA and SSRP, practical adoption and implementation of specific standards for components of quality education still remains lacking. Despite identifying Minimum Enabling Conditions for quality education, resource constraints and absorption capacity of the education system in terms of utilizing the budget have forced to review the programmes and lowering the targets. Similarly, provision of ICT is one important aspect that the government has made regulation to cover nation-wide, however merely 6.6% (1,864) schools are found to have ICT facilities and only 3.5% of them use it for teaching learning at the secondary level (DOE, ASIP, 2012).

Qualified and dedicated teachers is crucial for enhancement of quality, however due to current political circumstances political parties and associated unions/organizations exert undue influence, on teacher recruitments as well as management, creating barriers for accountability, performance based teachers' management and professional development. Similarly, student examination is an important aspect for improvement in quality, however examination system is rather rudimentary and its use is limited to grade promotion rather than its use for improvement in student learning or in curriculum planning. Piloting of formative approach to learning progress with continuous student assessment could not bring desired reform in school education. Recently, the country has introduced national assessment of student achievement, however it is still at initial phase and efforts are being made to utilize the results to improve school curriculum, teacher training, teaching and learning.

Ensuring the Rights of Indigenous People and Linguistic Minorities to receive basic education in their mother tongue

Government has made various policy pronouncements for using mother tongue as medium and subject of instruction in the early grades of primary school education. However, implementation of the policy provisions is facing many issues and challenges. For instance, Nepal has adopted the early-exit model of MLE. However, concerned MLE stakeholders are not adequately represented in the National MLE Steering Committee, the apex body for making MLE policies and guidelines. Consequently, the concept of MLE stated in legal provisions remained superficial and ambiguous. The MLE policy documents are silent on teacher recruitment and deployment to support primary education in mother tongue. Also, there is no data keeping system of the teachers and students on the basis of their mother tongues to help produce reading materials, teacher deployment and teacher training. CDC has initiated the translation of textbooks in mother tongues; however the translated textbooks often lack the real essence of cultural requirements of relevant ethnic groups. Still, the emphasis is on the use of mother tongue textbooks as subject instead of medium of instruction, and that too as an 'optional subject'.

There are misconceptions among a section of population regarding education and language that they need Nepali to compete in the country, and English to compete in the globalized world, and believe erroneously, that learning through the medium of the mother tongue

might prevent their children from learning the other important languages. There is lack of understanding among parents, teachers and wider communities with regard to the fact that children learn national and international languages better through MLE. To resolve the issue there should be policy priority to conduct awareness drive among stakeholders, including language communities, parents, children and teachers. There should be concrete programmes to train and recruit teachers qualified to develop MLE environment in the schools and use MLE approach in teaching and learning as expected by the policy.

Discussion on the priorities

Reaching the Unreached

Now that majority of (95% according to 2012 school census report of DOE and 78% as per 2011 survey report of CBS) the primary school age children are enrolled in school, one of the crucial challenges at present is how to reach the unreached - disadvantaged, marginalized, minority groups. The first requirement in reaching the unreached is to exactly identify the population, their whereabouts, and their needs.

There are many factors that can contribute to marginalization of people and community e.g., poverty, sickness (HIV/AIDS), gender, caste system, minority ethnicity, and being unlisted (street children, migrant workers etc.). Above all, awareness and lack of trust on the system can also be crucial factors. Language issue too is very important because awareness and trust start with language/communication.

Disaggregated data based on household surveys focused to these factors are important for specific identification and planning for addressing the issues, it is however a challenging task. There is an urgent need to address this challenge with an appropriate EMIS database in place to specifically plan an intervention in the support of such disadvantaged groups. There is also a need to develop equity based EFA indicators, including comprehensive aspects of quality and relevance, access and participation, literacy and life skills education with regard to the education sector as a whole.

Ensuring Quality and Relevance of Education for All

Poor quality and relevance of educational provisions are generally considered a cross cutting issue across the education sector. This is however most important at the ECD and primary level school because lack of quality and relevance at these levels brings consequential hurdles at the upper levels as well. The important consequences include low regularity in attendance, high failure rate, grade repetition and high dropout. Despite many efforts for enhancing quality such as provision of classrooms and furniture, textbooks, and trained and certified teachers, the primary level cycle completion rate has remained below 80%. The student scores in the achievement level tests in the district and national level examinations at grade 8, 10, 11 and 12 are below 50 percent.

One of the most important issues of quality and relevance relate to lack of practical and child friendly approach to teaching and learning. In most schools teaching and learning are synonymous to reading from the text and rote learning, writing the answers from the

texts, at the most. Consequently students do not get opportunity to learn and practice knowledge application and skill learning. Usefulness and relevance of school education to day to day life has been a crucial issue since the starting of the modern schooling in the country. Without a comprehensive change in the system and approach, curriculum implementations/practices will remain ritualistically limited to textbook reading and memorization without opportunities for knowledge application, experiential learning, and higher levels of thinking/critical thinking, research and creativity. There is a need for a comprehensive change in school environment, pedagogy, system support and attitudinal changes among all including management, teachers, students and parents. One of the urgent needs is to establish basic norms and standards regarding the educational provisions and that they are implemented and ensured through the system of planning and monitoring.

Appropriate life skill education for youths

Conceptually, the provision of life skill education through school curriculum is a good approach, however its effective delivery remains elusive and challenging as school education remains poor in quality. Textbook reading is not an appropriate way for learning life skill. The provisions of non-formal education through CLC are both inadequate and also not well managed due to lack of trained facilitators and resource persons. The provisions of technical education and vocational training are similarly too limited to address the magnitude of the youth population in need. Even there is lack of provisions to ensure that the youths going abroad learn basic skills such as language and communication before leaving the country. Most of them are compelled to join labour opportunities without basic preparation. Consequently, there are many cases of serious problems faced by such youths gone abroad.

The issue of relevance of educational provisions whether through school or non-formal provisions is even more crucial for poor communities who need to subsist on day to day earning basis. Even participation in school or non-formal education provisions would be rather taxing on their daily livelihood earning. In the mid- and far west regions of Nepal where bonded labourers called Haliya, Kamaiya, and Kamlari have lived a very pathetic life without alternative economic means and freedom under the exploitation of so called upper caste people and landlords. Recently, the system of bonded labour has been abolished, however without measures to support them with income generation opportunities; they are put in even more difficult circumstances in terms of livelihood.

Some other communities such as Chepang, Raute, and Meche have earlier relied on the forest resources by hunting and gathering for livelihood, now that forests are shrunk and are either controlled by the government as reserves/parks or by other communities in the form of community forests, their free movement and access to forest resources are constrained, making their livelihood very difficult. They need special attention; and life skill education along with life support provisions is important for such people.

Reform in education system to address changing scenario

Schools up to grade five have expanded greatly because that was the level considered for the EFA goal of ensuring universal access to basic and primary education until recently. However, in line with EFA spirit and progressing towards the global trend, Nepal has now changed the education structure and considered up to grade eight as the basic education. Accordingly there is now emergent need to develop more classrooms and provide teachers to upgrade the access provisions up to grade eight matching the provision up to grade five. Although the education system and structure are being expanded to some extent, the expansion of provisions continued to remain rudimentary, lacking the clear understanding of what should be taken care in ensuring the needs of students and teachers, and of the teaching learning activities with appropriate pedagogy. Because of this, limitations and constraints are faced in addressing many needs and issues. For example, the current school provisions including classrooms, furniture, and routines are constraining in terms of activity based teaching and learning; limited system of student examination constrains curriculum practice particularly limiting the scope of practical learning, skill learning, knowledge application and project work and research. Similarly the old system cannot support making school environment gender friendly and achieve gender equality. Inclusive classroom environment, multilingual provisions and individualized classroom pedagogy need new perspective in system and structure. In the same line flexible approach to school education including arrangement for interconnecting formal school education with non-formal and informal learning provisions require new perspectives and provisions.

Need based financing

Budget allocation is rather a challenging aspect for resource poor Nepal. However, the issue of addressing disadvantages and marginalization in education needs systematic planning, evidence and results based resource allocation and monitoring for more targeted interventions. Improvement in quality also requires significant increase in budget resources. Most importantly, the budget for non-formal education needs to be massively increased in order to provide second chance education and literacy for all. Obviously, meeting the needs of literacy and life-skills targets for disadvantaged and marginalized groups would require improved funding to at least more than 3 percent of the total education budget from its current level of 1-2 percent. Without significant increase in budget allocation, improvement in the priority areas is likely to remain critically challenging.

Competence and creativity to connect with the global development

Competence of the system to reform/transform to be able to address the needs of connecting educational development in Nepal with the global development trend remains an important challenge. It will not be possible to address this challenge on the basis of traditional approach and provisions i.e. business as usual. There is need for more creative and innovative approach for this. There is need to promote participation of all stakeholders particularly the institutions of higher education and research, NGOs and INGOs in making innovations and creativity.

5

CONCLUSIONS AND WAY FORWARD

Nepal is in a position to achieve many of the EFA goals, though not fully. Achievements relating to goal 1, 2 and 5 are remarkable in terms of a number of indicators. Even the youth literacy rate of age group 15-24 years, an integral part of goal 3 and 4 has improved remarkably. Some significant achievements include:

- School enrolments have increased significantly, with more girls than boys at both primary and secondary levels. Consequently, primary NER increased to 95.3% in 2012 from less than 80% before 2000.
- Increased female teachers from 30% in 2006/07 (by MDA period) to 37.8% (GPI 0.7) at primary, 20.6 percent at lower secondary (now basic) level and 14.7% at secondary level were reported in the school year 2012/13. In both community and institutional schools, the percentage of female teachers was 41.5 percent at primary and 27.4 percent at basic level. There are greater numbers of female teachers in institutional schools at all levels of school education.
- Licensing of teacher profession has been completed successfully.
- ECD enrolments increased from the GER of about 10% in 2000 to 41.4% in 2006 and 73.7% in 2012; the numbers of ECD centers (34,174 in 2012 from 23,659 in 2008) increased tremendously.
- At grade 1 children with ECD experiences rose from 8% in 2003 to 18.3% in 2006 and recently to 55.6% in 2012, with girls (55.9%) slightly more than boys (55.2%).
- Gender parity at primary level NER increased from 0.96 in 2006 to 0.99 in 2012.
- EMIS has progressed significantly; regular bi-annual publications of Flash Report I, Flash Report II and Consolidated Report of School Level Educational Statistics of Nepal provide disaggregated data on agreed indicators in the EFA NPA and SSRP. Decennial censuses and periodic household surveys such as NLSS, NLFS, MICS and NDHS provide and substantiate data on school and higher education, and on NFE and literacy.
- School level education related data are placed on the DOE's Website: www.doe.gov.np

Programmes and Strategies that Contributed to the Achievements

Preparation of education plans and Programmes included comprehensive strategies, which were implemented successfully with the support of development partners, including UN agencies such as, UNESCO, UNICEF and WFP and I/NGOs. The BPEP I, BPEP II and the EFA core document were implemented effectively during 1990 -2009. Currently, the School Sector Reform Programme (SSRP), 2009 -2015 is in the final year of implementation.

The main EFA strategy was to develop and implement Programmes, addressing the major issues of disadvantaged and marginalized children. Some of the innovative activities that contributed to achievements included:

- Welcome to school programme assisted to reaching the disadvantaged children in the rural areas.
- Free textbooks to all public primary/basic school children helped enrolment as well as learning.
- School feeding programme (day meal programme) ensured not only the enrolment of the poor children but also their retention in the school for the whole day and the whole year.
- Oil for mothers worked well, contributing to increased girls' enrolment and their retention.
- Grants to public lower secondary and secondary schools to provide free education to all Dalit students helped increase their enrolment and retention.
- Scholarship Programmes with particular focus on girls and disadvantaged children such as, Dalits, disadvantaged Janajatis, poor children, children with disabilities, etc.; supported the expansion of school access, participation and retention in both primary and secondary education.
- INGO partnership for the school construction (Save the children, Plan International, Room to Read, etc.) contributed to improve the school physical facilities for teaching and learning in a pleasant environment.
- Community Owned Primary Education (COPE) supported schools worked well in generating community partnership for ensuring quality education.
- Transfer of school management to community worked well for better management and quality, contributing to enhanced ownership.
- Partnership between INGO (Save the Children, Nepal), the Embassy of Israel, the DOE and UN agencies (UNESCO and UNICEF) with regard to ECD programme contributed to collaborative participation, especially for the development of ECD curriculum and training of facilitators.

Issues and Challenges

- Still many children (5% to 22%) are not enrolled; those not enrolled include the children from the poorest families, street children, children of seasonal or occasional labourers, Dalits, particularly Terai Dalits such as Musahar, Chammar, Dom, Halkhor and Dusadh. Rural mountain communities are still out of easy access to schools, especially lower secondary and secondary schools. In some Terai, Mid and Far Western districts girls are still not getting easy access to schooling because of social barriers. The challenge remains to bring these children to school and retain them so that they can complete basic education and transit to secondary education.
- Quality of primary school education as well as non-formal classes remains poor. Most of the schools and the NFE classes do not meet minimum enabling conditions in terms of infrastructure, learning environment, and teaching learning practices. Studies indicate that the approach, methods, techniques and skills provided to teachers in their training are in most of cases not getting transferred to classrooms, resulting in poor learning achievement of children. The extent of commitment and dedication anticipated from teachers in school transformation needs to be strengthened and realized.

- A significantly large number of youths are out of education system: some have never attained a school or even non-formal education provisions, there are many who are school drop outs, and many who completed primary school could not or did not join secondary school or above. The youths are not prepared with functional life skills. Preparing such youths with appropriate life skill education remains a major challenge. The provisions are too small compared to their needs. Besides there is serious need to make the existing provisions effective and relevant.
- Although changes have been made in school management, schools in most cases remain disconnected to local contexts. This might be due to lack of experiences and capacity, on the part of community people to transform school as a dynamic and viable community centre for children.
- Most importantly, lack of resources including fund for school improvement and NFE activities at local level is a huge challenge.
- Overall, there is need for enhancing system capacity, structural reforms and lots of innovative programmes to deal with the issues and challenges with regard to providing quality education for all.

Reflection on the Achievements and Issues

The focus of the national EFA programme has been to ensure equitable access to quality primary education with a particular emphasis on disadvantaged groups. In this regard, the programme successfully attempted to address the expansion of access to school education, mainly primary school, which is up to grade 5 for the children aged 5 to 9 years. Two issues have been recognized with regard to this thrust – 1) lack of effective provisions for out-of-school and dropout children, and 2) lack of systemic linkages between formal and non-formal education. These issues still need serious consideration as a significant number of school age children are not enrolled in school. Further, school sector still faces big differences between NER and GER, indicating that a large section of children are enrolled late. Besides, an overwhelming number of children drop out from the school system without completing even the primary education cycle (DOE, Flash Report 1, 2012/13).

There is a good linkage between transition from the ECD/PPE to the primary school because of the systemic coverage and progression. However, the impact of ECD/PPE on reducing GIR in grade one, GER at primary level and enhancing learning achievement of children still needs to be demonstrated.

There are provisions of flexible schooling, alternative schooling and open school to provide non-formal education as equivalent to formal school education. However, studies show that few children from non-formal stream are enrolled in regular schools.

Another key issue relates to transition from primary to lower secondary level. The GER at lower secondary level (grade 6-8) was 72% and for secondary (Grade 9-10) it was 56% in 2012. However, the NERs at lower secondary and secondary levels accounted for 52% and 35% respectively. This shows a considerably low level of transition from the primary to the secondary level, contributing to the poor flow of education with little scope and provisions for the children who are left out from the flow.

According to the EFA Global Monitoring Report (UNESCO, 2013), over 7.5 million adults (15 years and above), with 70% females would still be illiterate in Nepal in 2015. The provisions of NFE with regard to adult literacy, female literacy, post literacy and income generation activities all combined cover about 250,000 adults a year (NFEC, 2012/13). The total coverage by CTEVT and affiliated institutions at TSLC level (secondary level) and diploma level (higher secondary level) combined is about 11,000. This indicates the total coverage remains too far from the needs and demands.

The linkage between non-formal and formal education has been considered at the conceptual level. Institutionalization of such linkage still remains to be developed. There is similar problem of inter-linkage between the provisions of TEVT and formal education. TEVT can absorb children coming out from secondary schools but there is no provision for the TSLC students to join formal higher education. There is therefore a flaw in terms of opportunities for the students for their upward mobility in regard to continuing education and lifelong learning.

Systematic data and information on the situation of education and literacy goals is essential to locate problem areas, plan and monitor properly with a view to assessing progress towards EFA. The Department of Education has established Flash reporting instrument with regard to the Education Management Information System (EMIS) for school level education statistics of Nepal. A similar system with regard to the non-formal education management information system (NFE-MIS) needs to be set up in order to support evidence-based planning, implementation and monitoring of NFE and literacy programmes.

Recommendations

Keeping in view the findings of this review, following suggestions are recommended:

- Ensuring quality of school education should be the priority of school sector reform and development. School quality assurance system should be developed based on quality criteria and measurable indicators, including good governance and management, teaching learning environment, resources and support; teacher qualification, responsibilities, professional development and support, student counseling and support services, participation and mobilization of stakeholders, including parents, local community and organizations, accountability and transparency in compliance to national laws, rules and regulations.
- Teacher preparation and training is the most important part to ensure successful achievement of EFA goals. Teacher training and support system should be expanded and strengthened with inclusion of different emerging aspects of professional challenges such as changing pedagogical understanding and practices, sensitization to human rights and child rights, classroom management in bilingual and multilingual setting, teaching how to learn (self-learning), general skills to develop teaching-learning resources including reading materials, linking education to real life i.e. knowledge application and research for the further development of the comprehensive education sector.
- The current mapping of (P) ECs in schools should lead to an increased push to ensure that all schools meet all 5 PMECs by 2015 and beyond through targeting of available resources from the government.

- CBOs and I/NGOs should be actively engaged to support in the establishment of all PMECs in schools and with the school follow-up training and teacher professional development activities to ensure that they are being internalized and implemented.
- SMC, PTA, community members and parents should be actively engaged in monitoring the quality of education provided in schools.
- The EFA goal is to ensure quality basic education to all citizens of Nepal with curricula, materials and methods grounded on the local culture and linguistic diversity. To achieve this goal it is important to make quality basic education accessible to all children primarily through the medium of the mother tongue across the primary/basic level and gradually switching to the language of wider communication (e.g. Nepali in the national context and English as the language of global communication) through transitional multilingual education (MLE) process, which has been widely accepted and implemented in the South and Southeast Asia and elsewhere.
- MOE had approved 'Policy of Distance and Open Education' in 2007. The policy aimed at expanding full access to school and higher education to learners having diverse needs, especially for out-of-school children, deprived groups, working people, housewives and so on through open and distance learning system as supplementary to the existing system of education. The policy also aimed at promoting lifelong learning, continuing education and professional development through open and distance learning by applying mix mode delivery mechanism. However, in practice there is a lack of satisfactory programmes and practices towards this provision.

Way Forward

It is likely that the future system of education governance will be based on national priorities. The Government has formed a Policy Review Committee (PRC) to identify and review the national priorities with regard to their relevance to the comprehensive education sector, including early childhood development and pre-primary, primary/basic, secondary and higher education in the country. Based on these priorities, strategic dialogues between the schools/institutions and the State will take place through the PRC.

By 2015, Nepal would be close to meeting most of the EFA key targets, such as expansion of early childhood development and pre-primary education, universal enrolment and participation of primary school age children and getting close to the condition where all children complete primary/basic education with a satisfactory level of learning, and transit to secondary education.

Despite substantial progress since 2000, achieving the goal of literacy for all is likely to remain lagging behind the set target of 75% adult literacy rate by 2015. However, though still far from the set target of 95%, progress in youth literacy (15-24 years' age groups) at a projected 87% (91% males and 83% females) in 2015 (UNESCO 2013), with less than one million (885,000) illiterate youths is really satisfactory. However, the female youth literacy rate at 64 percent will still remain a matter of serious concern. The way forward in regard to achieving literacy for all would require to establishing equity based targets with provisions of adequate resources and a powerful means of monitoring and evaluation through NFE-MIS.

Overall, the BPEP, EFA and SSRP programmes have been successful in focusing attention and mobilizing resources towards achieving the EFA goals. It is expected that the global

community will continue to pursue the unfinished EFA agenda and further commit to setting more ambitious goals and targets on the post-2015 education agenda as outlined in several background papers, including “Education 2030: Equity and quality with a lifelong learning perspective” (UNESCO May 2015, Policy Paper 20). Such goals and targets would also relate to the aspects of MDGs, ensuring reasonable/acceptable standards and making education relevant to human rights, sustainable development, poverty alleviation, gender and social equality, etc. The new education goals will move beyond primary schooling to secondary schooling for all and universal functional literacy and numeracy associated with improved job skills. The new goals will be to ensure essential human rights and create adequate enabling conditions to help individuals realize their full potential.

In a globalized world, it is risky and undesirable to allow a situation of quality education for a few who can afford and poor quality education for many who cannot afford the expenses of education. Building on the EFA and MDGs, Nepal needs to move beyond meeting the basic human needs and promote dynamic, inclusive and sustainable development. This calls for focus on four strategic elements of policy for comprehensive schooling from pre-primary to higher secondary education: (i) disadvantaged children, (ii) equilibrium in addressing access and participation, equity and quality, (iii) adequate financing to address marginalization in education, especially for the poorest 20-40 percent consumption quintiles, and (iv) strengthening monitoring and evaluation system for the post-EFA 2015 era for a comprehensive education sector development.

There has been an overwhelming realization now that education needs to be linked to the overall local, national and international contexts; it needs to be functional, linking to the social and economic contexts, particularly between the world of education and the world of work. In the background of these contexts, the goals of education in Nepal beyond 2015 should be achieving:

- Free and compulsory basic education for all school age children, moving progressively towards comprehensive secondary and higher education,
- Open and flexible education linked to formal streams for out-of-school children, adolescents and drop out youths,
- Functional literacy for adults, with clear linkages between continuous education and lifelong learning for better living,
- Ensuring essential enabling conditions in schools and institutions for improved quality of education and enhanced learning achievement at all levels of education from pre-primary to higher education,
- Developing school and higher education curriculum and practices for preparing students with an appropriate education relevant to their daily life and jobs, besides preparing them for the next higher level of education of their choice and preference,
- Transforming schools and institutions as community development centers that care for the overall development needs of children, adolescents, youths and adults pedagogically, physically, socially and culturally,
- Provision of ICT in teaching and learning as well as computerized EMIS for both formal and non-formal education, and
- Inclusive education with complete harmonization in achievements, especially with regard to universal access and participation, completion, internal efficiency and learning achievements irrespective of gender, caste and ethnicity, rural and urban, status of wealth, disabilities, etc.

State should respect diversity of society, community, family and individuals through a system and structure that cares and respects the basic humanitarian principles, values and universal rights. Each school in Nepal should act as a foundation to constructing/building such State.

The strategy should be to gear up programmes and activities of schools and educational institutions as community endeavors in their entirety covering overall development aspects, including economic, social, linguistic and cultural aspects.

Pedagogic transformation of schools is the most crucial need of the country. Transformation of schools to better addressing the pedagogical issues relating to language, gender, social and economic aspects should essentially ensure the completion of schooling meaningfully and beneficially for higher level of education and learning and/or appropriate jobs.

The focus should be on the transformation of schools as a part of the system of society that cares individual child so that no child is left behind unattended:

- *Focus on universal participation and completion:* Now that 95% of school age children are enrolled in school at primary level, special strategy associated with robust and computerized EMIS at school level should be developed to track and support the disadvantaged children to bring in school and complete primary education with an acceptable level of learning. Such strategy should be an integral part of the overall strategy of free and compulsory school education.
- *Focus on Learning and Teachers:* Attention needs to be paid towards effective learning activities for the many diverse backgrounds of learners. While developing plan for the Education 2030, 'learning outcomes' should be the most focused area. Provision of highly qualified and trained teachers is vital to ensure quality education and learning for all, especially the disadvantaged. This would require reasonable salaries and career paths for teachers at all levels, including for non-formal education and literacy, ECD and pre-primary, primary, secondary and higher education.
- *Focus on Flexibilities:* Only formal education cannot address the educational needs of learners with various backgrounds. For this education should be provided using multiple methods, including flexibility in time, varieties in modes of learning opportunity, relevance- and needs- based curriculum, etc. It has been realized in many countries including Nepal that the conventional school system alone cannot meet the learning needs of all learners. It is essential to recognize that traditional ways of organizing education need to be reinforced by innovative methods. Interest of both educators and learners in the use of Internet and multimedia technologies is crucial for learners in line with the fundamental rights of all people to learning.

In view of the above, it is vital to consider the following for making education more relevant to social and economic context:

- *Focus on knowledge application and skills for life:* In the emerging world, it is increasingly challenging to ensure life skills/appropriate learning needs of the young and adults because of their required diverse needs, technological advancements, communication modes and rapidly changing world of work.
- *Focus on lifelong learning:* In the dynamic world of this century, it is very essential

to create a lifelong learning environment, giving people opportunity to learn at any time and equip them with recognized educational achievements. Comprehensive lifelong learning system aims to address the learning needs of different segments of the entire population. Certain groups such as minorities, elderly, women, or illiterate and semiliterate persons require specific types of educational opportunities. Lifelong learning opportunities address the needs of adults with different learning motivations, including people who desire recreation, self-improvement, vocational skills, social contact, or learning for their own sake.

- *Focus on second chance education for School Dropout children:* In Nepal many children leave school without having developed adequate literacy, numeracy and other relevant skills. As a result many children and youths are unable to advance to higher levels of education or to move on to gainful employment. Adequate technical and vocational education and training systems are required to provide education related to life skills, entrepreneurship and jobs.
- *Commitment for increased education financing and sector management:* Political will to invest in education has been a key concern for reform and development of the education sector, including pre-schooling, basic, secondary and tertiary education. Government's commitment for increased financing is necessary to prepare a credible education sector plan with a particular attention on the provisions of adequately qualified teachers, improved school infrastructure and services, which are fundamental to provide enhanced school environment and student-centered teaching and learning. Government must ensure adequate funding to support the entire education sector reform needs. Given the country's limited resources, there is need for continued support of the international community in line with the Framework for Action on the post-2015 education agenda.

To conclude, it is worth considering the Incheon Declaration, with a view to reshaping the vision for free and compulsory education with human rights perspective to “Ensure the provision of 12 years of publicly-funded, equitable quality primary and secondary education, of which at least nine years are free and compulsory, leading to relevant learning outcomes”.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1: Types and Share of Schools, 2012-13

Levels and Types of Schools	Grades	Community Schools	Institutional Schools	Religious Schools	Total Schools	Community Schools %	Inst Schools %	Religious Schools %
ECD/Pre-Primary	K-	29273	4901	0	34174	85.7	14.3	0
Primary	1-5	.28.300	5192	806	34,298	82.5	15.1	2.3
Lower Secondary	6-8	10,809	3597	41	14,447	74.8	24.9	0.3
Secondary	9-10	5,790	2,611	15	8,416	68.8	31.0	0.2
Higher Secondary	11-12	2,643	953	0	3,596	73.5	26.5	0.0

Annex 2: Share in Enrolment by Levels and Types of Schools, 2012-13

Enrolment by Level of Schools	Community	Institutional	Religious	Total	Community	Institutional	Religious
ECD and Pre-Primary	-	-	-	1,053,054	-	-	-
Primary	3,885,449	691,244	0	4,576,693	84.9	15.1	0.0
Lower Secondary	1,537,167	286,025	0	1,823,192	84.3	15.7	0.0
Secondary	722,145	155,902	0	878,047	82.2	17.8	0.0
Higher Secondary	302,334	85,182	0	387,516	78.0	22.0	0.0
Total Schools	6,447,095	1,218,353	0	7,665,448	84.1	15.9	0.0

As the data presented in the above tables reveal, the proportions and shares of private schools in Nepal are very significant in all levels of school education. In terms of numbers of schools, it is evident that the shares of private schools are 14.3percent in pre-primary, 15.1percent in primary, 24.9 percent in lower secondary, 31 percent in secondary and 26.5 percent in higher secondary levels of school education in Nepal. In respect to their contribution in the overall numbers of children enrolled in all levels of school education from grade 1 to 12 (7.6 million), it is almost 16 percent (1.2 million) in institutional schools and 84 percent (6.4 million) in community schools.

However, this figure is much higher in view of household data. According to NLSS –III, 2010/11, attendance rates in private schools for both sex were 7.5 percent in 1995/96, which increased to 16.7 percent in 2003/04 and 26.8 in 2010/11.

Among development regions, the mid-west and the far-west have much lower private school participation rates (16 percent and 17 percent respectively). About 60 percent of the students from the richest quintile are currently attending private schools while only 6 percent of students from the poorest quintile are in private institutions. In urban areas, more than one half of the students attend private schools while the proportion in the rural areas is only 20 percent.

Annex 3: Targets by Core EFA Indicators, 2000-2015

Indicators		2000	2005	End of 10th Plan, 2007	By 2012 (including interim plan period)	By 2015
1	Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) for Early Childhood Development/ Pre-primary Education (ECD/PPE)	13	20	32	60	80
2	% of New entrants at Grade 1 with ECD/PPE experiences	10.5	30	40	65	80
3	Gross Intake Rate, GIR at Grade 1	141	125	123	111	102
4	Net Intake Rate, NIR at Grade 1	53.7 ^a	67	73	89	98
5	Net Intake Rate, NIR at Grade 1	119.8	110	110	110	105
6	Net Enrolment Rate, NER (Grades 1-5)	80.4	88	90	95	100
7	Primary Exp. /GNP	1.8 ^b	1.9	2.0	2.3	2.5
8	Primary Exp./Total Ed. Exp.	56.7 ^b	60	62	65	65
9	% of teachers with req. qualification & training	15.4	50	100	100	100
10	% of teachers with required Certification	-	60	100	100	100
11	Pupil Teacher Ratio	37	34	34	31	30
12	Repetition Rate					
	Grade 1	42	30	24	14	10
	Grade 5	11	9	8	8	8
13	Survival rate up to Grade 5	63	71	75	86	90
14	Efficiency	55	63	67	76	80
15	% of Learning Achievement at Grade 5	40	52	57	70	80
16	% of Literacy Age Group 15-24	70 ^c	76	79	86	95
17	% of Literacy					
	Age Group 6+ years	54 ^c	65	75	85	90
	Age Group 15+ years	48 ^c	58	63	70	75
18	Literacy GPI (15+ years)	0.6 ^c	0.7	0.8	0.9	1.0

a: 1997, b: 2001/02, c: 2001; Source: MOE, UNESCO (2003). EFA NPA Nepal (2001-2015)

Annex 4: Education Financing

The structure of education financing in Nepal is mainly that of central government in the form of the Ministry of Finance which allocates budget to the Ministry of Education to reach the community (public) schools. In the case of institutional (private) schools, parents pay full fees in private schools and the fees vary according to the services provided as well as the performance status achieved by the schools. Financi□

Public resource mobilization in education has ever been one of the major policy emphases of the government of Nepal. Government provides earmarked fund for teacher salaries at all levels of public schools, scholarships for girls and disadvantaged children, grants for classroom □

Government funding comes based on the national annual budget, which is presented in the budget session of the parliament and formally approved. The national annual budget is guided by medium term national development plan of 3 to 5 years duration. The following is the budget provision in the annual budget plan (2004/05 to 2013/14).

Comparison of education budget with GDP and national budget as per Red Book, 2004-2005 to 2013-2014

Headings	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in NRs 000	589,400,000	654,100,000	727,800,000	815,700,000	988,300,000	1,193,700,000	1,375,000,000	1,536,000,000	1,701,200,000	1,925,758,400

Headings	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in US\$ million	7,965	8,839	10,251	12,549	14,119	15,503	19,097	18,732	20,014	22,135
National Budget in NRs 000	111,690,000	126,885,000	143,912,000	168,995,000	236,016,000	285,930,000	337,900,000	384,900,000	404,825,000	517,240,000
National Budget in US\$ million	1,509	1,715	2,027	2,600	3,372	3,713	4,693	4,694	4,763	5,945
Education Budget in NRs 000	18,059,654	21,250,447	23,005,525	28,390,000	39,086,407	46,616,672	57,827,542	63,918,839	63,431,397	80,958,080
Education Budget in US\$ million	244	287	324	437	558	605	803	779	746	931

Headings	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Primary Education in NRs 000	8,461,049	9,981,475	10,351,425	11,900,101	16,281,277	30,281,444	48,576,461	53,776,888	53,403,622	55,510,628
Primary Education in US\$ million	114.34	134.88	145.79	183.08	232.59	393.27	674.67	655.82	628.28	638.05
Secondary Education in NRs 000	4,253,925	5,012,910	5,418,516	6,543,343	9,019,897	8,611,533	894,764	901,550	1,059,359	14,732,862
Secondary Education in US\$ million	57.49	67.74	76.32	100.67	128.86	111.84	12.43	10.99	12.46	169.34
1000 US\$ equals to	74,000	74,000	71,000	65,000	70,000	77,000	72000	82,000	85,000	87,000

Comparison of share of education (2004-2005 to 2013-2014) budget

Items	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Share of Education Budget in Total budget	16.17	16.75	15.99	16.80	16.56	16.30	17.11	16.61	15.67	15.65
Share of Government in Education budget	69.89	72.78	71.37	72.69	71.83	68.78	77.51	76.16	80.81	77.84
Share of Foreign Aid in Education budget	30.11	27.22	28.63	27.31	28.17	31.22	22.49	23.84	19.19	22.16
Share of Government in Primary Education budget	63.06	66.75	65.95	67.13	63.93	60.39	71.33	70.13	75.08	71.31
Share of Foreign Aid in Primary Education budget	36.94	33.25	34.05	32.87	36.07	39.61	28.67	29.87	24.92	28.69

Comparison of education sub-sector (2004-2005 to 2013-2014) budget

Education sub-sector	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Primary Education	62.58	62.30	60.98	61.14	62.87	67.22	68.47	68.86	67.62	68.57
Secondary Education	23.55	23.59	23.55	23.05	23.08	18.47	17.08	16.69	18.24	18.20
TEVT	1.16	1.38	1.43	1.60	1.21	1.65	2.36	3.62	2.06	2.91
Tertiary Education	9.36	9.29	10.60	11.02	10.96	10.65	10.04	9.02	10.17	8.33
Edu Mgt and Admin	2.53	2.64	2.57	2.36	1.84	1.95	1.99	1.77	1.88	1.96
Others	0.82	0.80	0.87	0.83	0.05	0.05	0.06	0.04	0.03	0.03

Share of education, primary and secondary education (2004-2005 to 2013-2014) budget as per GDP

Items	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Share of education budget in GDP	3.06	3.25	3.16	3.48	3.95	3.91	4.21	4.16	3.73	4.20
Share of primary education budget in GDP	1.44	1.53	1.42	1.46	1.65	2.54	3.53	3.50	3.14	2.88
Share of secondary education budget in GDP	0.72	0.77	0.74	0.80	0.91	0.72	0.07	0.06	0.06	0.77

Donor fund has become a very important part of education financing in Nepal for the last several decades. Currently several friendly countries, development partners and UN agencies are providing fund support to the government of Nepal in the education sector. The major donors include- World Bank, Asian Development Bank, European Commission, DfID, Australia, Denmark, Norway, Finland, and UNICEF as pool donors. They channel their resources through the Government system under the concept of sector wide approach. In addition, there are other development partners such as JICA, USAID, WFP and UNESCO, which provide support to the government programme under separate arrangement. The donor support varies year to year (See above table).

The government fund flow mechanism in education ensures the flow of funds from the ministry to regional and district level educational agencies through the Annual Strategic Implementation Plan (ASIP) associated with Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB) of the MOE/DOE. The spending is incurred under the budget headings of the plan. Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) provides rational for the distribution of the budget as per the stated policies and programme priorities.

Budgetary calculations are attempted regarding the allocation and disbursement of the budget to address the needs of the disadvantaged groups. The disadvantaged groups are supported in the form of incentives. The major incentives provided for disadvantaged groups include:

- Text books for all basic school children (Grade 1-8)
- Scholarships for all primary Dalit children and 50 percent girls, all children and students with disabilities,
- Special scholarship for the children and students of Karnali zone, and children of martyrs
- Day meal to primary school children in selected poor districts and,
- Grants to lower secondary and secondary schools to provide free education to Dalit students

Based on the successful experiences of previous plans and programmes, especially BPEP I and BPEP II vis-à-vis basket funding, the country together with EFA partners developed a joint Financing Arrangement (JFA) for pool funding for achieving the goals of EFA, thus paving the way for increased/improved funding by a consortium of EFA partners including the government of Nepal. While this process is still evolving, it is worthwhile to determine what impact these efforts had upon the implementation of EFA plans and programmes as well as how these efforts would effect upon future strategic planning of the education sector for education-related assistance.

International assistance accounts for a large proportion of education development budget. Education for All programme followed by School Sector Reform Programme with focus on primary/basic education (grade 1-8) receive most of the international assistance on

education. Nepal has been successful in adopting a mechanism for mobilizing donor resources for EFA following a joint financing arrangement led by government procedures.

Building upon the experiences of basket funding approach, EFA programme has adopted a joint financing approach in which resources are pooled based on pro rata share. Contributions by development partners form 20 to 24% of total expenditures including recurrent and capital expenditures while the government bears 76 to 80 of the education budget for all pool financing. Under this modality, government procedures are followed in spending and reporting with a few exceptions. Besides, there is non-pool financing under separate agreement with the individual donor.

The JFA includes important elements such as: (i) goals of the EFA programme and scope of the JFA; (ii) responsibilities of Government; (iii) responsibilities of the pooling donors; (iv) meeting structure; (v) organizational structure and consultations; (vi) the pooling mechanism; and (vii) procurement, reporting and monitoring issues; and dispute settlement. Under the JFA, Government has the overall responsibility for planning, administration, procurement and financial management, implementation and monitoring of the programme.

Every year two consultation and review meetings in November/December and April/May are organized for pool as well as non-pool partners to discuss the implementation and achievements of education programmes and commit on funding and support for the next year. While annual consultation meeting in December takes stock of progress and achievements in the previous year through field visits and monitoring reports/instruments such as the Flash and Consolidated Reports of School Level Educational Statistics of Nepal and the Status Report (Annual Progress Report), the annual review meeting in April focuses on providing financial assistance for the next fiscal year based on the Annual Strategic Implementation Plan (ASIP) aligned with Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB).

On the annual basis, the pooling donors review the ASIP/AWPB for the programme and commit their contributions. The MOE and the Financial Controller General's Office (FCGO) are responsible for certifying and forwarding the relevant financial reports to the Lead donor (Donor Contact Point). The FCGO/MOF certifies all consolidated trimester and annual expenditure reports.

The planning and monitoring instruments form a powerful basis for donor coordination for the present as well as future support and cooperation in the field of education. It has proved that adoption of a common results framework for monitoring progress on Education for All (EFA) goals, and reliance on government rules and procedures for financial management, procurement, reporting and auditing of pool donors and government funds have helped increase the effectiveness of education programmes and reduce transaction costs of donors and government, contributing to improved coordination of all EFA partners.

It is expected that the new constitution of Nepal will adopt a federal set up, which might have major implications for decentralizing education. In this respect, it is assumed that education governance will be the shared responsibility of the central, provincial and local governments. It is worth mentioning here that based on EFA experiences, for post-2015 there is a need to expand the JFA mechanism to cover the whole education sector including basic, secondary and tertiary education to ensure adequate flows of funds to schools and institutions, contributing to improved funding and effectiveness of financial and technical support from government as well as EFA development partners to the comprehensive education sector.

In the light of federalism education, the question is: what should be the contributions of the central, provincial and local governments, communities and development partners in meeting the costs of education, with particular emphasis on meeting the needs of the disadvantaged population? And, in what way?

Annex 5: Roles and Functions of Various Institutions

For the monitoring actors, the following roles and functions have been envisioned for the different stakeholders towards implementation of the EFA programmes including the role of monitoring and evaluation:

Institution	Roles and Functions
MOE	• Formulation of educational policy, plans and programs and giving directions for their implementation • Education sector annual planning, programming and budgeting • Policy analysis and development • Institutional coordination • Research and Design • Foreign aid co-ordination and mobilization of national and international resources • Education sector management information system • Monitoring and evaluation at macro level • Public relations and parliamentary affairs
DOE	• Annual programming and budgeting for primary and secondary education • Design of educational development programs and dissemination • Research and development • Technical assistance to districts for program implementation • Policy management and enforcement • Feedback to the Ministry on educational policies and programs • Supervision and monitoring of program implementation in the districts

Institution	Roles and Functions
CDC	• Curriculum policy framing and planning • Design, review and revise curricula and textbooks • Authorize and publish textbooks and supplementary reading materials • Promote sound assessment practice in schools through assessment guidelines and training workshops • Develop teacher support materials for effective use of curricula and textbooks • Curriculum dissemination and monitoring • Curriculum evaluation and research • Development of school library
NCED	• Planning and organizing in-service training of teachers, educational managers, head teachers and other educational personnel • Training of trainers • Accreditation of training courses • Development of training packages and materials • Identification of professional needs of teachers and other educational personnel • Coordination of public and private teacher training institutions • Support and supervision to ETCs • Research on teacher development and teaching • Development of teacher management information system
NFEC	• Annual planning and programming for adult education program • Post-literacy and continuing education program • Implementation of NFE programs in partnership with local bodies and NGOs • Supervision and monitoring of NFE programs • Organization of literacy campaigns • Design and implement out-of-school education

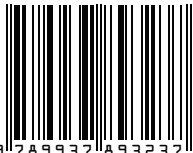
Institution	Roles and Functions
RED	• Coordination of the implementation of educational plans and programs within the region • Professional upgrading of educational personnel through training, workshops, and seminars • Monitoring and evaluation of DEOs • Coordination of DEO activities within the region • Supervision and monitoring
DEO	• School administration • Decentralized planning based on district level EMIS • School improvement planning • Teacher personnel management • Preparation and costing of educational plans, programs and projects. • Teacher evaluation • Implementation management • School evaluation and monitoring • Working with NGOs, community-based organizations, teacher associations and local governments • Administration and management of examinations • General and financial administration
RC	• Identification of recurrent training needs of teachers • Planning of recurrent/refresher training courses • Training follow-up, supervision and evaluation • Classroom observation and analysis of classroom data • Teacher professional support • Conducting professional meetings, workshops, and seminars • Conducting community surveys and community mobilization • Coordination of cluster-wide instructional activities

Institution	Roles and Functions
VEC	• Coordination of SMCs, schools and educational programs within the VDC • Preparation of educational plans and programs within the VDC • Advise the VDC on educational matters • Monitoring and follow-up of implementation of educational plans and programs within the VDC (e.g., early childhood education, literacy) • Mobilize resources
SMC	• Preparation of school improvement plans and programs • Recruitment of temporary teachers • Monitor school and teacher performance • Mobilize resources for school development • Oversee general functioning of the school • Mobilize communities in the preparation and execution of school improvement plans • Reward and punishment of teachers • Management of school funds and property • Control of school finance
Local bodies (DDC, VDC, Municipality)	• Prepare plan and programs to ensure basic and primary education within their area • Generate resources to support education programs • Monitor education activities to ensure accountability towards the beneficiary • Support for program implementation-- coordination, resource mobilization and monitoring • Prepare literacy/education maps • Prepare formal and non-formal education plans • Launch programs/campaigns for eliminating illiteracy • Building relationship with the agencies working in the respective areas • Be aware of the different cost-effective and innovative measures for increasing the number of literate.

Institution	Roles and Functions
UN Agencies, INGOs, Development Partners	• Linkage and support, program facilitation, financial support, evaluation • Develop partnership programme for education activities
NGOs	• Advocacy for basic and primary education • Awareness programs • Monitoring of educational development
CLCs	• To implement NFE Program, • To provide life skills to the out-of-school youths and adults using NFE materials as well as new materials and activities • To facilitate community-based forum for EFA activities • To provide material and institutional support to community education
Schools	• Education program implementation • To deliver basic and primary education including life skills to the children through school curriculum • Organize extension activities for EFA
Teacher organizations	• Advocacy for basic and primary education • Awareness programs • Monitoring of educational development • Monitoring of professional development for quality improvement
PTA and local intellectuals	• Safeguard beneficiaries interest • Support classroom practices for joyful learning



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