



**SOCIAL INCLUSION:  
GENDER AND EQUITY IN EDUCATION SWAPS  
IN SOUTH ASIA**

**NEPAL CASE STUDY**

**Sushan Acharya**



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## Foreword

The Ministry of Education and Sports welcomes this publication of joint research into the issue of gender and social inclusion in sector-wide approaches to education.

Nepal is undergoing profound changes, and chief amongst these is increased demand from the people for better services, including education. The Government is committed, along with donors, to meeting this demand where possible, and has chosen the sector-wide approach to be the current major reform of school education. Gender and social inclusion are central to this review, as the rights of women, girls and minority groups were central to the popular movement in April 2006. The Interim Constitution is an important recognition of the new context.

As data in this publication shows, many of the gender and social inclusion indicators in terms of participation and achievement are moving rapidly in the right direction, and this is confirmed by the Mid-Term Review of Education for All, and by figures in the recently published *Nepal Demographic and Health Survey 2006*. We in the Ministry of Education and Sports take particular satisfaction from this, since these improvements have been taking place, for most of the past decade, against a background of conflict. It is clear that the school system in Nepal is robust, and that schools continue to thrive.

There is however no room for complacency. Girls and members of minority groups are losing out on education, either by staying in school for fewer years than most boys, or for far too many by not being allowed to go to school at all. Gender and social inclusion issues have a national dimension, in terms of underutilized potential for the state: they also have a domestic dimension, where parents are unable or unwilling to support girls and others disadvantaged in some way in accessing the education that is their basic human right.

For members of some disadvantaged groups – the differently abled, the very poor, people living with HIV or AIDS, for example – the position is worse than for girls: for these children there are frequently multiple disadvantages, and these have been made worse by the conflict. For both groups, Nepal's rich language variety can be yet another barrier to education, and the Interim Constitution and the reform plans make clear that children will have the right to education in their mother tongue.

We welcome the vigorous debate around these issues, and the emerging consensus that things must change. School Sector Reform, Nepal's SWAp, will address the challenges children and their families face.

This timely publication contributes to our understanding on gender and social inclusion most effectively. As Nepal moves rapidly towards major school reforms, it usefully brings to the fore important concerns, and these are relevant not just here in Nepal but throughout the South Asian Region. The Ministry of Education and Sports appreciates the role of UNICEF in initiating the research of which this publication is the outcome, and I commend it to all as informative and relevant.



Balananda Paudel  
Acting Secretary  
Ministry of Education and Sports

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## Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ASIP	Annual Strategic Implementation Plan
ASP	Alternative School Programme
AWPB	Annual Work Programme and Budget
BPEP	Basic and Primary Education
CDC	Curriculum Development Centre
CERID	Centre for Educational Research, Innovation and Development
CSSP	Community School Support Programme
CVICT	Centre for Victims of Torture
DDC	District Development Committee
DEC	Distance Education Centre
DEP	District Education Plan
DEVA	Development Associates for Rural and Regional Development
DG	Director General
DOE	Department of Education
ECD	Early Childhood Education
ECECO	European Commission Education Coordination Office
EFA	Education for All
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ETC	Education Training Centre
FCGO	Financial Controller General's Office
FUG	Forest Users' Group
GATE	Girls' Access to Education
GEDS	Gender Equality Development Section
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
GON	Government of Nepal
GPI	Gender Parity Index
HDI	Human Development Index
HMG	His Majesty's Government
HSEB	Higher Secondary Education Board
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IFCD	Innovative Forum for Community Development
INSEC	Informal Sector Service Centre
JFA	Joint Financial Arrangement
JICA	Japanese International Cooperation Agency
LRC	Lead Resource Centre
MLD	Ministry of Local Development
MOES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MTEF	Mid-Term Education Finance
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NCED	National Centre for Educational Development
NDHS	Nepal Demographic Health Survey
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NLFS	National Labour Force Survey
NLSS	Nepal Living Standard Survey

NNDSWO	Nepal National Dalit Social Welfare Organization
NPA	National Plan of Action
NPC	National Planning Commission
PBA	Programme-Based Approach
PEB	Programme Executive Board
PID	Programme Intensive District
PMC	Programme Management Committee
PPC	Pre-Primary Centre
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
RC	Resource Centre
RP	Resource Person
SESP	Secondary Education Support Programme
SGOG	School Grants Operation Guidelines
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SLC	School Leaving Certificate
SMC	School Management Committee
SSA	School Sector Approach
STR	Student Teacher Ratio
SWAp	Sector-Wide Approach
TA	Technical Assistance
TMIS	Training Management Information System
TRSE	Technical Review of School Education
VEP	Village Education Plan
WFP	World Food Programme
WTS	Welcome to School

## Executive Summary

This study has aimed to understand whether and how a move towards a sector-wide approach (SWAp) in education in Nepal is making a difference to the addressing of educational inequity and exclusion. It further explores how current approaches could be adapted, strengthened or improved in order to enhance overall effectiveness. The main focus of enquiry was the Education for All (EFA) Programme 2004–09, which is already following a SWAp modality to some extent. However, consideration was also given to the Secondary Education Support Programme (SESP) 2003–09, as it is planned that this large, jointly-funded project for the secondary sub-sector will be merged with EFA into a single SWAp for the schools sector – the School Sector Approach (SSA).

Conceptualization of gender and social inclusion issues within EFA 2004–09 and SESP and the implementation processes to address the issues were explored. The major methods adopted in order to capture the mechanisms as well as perceptions of the stakeholders were primarily document review and semi-structured interviews with key personnel. This report, while examining the process and contribution of SWAps in addressing issues of inequity, explores dimensions of challenges and disparities that directly and indirectly affect the education of Nepali children.

The overall conclusion of the study is that, whilst there have been many efforts and initiatives to address the serious levels of educational inequity that exist in Nepal, these have not been as effective as they might have been, even taking into account the very challenging governance context. A key reason for this is that the move to a SWAp modality has in fact been superficial and partial. Therefore, the potential benefits of such an approach in terms of achieving better equity outcomes through improved policy coherence, clear agreement on priorities, much-needed institutional reform and capacity development, cannot currently be realized. Mainstreaming of gender and equity concerns across the programme remains limited. There is a lack of consistency on the fundamental issue of free primary education and targeting of ECD to the most disadvantaged. Even the activities implemented by government using pooled funds are poorly linked across different components, and seen as competing rather than complementary. Furthermore, there are numerous further activities in the sub-sector that fall outside of the EFA 2004–09 programme and budget, risking duplication and undermining of capacity. The key recommendations of the study therefore relate to achieving a more robust and comprehensive strategic framework for the whole sub-sector, with clear government leadership and a higher level of donor 'buy in' and coordination, in order to strengthen capacity and institutions at all levels to bring about accelerated progress in equity in educational access and outcomes.

## The Context for the SWAp

Multiple factors cause disparity and inequality in education. Therefore the social inclusion challenge is vast – high levels of poverty, fragile environments, entrenched gender and caste discrimination and the existence of 'hidden' groups of particularly vulnerable children, including disabled children, working children, HIV affected children and those displaced by conflict. Adding to these challenges are weak governance, incoherent policies, and weak coordination and collaboration within and between sectors.

Though the move towards a SWAp was initiated in difficult circumstances, the context is gradually improving. Many human rights instruments and legal frameworks are in operation. The

Interim Constitution 2007 has further strengthened previous commitments; the draft of the three-year interim development plan of the education sector has also made commitments towards addressing old as well as new forms of challenges; and the school sector approach initiative is geared towards comprehensively addressing social exclusion in the total school system (Grades 1 to 12).

## Lessons Learned

### Impact

- Systematic and adequate documentation about the development of the SWAp is not available so we cannot be completely clear about its equity impact. Nevertheless, even after years of conflict, programmes have been maintained and indicators have steadily improved. Understanding about social inclusion and activities to address the issues related to exclusion has also increased. Strategies adopted by EFA 2004–09 to ensure equitable access and quality education have seemingly helped improve access more than other areas (e.g. internal efficiency and quality).
- There is no definite evidence, though, to argue that the improvement is caused by EFA 2004–09 or SESP alone. Nevertheless, evaluations of individual components suggest some positive impacts in certain areas, e.g. promotion of girls and Dalit children, proportion of female teachers, and improved GPI. But difficult political and governance context, combined with relatively poor donor coordination (in comparison with other country examples) have undoubtedly been significant constraints on impact.
- Systematically identifying, reaching and facilitating the education of ‘hard to reach’ children has been difficult to achieve, owing to the non-functioning of district level government.

### Design and content

- Understanding about social inclusion and activities to address the issues related to exclusion has improved within the system. The tendency to make policy decisions to address exclusion issues has also improved. Use of available human rights instruments, national policies/plans and legal frameworks is also observed. However, Nepal EFA 2004–09 and SESP are *predominantly* guided by a national development agenda rather than a ‘rights’ perspective.
- The EFA 2004–09 programme is conceptualized around Nepal’s EFA goals, linked to the international (Dakar) EFA goals. Plans for each goal were devised separately with little linkage with the overarching goal of equity and universal primary education. Thus, ECD and NFE have been seen as parallel and competing components, rather than linked strategically to overall progress on UPE.
- In SESP a more comprehensive and consolidated outlook regarding equity would have captured the equity issue in totality. Focus on poverty alone has missed the complex dynamics of gender and social exclusion.
- Though equity-related issues are progressively captured both in EFA 2004–09 and SESP the use of ‘mainstreaming’ concepts of equity and inclusion is relatively limited.
- Since the EFA 2004–09 Core Document is not sufficiently coherent, prioritized and linked to budget lines, the danger of programme duplication/repetition remains, and initiatives outside the framework proliferate.

## Implementation

- The development partners', including INGOs', role in pursuing the issues of disparity influenced the reform activities in EFA 2004–09 and SESP.
- With a fixed programme framework and budget allocation being handed down from the centre, the sense of responsibility of the system towards students and community has tended to weaken. This reinforces the upward accountability. Meanwhile, communities have felt 'burdened' with extra responsibilities, rather than genuinely empowered through greater decision-making power or sense of entitlement.
- Still the issues of social exclusion are not approached holistically. Thus an unbalanced approach to reform is applied.
- There is a tendency among DPs, I/NGOs and domestic pressure groups to advocate single issues (e.g. disability, language) or even sub-sectors (e.g. ECD, NFE). Regardless of the importance of the issue or sub-sector, this tends to undermine progress towards a coherent and efficient evidence-based programme.
- DPs exhibit multiple voices. This has also affected coordination and efficient addressing of inequity in education.

## Consultation and participation of stakeholders

- EFA 2004–09 design processes were to a larger extent participatory and appeared to be more inclusive than for the previous phases (BPEP) and for SESP.
- SIPs, DEPs and ASIP are conceived as the major mechanisms to ensure gender and social inclusion at the implementation level. However, in practice, focus appears to have been on the written product, rather than on making use of the *processes* of school, district or central planning to bring about capacity development and attitudinal change in relation to participation, analysis, committing to and addressing equity issues. The supply driven approach of both EFA 2004–09 and SESP thus discourages the need for consultation with the stakeholders.
- Ongoing communication with the parents/guardians and communities, and catering to their needs, seem weak. As a result, for many parents school is an extra burden that they have to take on and is seen as a benefit for others, not for themselves or their children.
- Teachers (including head teachers) are the main channel for delivery of all the decisions and strategies made at the central level. Therefore in order to successfully deliver the reform initiatives, support of the teachers is essential. Inclusion of the Teacher Union in different forums and discussions has begun, but to a very limited extent.

## Coordination and collaboration

- Gender and social inclusion are the interest and priority of most of the development partners, including I/NGOs, but poor coordination constrains a coherent and 'mainstreaming' approach.
- In terms of the regular programmes, donor coordination is functioning better. However, there remain considerable concerns – on both sides – about TA management, observance of the Code of Conduct and the number of additional activities and projects outside the agreed programme framework. Likewise, foreign interns employed by UN agencies such as UNESCO and who are assigned to directly work and communicate with the government system and local experts has also been an issue because most of them come with very little in the way of professional skills and knowledge of the context of Nepal.

- Internal coordination has emerged as a serious challenge in comprehensively addressing the issues of gender and social exclusion issues. Bureaucratic procedures or norms and development partners' uncoordinated/fragmented support are partially responsible for this situation.
- In contradiction to the Paris Declaration, and in contrast to how many of the same DPs operate in other contexts, in Nepal most DPs remain 'traditional' in approach.

### Monitoring and evaluation

- Improvements have been made in data collection, in a difficult context. But beyond gender, there is not yet an agreed, usable classification system for collecting and analysing disaggregated data (e.g. for caste, ethnicity, language, etc.). Quantitative tools are inadequate and a systematic qualitative tool is absent.
- The focus has been on upward reporting, rather than for school and district level planning purposes that respond to local needs.
- In design (and ongoing monitoring), MOES/DOE tends to rely on input-based information collected and produced by MOES/DOE itself and on district-level aggregated data rather than school-level data. Other available sources have not been well utilized, and the evidence base for policy making and prioritization of activities remains weak.
- Whilst national level indicators give some sense of progress, there are not yet tools for analysing the success (or otherwise) of specific policies and actions, on which to base further policy development and reform. The Joint Reviews also inadequately focus on successes and/or outcomes.
- In order to adjust teacher positions and school mergers, an accurate database of district and sub-district level teacher–pupil ratios is crucial. However, this is still lacking.

### Funding mechanisms

- Despite the attempts to channel more funds to schools, restrictions in terms of fund mobilization and utilization hampers the drive to devolution. This is evident more in SESP than in EFA 2004–09. The SESP frame is more rigid and centrally controlled to the extent that school construction is managed by DOE and DEOs despite the presence of SMCs.
- The prioritization and budgeting process of MOES does not adequately use a specific 'equity lens' and there are no clear mechanisms for prioritizing one activity over another.
- The provision of matching funds (for example in ECD and NFE) is 'equal treatment to the unequal', therefore is more likely to exacerbate inequity than to extend ECD and NFE opportunities to those who would most benefit.
- Small initiatives implemented sporadically through direct funding and through other multilateral and bilateral agencies have made SWAps in education a conglomeration of projects rather than a comprehensive programme-based approach.

### NFE

- NFE is an important strategy for reaching all children with quality education. However, it currently is seen as a 'welfare' school for the poor or underprivileged, and thus risks becoming a 'second class system'. There is limited synergy and lesson-learning between the two systems.

## Specific strategies for equity and inclusion

- A number of strategies are being implemented, especially in relation to ‘equity in access’, including targeted scholarships, incentives to recruit women teachers in rural areas and pilots of bilingual education. However, for the moment, many such initiatives are isolated from what is seen as the ‘regular’ programme. They are rather seen as additional or even as ‘diverting energy’.
- Strategies for access tend to be stronger than strategies for quality such as addressing unequal and discriminatory behaviour, developing pupil confidence, or promoting a healthy environment within the classroom and school, despite these issues being repeatedly stressed in research findings.
- Monetary incentive is a desirable strategy, but targeted scholarships are not necessarily reaching the neediest children and the amount is not adequate even to meet direct costs.
- Despite some good individual efforts the strategies tend to reform one aspect or one level extensively and ignore the others which are eventually affected by that reform initiative.
- Most schools are not ready for the intended reform partly because they lack adequate financial and technical backup.
- From a gender perspective, access to secondary level is still a concern because many secondary schools are not in reachable distance. As a result many girls are likely to be denied secondary level education.

## Capacity building

- Capacity building, particularly in the area of gender and social inclusion, is undertaken through the EFA 2004–09 and SESP pool and direct funds and support from I/NGOs. However capacity building relating to equity is limited in coverage in terms of content and scale.
- Capacity building in NFE is comparatively very weak.
- Capacity building efforts are hardly linked to job performance and/or outcome.
- Schools are functioning under vast diversity in terms of student population, management efficiency, physical and human capacities, accountability and performance. But the approach to social inclusion has been ‘one fits all’. Therefore most schools are not ready for the intended reform partly because they lack adequate financial and technical backup.

## Recommendations on Ways Forward

### Policy and strategy related

1. Improvement in equity requires informed and coherent policies. Therefore a fundamental task is to compile and analyse regional and national policies in relation to gender and social inclusion. Policy lessons drawn from this exercise can be adapted to develop a coherent equity-related education policy framework for entire school sector (Grades 1–12).
2. Advantage needs to be taken of a SWAp approach to ensure a more coherent policy framework, with long term sector strategies that fully mainstream gender and equity concerns. Even if DPs’ own procedures require earmarking of funds, these should be ‘on budget’ and managed within the MOES/DOE.
3. The process of inclusion must operate both at school and system levels. Therefore any intervention devised to address inequity at school level requires a thorough review of the legal

and other institutional mechanisms. If contradictions surface, then reform should partly focus on making the institutional frame consistent

4. The growing interest and spirit to ensure gender and social inclusion within EFA 2004–09 (primary sub-sector) has not reached other levels (lower secondary and up), particularly for the caste, ethnicity and poverty dimensions of exclusion. It is therefore essential to move the efforts and initiatives made so far in the primary sub-sector to upper levels to comprehensively ensure gender and social equity across the entire education sector.

### Coordination, collaboration and participation related

1. Considerable thought will need to be given to the institutional aspects if the two current programmes (EFA 2004–09 and SESP) are to successfully evolve into the School Sector Approach. Attention is particularly required in matters related to ownership of the host government and coordinated involvement of local partners and development agencies.
2. An institutional audit would be useful to shed light on existing lines of management and job descriptions, identifying reporting structures and examining the horizontal linkages between sections, units or institutions and making recommendations for a more conducive structure for effective sector management and coordination, including the effective cross-cutting of gender and equity concerns.
3. Answers to the issues of gender and social exclusion in education are not available only within MOES/DOE. Therefore collaboration with line ministries/agencies, NPC and I/NGOs should be sought. A simple but comprehensive account of the in-school and out-of-school barriers and potential line agencies that could assist in minimizing the barriers can be prepared and updated along with the ASIP. Schools can be oriented to perform similar tasks while preparing SIPs. In this case support of NPC can be sought to address the issues through other machineries. Consequently, ongoing more inclusive and participatory consultation with parents/guardians and directly addressing their specific issues could be institutionalized.
4. At central level an activity such as preparing pre-service teacher training graduates for the Teacher Service Commission examination can best be combined with the programme designed to prepare women for the Public Service Commission examination by the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare. Similarly, the MOU signed between I/NGOs and MOES can include DDCs (at present Local Development Officers, LDOs) and DEOs to ensure functional collaboration at district level. The DEO personnel can then be utilized as resource persons in the intended projects. LDOs can ensure proper utilization of the processes and other partners, and outcomes of the initiatives to improve DEPs.
5. In order to ensure donor harmonization and horizontal linkage between similar initiatives, one single TA and/or direct funding steering committee can be formed. The responsibility of the steering committee can also be to establish functional collaboration and to ensure resource sharing with other equity related existing initiatives.
6. Extensive consultation with DOE/MOES while selecting international technical advisors would also help in identifying the most suitable human resources in the context of Nepal. Therefore it is better to allow the government to identify TA needs and priorities, lead writing of the TOR and approve the appointments with full access to CVs of the consultants etc. Meanwhile in order to strengthen institutional collaboration external evaluation is necessary of the interns who are hired by UN agencies and are in direct contact with the government system and the local experts.
7. Functional linkage between simultaneously implemented activities through different units/sections of DOE could accelerate improvement in social inclusion. Improved interaction,

collaboration and synergy at the central level would avoid the danger of programme duplication and confusion at the district and school levels as well.

8. It will be vital to develop deeper understanding of what is meant by a SWAp, focusing on the potential for accelerated sector progress, drawing on positive experiences from other countries (in many of which the same DP agencies are active). Meanwhile for better coordination among donors the Code of Conduct can be revitalized and examples from other countries from the region can be reviewed and adapted.
9. The SWAp frame (SSA in the future) needs to be expanded and made more flexible. Any support offered by the donors through direct funding and/or TA should follow the frame.
10. The process of including the Teacher Union in different forums and discussions if incorporated within the SWAp frame can be more meaningful to improve the success of the programmes.
11. Given that local government is not fully functioning, both a long term and transition plan and strategy to identify and cater for the 'hard to reach children' are needed to enable district level partners (DEC, DDC, Dalit Development Committee, NGOs) to carry out this task. Human and financial resources sharing may be required. The role of DOE and DEOs in this situation will best be technical support and supervision to ensure equity.
12. Improved interaction, collaboration and synergy at the central level units, sections or institutions would avoid the danger of programme duplication and confusion at the district and school levels.

### Monitoring and evaluation related

1. Strong monitoring mechanisms at all levels are required to measure progress. Therefore at the school level the RPs and school supervisors can be brought under a community managed RC with enhanced technical capacity. At district level DDC (at present LDO) can perform the monitoring and evaluation of education sector inputs.
2. MOES/DOE cannot reach everywhere. Therefore it is essential to consider the information provided by other sources to identify the 'hard to reach' children and thereby provide tailored services.
3. Other sources of information can provide an evidence base for policy making and prioritization of activities. For example, the stories highlighted by the media in relation to disparity and exclusion can be followed up. The same media can be asked to highlight the actions taken to mitigate the situation. This will warn other institutions and individuals about their actions/behaviour on one hand and motivate the media to investigate disparity and exclusion in the education sector on the other.
4. In order to understand and analyse the magnitude of social exclusion, and to ensure vertical equity, school level data is not enough. Therefore the VEP development process can be mainstreamed so that blanket approaches like non-discriminatory provision of matching fund and equal amount of stipend to all irrespective of their socio-economic circumstances can be avoided.
5. Authentic evidence of teacher shortage is urgently required based on which teacher positions could be adjusted and which schools could be merged.

### Funding and service delivery related

1. In order to achieve the aim of the SIP and transfer of school management to the community, MOES can facilitate an intensive joint consultation with MOF, Ministry of Local Development and the Teacher Union. There is also a need to explore mechanisms for ensuring inclusion of

socially excluded individuals and groups in school and community level planning processes, along with mechanisms for greater weighting of funding to schools serving the most disadvantaged communities.

2. The prioritization and budgeting of MOES could be more inclusive if cost and benefit of fund allocation to any particular area is calculated from an equity perspective.
3. Adequate compliance with the Paris Declaration would ease the rigidity seen in fund allocation modality.
4. Provisions like matching grants adopted in ECD and NFEC should be revisited and fund allocation to the poor and underprivileged should be made more equitable.
5. A standard inventory form to record both fixed and movable capital of schools needs to be developed. School supervisors will fill out the form, which will then be updated every three years. This will help in the assessment of school needs and also make schools more accountable towards students and parents/guardians.
6. Delayed delivery of reading materials in the case of both NFE and formal schools is persistent. Therefore the piloting of decentralization of grade five textbooks publication and distribution recently undertaken should be applied across the formal and NFE sectors.

### Capacity development related

1. In order to avoid resource duplication the content and approaches of training manuals produced by different units of DOE/MOES can be made consistent. Meanwhile different levels (simple and sophisticated) and methods (quantitative and qualitative) of equity analysis exercises included in training programmes can positively impact the planning and programming exercises.
2. Capacity development of NFE should get extra attention as it has the potential of providing opportunity to those who are already left behind and who are likely to be left behind.

### Specific strategies and efforts related

1. Congruent and simultaneous intervention is more effective because poverty, social discrimination in school, inadequate academic support, language difficulty and inadequately relevant curriculum push many children out of school.
2. Well defined strategies to bring children to school, and ensure their survival and improved learning achievement, are required to address issues of inequity in a more consolidated manner.
3. The scholarship amount requires revisiting because as of now the it is not adequate even to meet direct costs.
4. In order to make scholarships more equitable the principle of vertical equity needs to be adopted. Meanwhile extensive consultation and sharing with the stakeholders will help reduce the gap in understanding observed about the intent of scholarships.
5. Given the fact that student enrolment and survival decrease in upper grades, NFE should be developed as system that is complementary to, and integrated with, the formal primary and upper level education. NFE thus requires increased funding, and strong institutional and human resource capacities from the centre to the district level.
6. Schools are still functioning without sanitation facilities and often overlook the need to have ramps for wheelchair accessibility. From an equity perspective the physical planning section of DOE through DEO should ensure that schools (both private and community) while constructing and rehabilitating their buildings or classrooms build ramps and construct enough facilities. Meanwhile in urban areas the trend has been to construct 4/5 storey

buildings with very limited outlets to get out of the building in times of emergency. Therefore school building norms, particularly in urban areas, have to be revisited and enforced with earthquake safety being the major concern.

7. In order to achieve equity in school education, alternative learning provisions, particularly for girls where a secondary school is not in accessible distance, has to be a priority of SESP and the School Sector Approach.
8. Where there is food shortage, programmes like Food for Education can play a significant role in supporting children's schooling. Such programmes can help address inequity in education particularly caused by poverty and gender discrimination.



# 1. Introduction

This report presents the Case Study from Nepal as a part of a three-country study that also includes Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. The Nepal case explores how education programmes supported through a Sector-Wide Approach (SWAp) or Programme-Based Approach (PBA) are conceptualizing and addressing issues of gender and social exclusion, and what have been the outcomes of the programmes.

## 1.1 Background to the Study

The study is grounded on the assertion that good quality education is both a right of all children and a development imperative. In Nepal formal and/or modern education has a very short history, and education has traditionally been seen more as a development tool than a right of an individual, reinforcing existing caste- and gender-based discrimination, rather than challenging them. Therefore in Nepal a significant number of girls and children from excluded and vulnerable groups are not enrolled, not attending, or not completing a cycle of (even) basic education. In addition, there are many children who, despite being in school, are not fully enjoying their rights to a good quality education from equal opportunities, protection and non-discrimination perspectives. As in other South Asian countries, armed conflict, incidence of poverty and natural disasters have compounded the challenges of achieving equity in educational access and outcomes. Thus, a central understanding of the Nepal case study has been that social exclusion and gender inequality are deeply intertwined with poverty and armed conflict. If education is to reach all children and provide them with equal opportunities, planning for education needs to be based on a sound analysis and understanding of the complex dynamics of poverty and social exclusion and its impacts on children's life situations.

In Nepal, the move towards a Sector-Wide Approach (SWAp) began in 1999 with the Basic and Primary Education Programme Phase II (BPEP II), whilst the succeeding EFA Programme 2004–09 is explicitly labelled as a 'SWAp' by the government and development partners. Both in Nepal and internationally, the move towards SWAps, implying greater policy coherence, scope for evidence-based planning and more effective targeting of resources to where needs are greatest, has an obvious potential to strengthen equity and inclusion in quality education service provision. Up until now, there has been only limited exploration, mainly in relation to gender issues, as to whether and how this potential is being realized in practice. Therefore a study of this kind aims to add to the overall knowledge of SWAps by focusing on the South Asian context and the full range of social exclusion issues that are pertinent to the region.

The overall study was catalysed by UNICEF Regional Office for South Asia, as a result of a Regional Education Meeting in February 2006, which had the theme of 'SWAps and Disparities'. In this meeting gaps in the understanding of a SWAp itself and its potential in addressing issues of exclusion were identified and discussed. In Nepal the study has been a joint venture of the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) and DPs. Whilst UNICEF has provided overall coordination, in Nepal as in the other two countries, the study has been seen as an activity 'within the SWAp'. Moreover, it has proved possible to fully synergize the study with preparations for the Mid-Term Review of EFA 2004–09.

## 1.2 Developments in Commitments, Understanding and Practice

### 1.2.1 Commitments to equitable and inclusive education

#### *The MDGs*

The Millennium Development Goals, developed in 2000, constitute the set of international commitments that currently drive the 'development agenda', with 'poverty reduction' as central to the current development discourse. In many countries, the MDGs act as the basis for poverty reduction strategies and sector plans. Meanwhile, many development agencies have revised their policies and priorities around the meeting of these goals. Among eight areas of MDGs three have direct bearing on education:

#### **Goal 1. Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger**

- Target 1. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day.
- Target 2. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.

#### **Goal 2. Achieve Universal Primary Education**

- Target 3. Ensure that by 2015 children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.

#### **Goal 3. Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women**

- Target 4: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and at all levels of education no later than 2015.

It can be noted that 'social exclusion' is directly addressed in the goals only with regard to gender inequality. With regard to education, there is a new emphasis on 'completion' (in contrast to earlier goals stressing enrolment). However, the gender goal refers only to numerical 'parity' of enrolment, not a wider concept of equality.

#### *The EFA 'Dakar' goals*

The EFA goals were also developed in 2000, at the Dakar World Education Forum. They constitute a considerable strengthening and revision of the earlier EFA goals (developed in Jomtien, 1990):

1. Expanding and improving comprehensive **Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)**, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.
2. Ensuring that **by 2015** all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete **free and compulsory primary education of good quality**.
3. Ensuring that the **learning needs of all young people and adults** are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes.
4. Achieving a **50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015**, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.

5. **Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015**, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to, and achievement in, basic education of good quality.
6. 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.

The EFA goals do not contradict the education-related MDGs, but do considerably expand on them. There is a stronger emphasis on the quality and relevance of education, an expanded concept of gender equality including the concept of 'equity in quality', and a more explicit mention of socially excluded groups (namely 'vulnerable and disadvantaged children', 'children in difficult circumstances' and 'those belonging to ethnic minorities').

### *Rights commitments*

A number of international and regional rights conventions and declarations commit signatory countries to addressing social exclusion and inequality and ensuring each and every child accesses good quality, relevant education as a right. Some key ones include:

- Articles 28 and 29 of CRC, 1989, which ensure children's right to education.
- ILO Convention, which advocates for ensuring access to free basic education and, wherever possible, appropriate vocational training for all children removed from the worst forms of child labour.
- CEDAW 1979.
- Beijing Platform for Action, which recognizes the right of the girl child to education.
- The Colombo Resolution of Children, 1992 Second SAARC Conference on Children in South Asia. One of the recommendations was 'Access to and enrolment in primary education for at least 80 per cent of boys and 75 per cent of girls, and completion of primary education by at least 50 per cent of girls as well as boys by 1995'.
- SAARC Development Goals (2005–10). The goals include 'access to primary or community school for all', 'completion of the primary education cycle', 'universal functional literacy', 'quality education at primary, secondary and vocational levels', and 'reduce vulnerabilities of the poor, women and children'.
- SAARC Child Rights Decade (2001–10). The goals include 'enable all children of primary school age to complete primary school at the required level of learning' and 'eliminate child labour from the SAARC region'.

### *Failure to achieve the 2005 gender goal*

This 2005 MDG and EFA goal for gender parity in primary and secondary education has not been achieved. Indeed, at the current rates, this target will not be achieved by 40 per cent of the remaining countries by 2015. The Global Governance Initiative Report 2005 highlighted this failure as one of the 'world's biggest failures and missed opportunities'. The 'Beijing Plus Ten' Conference (2005) called for renewed efforts to achieve this goal, without which wider progress on gender becomes impossible.

Like many other countries, Nepal has been working to achieve the gender parity target missed in 2005 and is currently defined as 'on track' for doing so by 2015. The gender parity index of primary level enrolment is now 0.94 (MOES/DOE, Flash Report I, 2006). The participation of girls in lower secondary and secondary levels is much lower than that in primary level.

### 1.2.2 Understanding poverty, gender inequality and social exclusion

International understanding of the interaction between poverty, gender and social exclusion has developed both through 'academic' study and practical experience.

#### *Poverty*

Earlier models of 'development' often assumed that economic growth would reduce poverty. In the education sector, concern for national development and economic growth was the initial driver for the expansion of education systems from the 1950s through to the late 1980s, with this initial drive tending to focus on physical expansion (e.g. building schools in rural areas).

Gradually, it became apparent that this approach was not 'trickling down' to large numbers of poor people. 'The poor' are not only those without money or resources, but also experience a wide range of disadvantages related to *access* to resources and services, and to associated power, status and participation. Poverty is not only 'absolute', but also 'relative', in a particular context. The approach has shifted to one of a *direct focus* on poverty reduction, including attention to access of the poor to quality basic services. This is now very explicit in the MDGs and the emphasis on national poverty reduction strategies.

In the education sector, the sharpened focus on direct poverty reduction has catalysed a stronger focus on 'universalizing' access to primary and basic education, in order to directly 'empower' the poor. Since the mid-1990s, education efforts have shifted to a wider range of 'access' strategies, such as reducing costs to poor parents, combined with policies to address the 'quality' of education, often related to provision of trained teachers and basic educational resources. These approaches have certainly reaped some rewards, the initial dramatic results of the 'UPE' policies of Uganda and Malawi being oft-quoted examples.

#### *Gender*

Gender discrimination is perhaps the most universal form of social exclusion. Gender issues, and the interaction of gender discrimination and poverty, have attracted rigorous academic analysis and now benefit from a strong conceptual basis. An overall documented trend is the move from 'Women in Development (WID)' approaches, which implied special programmes for women and girls as a 'disadvantaged' group, to 'Gender and Development (GAD)' approaches, which imply analysis and addressing of the unequal power relationships between males and females. Central to a GAD approach is the concept of *gender mainstreaming*:

*Gender mainstreaming means the consistent use of a gender perspective at all stages of the development and implementation of policies, plans, programmes and projects. In the education sector, this would include not only the activities of governments, but also those of schools, colleges, education institutions and, where appropriate, of NGOs and the private sectors as well ... Rather than adding on a women's component to existing policies, plans, programmes and projects, a gender perspective informs these at all stages, and in every aspect of the decision-making process. Gender mainstreaming may thus entail a fundamental transformation of the underlying paradigms that inform education. (DAC, 1998a)*

UN agencies, the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of OECD and other international bodies have developed comprehensive guidelines for mainstreaming gender, at national, sector and institutional levels, and many governments and development agencies are – at least in theory – committed to such an approach.

This is no less the case in the education sector, where it has been gradually realized that not only were girls benefiting less than boys from the expansion of educational opportunities, but also that the education of girls and women is one of the essential strategies for making progress on poverty reduction and needs to be more highly prioritized. An understanding of gender discrimination implies that, whilst cost reduction strategies remain vital to reduce the pressure on poor parents to have to choose which children to educate, it is also necessary to directly address discriminatory attitudes and demonstrate the benefits to everyone of educating girls. Meanwhile, attention needs to be paid to ensuring gender equity in the school and classroom, so that girls are not held back due to poor self esteem, discrimination, low expectations or harassment, or simply the lack of female teachers.

### *Social exclusion*

Some countries have long recognized that other forms of social exclusion also need attention, if progress is to be made in realizing rights and achieving development goals. India, for example, has well established mechanisms and policies for targeting its ‘scheduled castes’ and ‘scheduled tribes’. However, internationally, attention to forms of social exclusion other than on the basis of gender has been more recent and, as yet, there is a less coherent conceptual framework on which to base analysis and action. One example of a recent attempt to address this lack, which usefully summarizes the learning to date, comes from DFID’s publication *Addressing Poverty by Tackling Social Exclusion* (DFID, 2005). This draws on a range of earlier work, including an earlier DFID publication on *Disability, Poverty and Development* (DFID, 2000).

The paper defines ‘social exclusion’ as follows:

*‘Social exclusion describes a process by which certain groups are systematically disadvantaged because they are discriminated against on the basis of their ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, caste, descent, gender, age, disability, HIV status, migrant status or where they live. Discrimination occurs in public institutions, such as the legal system or education and health services, as well as social institutions like the household, and in the community’. (DFID, 2005)*

The paper notes that in all societies some groups are socially excluded. However, the groups affected and the degree of discrimination vary from one society to another, as do the forms that social exclusion takes. Discrimination can be ‘open and deliberate’, ‘unofficial’, or ‘subtle and unintended’. It can be based on ‘who you are’, but also on ‘where you live’. It is also explored in detail how social exclusion causes poverty and hampers poverty reduction and development efforts, as summarized in the box below.

### **Social Exclusion Causes Poverty**

#### **Social exclusion causes the poverty of particular people, leading to higher rates of poverty among affected groups**

- It hurts them materially – making them poor in terms of income, health or education by causing them to be denied access to resources, markets and public services. It can also hurt them emotionally, by shutting them out of the life of their community.
- Socially excluded people are often denied the opportunities available to others to increase their income and escape from poverty by their own efforts. So, even though the economy may grow and general income levels may rise, excluded people are likely to be left behind, and make up an increasing proportion of those who remain in poverty.

#### **Social exclusion reduces the productive capacity – and rate of poverty reduction – of a society as a whole**

- It impedes the efficient operation of market forces and restrains economic growth. Some people with good ideas may not be able to raise the capital to start up a business. Discrimination in the labour market may make parents decide it is not worthwhile to invest in their children's education.
- Socially excluded groups often do participate but on unequal terms. Labour markets illustrate this most clearly by exploiting the powerlessness of excluded groups and at the same time reinforcing their disadvantaged position.
- Social exclusion also increases the level of economic inequality in society, which reduces the poverty reducing impact of a given growth rate.

#### **Social exclusion makes it harder to achieve the Millennium Development Goals**

- Social exclusion explains why some groups of people remain poorer than others, have less food, die younger, are less economically or politically involved, and are less likely to benefit from services. This makes it difficult to achieve the MDGs in some countries without particular strategies that directly tackle exclusion.

#### **Social exclusion leads to conflict and insecurity**

- Social exclusion is a leading cause of conflict and insecurity in many parts of the world. Excluded groups that suffer from multiple disadvantages may come together when they have unequal rights, are denied a voice in political processes and feel marginalized from the mainstream of their society.
- Peaceful mobilization may be the first step, such as marches, strikes and demonstrations. But if this has no effect, or if governments react violently to such protests, then groups are more likely to resort to violent conflict if they feel there is no alternative.
- When social groups feel unequal and suffer compared with others in society, conflict is more likely. Research over several decades has revealed that political and social forms of inequality are the most important factors in outbreaks of violence (particularly ethnic conflicts, revolutions and genocides).
- Social exclusion also causes insecurity in the form of gang violence. Young people who feel alienated from society and excluded from job opportunities and decision-making may turn to violence and crime as a way of feeling more powerful.

(DFID, 2005)

The growing focus on social exclusion is, again, reflected in the education sector. Both in Africa and South Asia, countries that have successfully expanded access to the majority of their populations are finding that the remaining minority (sometimes called the ‘last 10 per cent’, though it might be more or fewer), are a ‘hard to reach’ category, not responsive to general ‘pro-poor’ policies. Certainly, these children are poor, and a disproportionate number are girls. However, almost without exception, they are also affected by other forms of social exclusion, for example on the basis of caste, ethnicity, language, disability or citizenship status (e.g. being a migrant, IDP or refugee). These are the *multiply-vulnerable* children, perhaps living in isolated communities with languages and cultures that differ from the mainstream. Many do not benefit from a supportive family setting, but live in severely stressed families, in families constantly displaced or on-the-move, in refugee camps, as orphans in child-headed households, in other people’s families, in institutions, or alone on the street. They are almost certainly working for survival, but many are ‘hidden’ from public view: e.g. caring for sick relatives or younger siblings in an isolated rural home, working as unregistered migrants in the informal economy, working as bonded labourers, abused and exploited as child sex workers or domestic servants, or even trafficked across international borders. Others are disabled children, kept hidden away at home.

The barriers such children face in even accessing education can be formidable. Furthermore, the schools that can be ‘accessed’ by such groups are often irrelevant to their needs and of inferior quality. They might not provide education in minority children’s languages, be able to provide good quality teachers who can respond to children’s specific needs, or support children with disabilities. It is also frequently the case that schools reproduce the discriminatory attitudes and practices of the wider society. Socially excluded groups are therefore at greater risk of drop-out and non-completion of education, as well as learning less, and benefiting less from education.

It is therefore being learned that addressing ‘equity in access’ and ‘equity in quality’ are complex, requiring attention to the specific life situations in which girls and boys find themselves, to ‘demand’ as well as ‘supply’ factors, to attitudinal as well as economic barriers, to school–community relationships and to the ethos, teaching approaches and management of each school. Indeed, the whole education system needs to become flexible and inclusive, and a positive force for equality, inclusion and rights, if the complex dynamics of social exclusion and gender discrimination are to be addressed and reversed.

### 1.2.3 SWApS as modalities of ‘good practice’ for assistance to educational sector development

#### *The development of the ‘SWAp’ concept*

In tandem (but not necessarily explicitly linked) with developments in our understanding of social exclusion and how it can be addressed, have been substantive changes over the past decade in the way in which educational development is conceptualized and how international assistance to the sector is managed. From the mid-1990s a trend away from traditional project approaches began. The new concept at that time was of a ‘Sector Investment Programme’ (SIP). These programmes aimed to support governments in planning coherently for the whole sector within the context of an over-arching, realistic and costed policy framework, backed by concurrent attention to macro-economic stabilization and public service reform. Funding was to be provided flexibly as a part of government budgets, with governments and ministries of education able to make choices about resource allocation. Financial procedures were to be harmonized and monitoring at sector and programme level integrated, to meet diverse reporting needs. Donors would give up their control over specific project interventions, but gain participation as ‘Development Partners’ in education policy dialogue and broader budget framework negotiations.

The criteria proposed in the earlier formal definitions were largely a construct of development agencies (not government providers of education systems) and generally go beyond the status of practice in all but a very small number of examples. As implementation has got underway, it has been realized that ‘one size does not fit all’ and that national and local realities are the starting point for any sector programme. Few countries have been able to meet the ‘ideal’ wider context of macro-economic stability, action on corruption, civil service reform and decentralization. Similarly, differences in procedures and agendas of development agencies have proved hard to overcome and created difficulties in negotiating a coherent policy approach.

Therefore, over time, the terms ‘Sector-Wide Approaches’ (SWAs) and ‘Programme-Based Approaches’ (PBAs) have been adopted in preference to ‘SIPs’, to describe what is more of a direction, process and ethos than a rigid blueprint or narrowly-defined funding mechanism. There has also been a clearer linking of SWAs in the social sectors to overall poverty reduction frameworks, resulting in a shift of focus – at least in principle – from mechanism to poverty reduction outcomes. A definition put forward by ODI (2000) is one that has become widely used, as a useful working definition that picks out some key characteristics and principles whilst allowing some flexibility of interpretation.

#### **A SWAp includes support that :**

- Is sector wide in scope;
- Is based on a clear sector and strategy framework;
- Is based on long-term plans;
- Includes host country ownership and strong coordinated partnership with external agencies;
- Is developed and implemented with the involvement of, and partnership with, all local stakeholders;
- Includes the involvement of all main external agencies;
- Is based on common implementation arrangements and effective donor coordination
- Relies on local capacity; and
- Includes provision for results based monitoring.

(ODI, 2000)

#### *SWAs and social exclusion*

SWAs were developed as a pragmatic mechanism for more effective development assistance. Whilst they are gradually being linked more explicitly to poverty reduction, they do not of themselves necessarily imply a ‘rights based’ or ‘inclusive’ approach. Nevertheless, as it is becoming clearer that education systems need to address poverty reduction, gender equality and social inclusion as inter-dependent factors, the question arises as to whether and how the move towards a SWAp modality can consciously assist with this process.

In 2006, UNICEF South Asia held a Regional Meeting on ‘SWApS and Disparities’. The background paper for this meeting ‘*Addressing Social and Gender Disparity Through Swaps and PBAs in Education: What Is The Evidence And The Way Forward?*’ (Seel, 2006), summarizes much of the existing published literature<sup>1</sup> that explores gender and equity within SWApS, as well as analysing the ‘equity content’ of the core SWAp documents of twelve countries<sup>2</sup>. The study draws the following conclusions on the *potential* of SWApS to enhance attention to equity and inclusion, as well as *achievements* and *problems* in actual practice:

- A focus on sector-wide efficiency and national development objectives over individual rights can lead to a de-prioritizing of the ‘hard to reach’ groups as ‘too expensive to reach’.
- The top-down, centralized and ‘formal’ approach of many SWApS can lead to weak involvement from civil society, a lack of recognition of informal processes and the reinforcement of existing gender and social biases.
- The focus (over some years) in some SWApS on central-level capacity building and agreeing on mechanisms has diverted attention away from the present needs of poor communities, so that children have ‘slipped through the net’.
- There is variation in the quality and depth of analysis that takes place, of patterns of educational disparity, the key causal factors and of how these interact. Analyses often fail to be multidimensional and to relate one factor to another. There is still less attention to gender than to poverty, and to other forms of social exclusion than to gender.
- As a result, strategies that are identified can prove inappropriate or inadequate/insufficient. Strategies devised to address gender disparity or social exclusion tend to focus overly on physical access and enrolment. There is less attention to ‘equity in quality’, more nuanced approaches to address attitudinal barriers or addressing the specific life situations of multiply-vulnerable ‘hard to reach’ children. Many countries, despite developing ‘comprehensive’ education policy frameworks as a part of SWAp development, continue to lack clear policies related to minority languages in education, or modalities of provision for disabled children.
- SWApS are not necessarily founded on good consultative processes either with disadvantaged individuals and communities themselves or professionals with understanding of specific equity issues.
- There has been limited use of the DAC guidelines for gender mainstreaming in SWApS in practice, and no guidance exists pertaining to other forms of social exclusion. The degree and approach to addressing gender and social exclusion issues is highly dependent on individuals and the overall ‘donor mix’ in a country (including the level of agreement and coordination in support of government efforts).
- Some development partners perceive themselves to be losing the diversity and depth of experience, field-based understanding and relationships, which project interventions provided, making them less able to provide quality assistance.

<sup>1</sup> A key study was DAC/ ODI/ DFID/ CEC (Norton, Sibbons, Seel, Gibbard, Poulsen, Smawfield) *Case Studies on Mainstreaming Gender in Sector-Wide Approaches in Education* (consists of India Case Study, Ghana Case Study, Uganda Case Study, Literature Review and Synthesis Report), 2000; as well as a range of papers undertaken by the UK Overseas Development Institute (ODI).

<sup>2</sup> From South Asia, these included the three countries of this current research, plus India. Other countries included were Ghana, Uganda, Rwanda, Zambia, Yemen, Vietnam, Cambodia and Nicaragua.

## 1.3 Implications for this Study

From the existing literature and analysis, it can be concluded that SWAps/PBAs have a clear potential to accelerate progress on gender and equity, but that this is probably not being fully realized in practice. This Nepal study, and the study as a whole, seeks, above all, to help this potential to be more fully realized. It will do this by exploring in more detail how education SWAps developed *over time*: how equity issues are conceptualized, what ‘partnership’ factors help to bring about changes at different levels and what are effective capacity development strategies and institutional arrangements. In so doing, it will also help to fill gaps in the existing literature with regard to effective practices in education SWAps in South Asia, with its vastly different social-economic and cultural context. It is hoped that this study will inspire MOES and DPs to analyse and understand the complex, inter-linked forms of inequality and exclusion at work in their unique context. And then, that they will take the opportunities provided by a SWAp to address these as a matter of urgency.

## 1.4 Study Purpose and Objectives

### *Purpose*

To understand in detail how gender and social disparity/exclusion are being addressed in a selection of education SWAps in Nepal.

### *Objectives*

To achieve this purpose, the Nepal case study had the following objectives:

- Analyse the key dimensions of disparity and social exclusion that affect children and their implications for the education sector.
- Explore the political, policy, governance and institutional context for the SWAp, as well as ‘threats’ such as conflict or natural disaster.
- Assess the extent to which equity-related goals, objectives and indicators have been identified in the SWAp framework and plans.
- Identify the concepts, approaches and tools used in incorporating gender and equity considerations and the addressing of equity in different stages and processes of SWAp development and implementation.
- Identify development partner approaches, roles, influences and strategies related to addressing gender and social disparity within the SWAp.
- Assess the effectiveness of approaches taken and the influence of contextual factors. Identify lessons learned from good practice and identify gaps and weaknesses for further action.

## 2. Study Approach and Methodology

### 2.1 Overall Approach

The overall approach of the study has been exploratory, aiming to 'tell the story' of Education SWAp in Nepal and attempting to understand how and to what extent these have made a difference in addressing issues related to gender and social inclusion.

### 2.2 Methodology

#### 2.2.1 Research focus areas

Four **focus areas** were identified for the research, namely:

1. Patterns, causes and educational consequences of disparity, inequity and social exclusion. This was in order to set the context for the studies.
2. Analysis of the SWAp content, with regard to conceptualization and addressing of disparity and social exclusion.
3. Analysis of SWAp processes, mechanisms and development over time, with regard to the creation of a conducive context and environment for effectively understanding and addressing equity and social exclusion issues.
4. Analysis of SWAp impacts, including direct reduction of disparity and improved education outcomes for socially excluded groups; and impacts in terms of understanding, attitudes, capacity and mechanisms to analyse and address equity and inclusion issues in an ongoing way.

#### 2.2.2 Research methods and tasks

##### *Methods*

The above four focus areas were explored through two key methodologies, namely:

##### *1. Analysis of secondary data and documentation*

Secondary data and documentation was used for all areas of the study. This included:

- MoE official disaggregated statistics
- Data on disparities from other bodies
- Analyses and research undertaken by excluded groups themselves
- Analyses and research undertaken by Development Partners (including donors, UN, NGOs)
- Analyses undertaken for preparation of the SWAp, or to feed into education policy processes
- Overarching legislative or rights frameworks that guide the education sector
- Key plans/policy frameworks/strategic frameworks that guide the SWAp
- Tenth Five Year Development Plan/PRSP
- SWAp 'working documents', for example review mission Aides Memoire, code of conduct, monitoring reports, bilateral agreements
- DP reports, policies, country assistance plans and so on.

Documents consulted are listed under the consulted documents/materials section of this report (Chapter 9).

## 2. *Qualitative enquiry with a range of informants*

Qualitative investigation was mainly conducted through 'semi-structured' interviews, and discussion with individuals and small groups. Question guides were developed, to ensure consistency and coverage. The consultation guide utilized for interview and discussion is annexed (Table A15).

### *Research tasks*

The exploration of the four focus areas, through the two methodologies, was broken down into six 'research tasks', namely:

- A. Identification of sources, documents and study informants
- B. Document-based analysis of key dimensions of educational disparity
- C. Document-based analysis of SWAp content, processes and impacts
- D. Qualitative research on SWAp processes and impacts
- E. Analysis of findings
- F. Writing up the case study.

## **2.3 Limitations and Constraints**

A major limitation faced during the study was unavailability of the key informants. Some were out of the country for as long as three weeks, some informed DP personnel had already left the country, some were not available due to a strike and close-down of institutions. This kept the researcher/s engaged in following up the informants and meeting them till the last moment. The task was very ambitious given the amount of consultation and reviews required. Due to logistic problems a field visit had to be terminated. The need for analysis of programmes doubled the scale of the task, but this was necessary for the purpose of the School Sector Approach (SSA), the next phase of education support in Nepal, the groundwork for which has already begun.

## 3. SWAp Development

### 3.1 Towards an Education SWAp in Nepal

Intervention in school education in an organized manner began in 1980 with the Education for Rural Development (ERD) project supported by UNICEF and UNESCO. ERD's primary concern was basic and primary education concentrated in Seti Zone, therefore it was popularly known as the Seti Project. Some good and successful strategies, such as children's Non-Formal Education (NFE), girls' NFE, and resource centres were introduced in a later intervention, the Primary Education Project (PEP) in 1984/85. PEP was implemented in six districts.

PEP was followed by the Basic and Primary Education Project Phase I (1992/93–1997/98), implemented in 19 districts including the 6 PEP and 5 ERD districts. BPEP I was gradually expanded to 40 districts by 1994/95. Objectives of the project included increased access, improved quality and improved management. Among the BPEP I activities, curriculum and textbook related activities were implemented nationwide; Early Childhood Development (ECD), special education and village readiness were implemented only in some project districts; and the Resource Centre approach, recurrent teacher training and school physical facility improvement were implemented in all the 40 project districts (MOE, 1999). The learning achievement of the children and reaching the unreached (girls, and other disadvantaged children) remained as major concerns in this phase. By the middle of the project period, the need to merge the BPEP I activities into the regular structure of the Ministry for more effective implementation and expansion of good practices/activities nationwide was realized (MOE, 1999).

The Primary Education Development Project (PEDP) (1992–1998) was implemented simultaneously during the BPEP I period, with ADB (Asian Development Bank) support. Some activities of the project continued till 2000. The focus of PEDP was management and teacher training in the primary sub-sector, with the aim of assisting in quality enhancement and equitable access to primary education. Therefore it also supported classroom construction and office buildings in 11 non-BPEP districts. For example, nine Primary Teacher Training Centres (PTTCs) with separate residence facilities for women teachers were established under PEDP.

Despite numerous attempts, improvement in school education in general and primary education in particular continued to be a challenge. It was realized that classroom practices, quality input, student learning, decentralized planning and programming, and strong technical institutions at the central level to support the lower levels should be the focus for quality improvement, enhanced sense of ownership by all levels of stakeholders and nationwide expansion of the activities. After the experience of almost two decades of project-based intervention it was realized that in order to bring change a programme-based approach should be considered.

Between 1997 and 1999 the focus was on completing the BPEP I activities and preparing for the next phase (MOE, 1999). In the meantime the government produced a Sub-Sector Development Programme (1998/99–2003/04) document. Major objectives of SSDP were to improve learning achievement, improve access and participation and capacity building. Guided by the SSDP framework, BPEP II (1998/99–2003/04) was designed as a programme-based approach. BPEP II was viewed as a comprehensive reform initiative of the sub-sector. Based on the experience and initiatives of BPEP I, the second phase also focused on providing access to quality basic and primary education to all. Specific objectives of BPEP II thus remained to improve the quality of

primary education, increase access to basic and primary education and strengthen the institutional capacity. The Department of Education (DOE) was established in 1999 for a more organized and systematic implementation of the second phase activities. By the end of BPEP II the government had initiated schemes such as free textbooks, and scholarships for females and Dalits. A school feeding programme was also initiated jointly by WFP and the government in 10 most food insecure districts. The number of districts receiving school feeding support was later expanded and WFP also introduced other schemes such as a Girls' Incentive Programme (GIP) under their Global Food for Education Programme (GFEP) .

With loan money from ADB, the Secondary Education Development Project (SEDP) (1992–2000) was implemented focusing on Grades 9 and 10. The objectives of the project included curriculum and textbook development; enhancement of teacher effectiveness and competency; improvement in learning assessment and examination systems; provision of books, equipment and laboratories; and strengthening of planning. SEDP did not have equity related objectives in particular but had provisions to increase girls' enrolment, appointed a gender specialist, and reviewed and revised curriculum and textbooks to remove gender bias. (MGEP, date not available). Secondary Education Development Units (SEDUs) were developed in 25 districts as resource centres at secondary level. The Science Education Project (SEP) was implemented before SEDP. SEP established well equipped Science Education Development Units which organized training for secondary and lower secondary science teachers. These units later became Secondary Education Development Units.

EFA (2004–09), essentially the third phase of BPEP, followed BPEP II. Though the Dakar Education for All Framework for Action gave options and encouraged the development of total school education, Nepal decided to focus on primary only. EFA 2004–09 has proposed the upgrading of basic education for Grades 5 to 8 by 2012, which Nepal has already committed itself to fulfil. However, the sub-sector approach continued. As a result SESP (2003/04–2009) was introduced, with focus on Grades 6 to 10.

Nepal's EFA 2004–09 and SESP thus paved the way to treat the school (Grades 1–12) as one sector, the groundwork for which has already begun under the banner of SSA<sup>3</sup>. The three-year interim plan (2007–10) of the education sector has also been developed with this concept.

Many donors were involved in the two phases of BPEP. EFA and SESP too are donor dependent, but in different degrees. Table 3.1 shows who supported these projects and programmes.

<sup>3</sup> School Sector Approach (SSA) is a Grade 1–12 school sector reform and restructure initiative to be started from 2009. Background work to prepare the SSA core document has already begun with financial support from ADB.

TABLE 3.1 Major programmes and the supporting agencies<sup>4</sup>

MAJOR INITIATIVES	DIRECT DONORS AND THEIR SHARES	OTHER DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS
BPEP I (1992/93–1997/98)	DANIDA (24.2%), UNICEF (6.9%), IDA (45.5%), JICA (23.4%)	UNESCO
BPEP II (1998/99–2003/04)*	DANIDA (23.8%), Finland (4.7%), Norway (22.1%), IDA (25.9%), EU (18.8)	JICA, ADB, UNICEF, UNESCO
EFA (2004–2009)**	DANIDA (4.6), Finland (2.34), Norway (3.75), IDA (8.05), DFID (5.71), and ADB, UNICEF**	JICA, UNESCO
SESP (2003–2009)	ADB (40%) and DANIDA (40%)	

\*Government contribution (4.7%) is not included in the total budget

\*\*ADB and UNICEF were supporting from outside the pool but from 2007 they joined the pool

\*\*\*Government contribution (75.55) is included in the total EFA budget

Sources: BPEP: A synthesis of experiences; BPEP II, PIP, 1999; and Financial Management Report, 2004/05, DOE

The merging of EFA and SESP into SSA can be seen as the beginning of a full SWAp in the education sector. Since this report is retrospective, EFA and SESP are considered separately for the analysis, whilst conclusions and recommendations will relate to the new 'SSA' phase.

### Financial scenario

It was agreed that in EFA 2004–09 the government : donor ratio would be 76:24 whereas in SESP the government's share is low with a ratio of 20:80. However, the EFA agreed ratio has not been maintained in the fiscal year 2006/07. Table 3.2 presents a brief scenario of the budget share in EFA and SESP.

Table 3.2 shows that in both primary and secondary education sub-sectors the contribution of donors has increased substantially, despite international assistance remaining a fairly constant percentage of the total government budget. The figures indicated, however, do not reflect the total budget because sporadic studies have shown that families also substantially invest directly and indirectly in their children's education. In a study conducted in three districts, Kathmandu Education Foundation (2000) for example found that the poorest households spent around 8 per cent and slightly better off households spent 9 per cent of their household expenditure on children's education. This is assumed to be true even today. In a consultation for this study, it was revealed that a tentative estimate of per-child cost of primary education per annum is 40–45 USD, but a calculation made by DOE personnel recently during a school visit turned out to be almost 100 USD when parental contribution was added.

For all community schools, their primary source of funding is government grant. The share of budget allocated to the schools has been increasing. In 2005/06 it reached 84 per cent in TRSE sample schools, up from 82 per cent in the previous year. Community schools receive two types of grant through DEO – earmarked and block grants. Earmarked grants are spent on fixed activities/headings for which they are allocated. If any activities remain incomplete, e.g. construction, the grant can be carried over to the next fiscal year. Block grants are SIP-based

<sup>4</sup> The World Bank and ADB loan money is also included in the same pool fund.

TABLE 3.2 Budget share in EFA and SESP

SN	DESCRIPTION	2059/060 (2002/03)	2060/061 (2003/04)	2061/062 (2004/05)	2062/063 (2005/06)	2063/064 (2006/07)
A	Total Annual Budget					
A1	% of Government	72	72	71	74	72
A2	% of Donors	28	28	29	26	28
B	% of Education Budget in National Budget	15	15	16	17	16
B1	% of Government	80	79	70	73	71
B2	% of Donors	20	21	30	27	29
C	% of Primary Education Budget in Education Budget	60	57	58	58	56
C1	% of Government	71	71	60	64	63
C2	% of Donors	29	29	40	36	37
D	% of Secondary Education Budget in Education Budget	21	21	25	24	23
D1	% of Government	99	96	74	71	77
D2	% of Donors	1	4	26	29	23

Source: Various Red Books, MOF; cited by TRSE (Technical Review of School Education), 2006

grants and schools are supposed to spend them in the same fiscal year for which they are allocated. More than 78 per cent of the earmarked grants go to teacher salaries and 3.8 per cent to scholarships (TRSE, 2007). Schools may have a variety of other sources, including student fees, personal donations, I/NGO support, local government contribution, rents from land or building, etc. However, such income and expenditure from other sources are not accounted in any official record of MOES/DOE.

Schools are not required to report their total income and expenditure. The annual audit report, a copy of which is sent to DEO and RED, only covers the grant received from the government. Audit of other income is done only for internal purposes and is not disclosed. Financial transaction reports of the support received from other agencies is submitted to the concerned agencies if required. Nor is information provided to the government about the property of the schools – it is reported that the government has never asked for such accounting. In this context there is no means to calculate the education budget in totality.

### 3.1.1 EFA 2004–09

The Nepal EFA 2004–09 programme was developed in 2003/04. The programme is a natural continuation of the previous BPEP I and BPEP II programmes. However, the name change reflects that this new phase also seeks to integrate with Nepal's 'National Plan of Action 2001–2015' (MOES, 2003a), developed as a response to the EFA commitments agreed at the World Forum on Education For All (Dakar, 2000). EFA 2004–09 was designed as a five-year strategic programme, guided by the national policy to provide free and compulsory primary education to all children. Its components are based on the six EFA goals, plus the additional goal of 'Ensuring the right of indigenous people and linguistic minorities to basic and primary education through mother tongue'.

Lessons learned from BPEP I and II helped envision EFA 2004–09 in the context of Nepal and thereby develop appropriate implementing strategies. ‘One of the important lessons of BPEP II is that future support and programmes for the sub-sector should be flexible and responsive to change. And BPEP II has made it clear that it is necessary to have visions for schools, teachers, and local institutions’ (EFA 2004–09 Core Document, MOES, 2003b, p. 9). According to the then primary division chief of DOE, the experience of BPEP led to the focus being on the school and child in EFA 2004–09 as opposed to the focus being at central level.

BPEP II formally ended in June 2004 and EFA 2004–09 came on board. A draft of the EFA 2004–09 Core Document was shared in the BPEP II and EFA Combined Joint Review Meeting (Aide Memoire, 19–24 March 2004). This meeting agreed on certain areas related to the matters of social inclusion. Such areas included supplementing the existing data base with more qualitative information from other sources, and developing indicators and monitoring mechanisms to capture the qualitative aspects applicable to all levels including schools by the monitoring team of MOES/DOE. In the same meeting, development partners also ‘endorsed the Annual Strategic Implementation Plan/Annual Work Programme and Budget (ASIP/AWPB) as an indicative planning basis for flexible implementation for the first year of EFA’ (Aide Memoire, 19–24 March 2004, p. 4). With this decision they suggested paying ‘more attention to capacity building, two-way communication strategies at all levels, pilots and development activities, transitional language strategies, NFE and non-salary recurrent budgets to schools’ (Aide Memoire, 19–24 March 2004).

### *Design process*

In early 2002 thematic reports of each of the seven EFA goals were prepared. This was followed by the National Plan of Action preparation for each goal. The following year the EFA 2004–09 Core Document (MOES, 2003b) was prepared. Exercises such as consultations with interest groups and district/regional level stakeholders were undertaken during the preparation, though there is no documented record of these consultations. Compilation of the thematic reports briefly mentions the methods, which included review of EFA goals, analysis of the current situation against respective goals, assessment of the needs and development of the action plans. Other than this none of the above documents have documented their preparation processes and/or the extent of stakeholders’ participation at different stages of the EFA preparation. According to a local expert heavily involved in the EFA preparation, experts from different areas were drawn for thematic report preparation who consulted with education stakeholders from grassroots to the MOES. Participation of the stakeholders such as women, caste groups, Janajatis and the disabled, however, was not very extensive and thus the equity consideration in the process was limited to the ‘politically correct’ extent. The NPA, according to him, was entirely prepared by the selected group of experts. This correlates with the representatives of the current interest groups like Dalit and language-related organizations who stated that they were not involved in EFA 2004–09 preparation. Teachers also ‘feel excluded from the consultation processes that the government and donor agencies are using to develop education reforms’ (VSO, 2005, p. 66).

The EFA 2004–09 Core Document was entirely prepared by the MOES and DOE personnel without any support from the consultants. However, facilitation and logistic support during the document preparation and editorial support during the finalization of the document were provided by ESAT, the Danish Education Sector Advisory Team. Consultation and sharing sessions were organized at regional, district and RC levels. Most people agree that MOES set objectives, priorities and strategies in the EFA. MOES staff involved in the design of the EFA 2004–09 Core Document stated that the objectives, priorities and strategies were devised in line with EFA NPA,

Education Act, Local Self Governance Act and PRSP/Tenth Five Year Plan. Since the entire Core Document was written by MOES staff, they claim that their sense of ownership is high in EFA 2004–09.

### *Resource allocation*

EFA 2004–09, according to MOES personnel, is an initiative moving towards a SWAp and covers the entire primary level, as well as pre-primary and/or ECD. The EFA 2004–09 Core Document, developed as a five year strategic plan within the framework of EFA 2015, is intended to be a basic document which all the partners willing to contribute to EFA initiatives will adhere to.

Resource allocation in EFA 2004–09 is based on the primary education sub-sector. Though some activities are indicated in the core document, the government is entirely free to decide the activities with the consent of the pooling donors. The budget was calculated on the basis of direct cost; however, the volume was based on indications of level of support from the donors. DP personnel also are of the view that many programmes have changed from the original EFA frame, with many initiatives added and others not implemented as originally agreed. In EFA 2004–09, out of 840 million USD core funding, the government's share is 76 per cent. In funding modality as well, BPEP's experience was used: in BPEP II, a portion of the TA (Technical Assistance) money was not spent, therefore the approximately 19 million USD TA in BPEP II was reduced to 8 million in EFA 2004–09, while allocations to schools substantially increased.

### **3.1.2 SESP**

The primary education sub-sector began receiving focused inputs in the early 1980s. As a result, the access and equity situation in this sub-sector improved compared with the secondary sub-sector. The level-wise GER (Gross Enrolment Rate) and NER (Net Enrolment Rate) presented in Chapter 4 also supports this assertion. SEDP (1992–98) initiated some important interventions such as establishment of SEDUs, secondary level teacher training, and curriculum revision, with the particular intention to increase girls' enrolment. As a result secondary level schools expanded but access, equity and quality continued to be a challenge. On the other hand, increased completion rates at the primary level created a demand for further quality education. This led to the development of SESP, whose overarching objective is developed in line with the intent of the Tenth Five year Plan (2002–07). The vision of SESP is therefore claimed to be grounded in a poverty reduction perspective. Its development objective 'to expand quality secondary education suitable for the need of national development' is also derived from the Tenth Five year Plan.

The development of SESP was informed by many other documents, including the MTEF (Mid Term Education Finance) (2002), Education Act Seventh Amendment (2001), LSGA (Local Self Governance Act) 1999 and feasibility study (2001) and Secondary Education Development Plan (2001). DOE personnel who have been working in EMIS (Education Management Information System), however, are of the opinion that both in EFA 2004–09 and SESP some subjective judgements were used while making decisions. This was inevitable because required information was not available and still is not.

The SESP core document has not given enough recognition to the previous sub-sector experiences of initiatives related to gender and social inclusion. The document presents itself as a new initiative in this respect. SEDP for example had initiated SAPs (School Action Plans) to promote gender equity in secondary education. SAP, a local level action planning, had an

overarching goal to ‘make it possible for a greater number of boys and, more especially, girls to obtain a better quality secondary education’. The intent of SAP was to build local level team and capacity; raise awareness about the constraints that secondary level girls face; and increase female participation in school. Gender analysis at the school level was one of the key features of SAP. SAP was initiated in 1996 but with the phasing out of SEDP it also waned. The possibility of merging this exercise with the SIP (School Improvement Plan) process could have been explored by SESP to address the issues of gender and social inclusion at secondary level. Despite ADB being partner in both initiatives (SEDP and SESP) learning of SAP has not been transferred.

Nevertheless, the development partners seemed to have realized the need for utilizing other initiatives of SEDP. As a result, DOE’s concern and suggestions regarding the utilization and adjustment of SEDUs was accepted (Aide Memoire, 18–21 November, 2003; 25–27 March, 2004).

### *Design process*

According to the SESP Core Document it was developed by the three development partners – GON (Government of Nepal), ADB and DANIDA. METCON, a local private company, was given sole responsibility of coordination and facilitation. The same company was assigned to facilitate the development of the secondary education development plan which preceded the core document. For the purpose of the development of the plan, a gender and equity analysis was carried out involving consultation from national level institutions to community level (Cambridge Education Consultants and METCON, 2001). The plan development exercise was funded by DFID and later taken on by ADB. The consultants were the same in both exercises and review of the core document reveals that the plan was well utilized. The core document, however, does not provide any further information with regard to its development process. It has been reported that there was a core team under the chairpersonship of the MOES Secretary with representation of all key agencies within MOES, and consultation did happen. But officials of DOE assert that the core document was given to them in a complete form. ‘The document was sent to the department for endorsement or signature’ and very little room to adjust the provisions was given. For example, upgrading of feeder hostels was included at that stage. The department, though, knew that districts with very low HDI (Human Development Index) rates selected for intervention wished to negotiate on the degree of investment. DOE was not in favour of investing a large proportion in remote (IPDs) districts because student numbers were very low, but the document could not be modified. DOE reports that, despite their suggestion, the donors remained firm in their decision. This seems to have stemmed partly from procedural problems and partly from principle.

Generally SESP is understood as a programme-based approach. However for ADB, since the activities are already specified, intervention areas are also defined and some internal procedures have to be followed in order to make adjustments, then it is a project. For DANIDA, since the government calls it a programme then it is a programme.

Some of the MOES personnel who were working at the district level while EFA 2004–09 and SESP were being designed said that they were not informed or consulted. One who was working in Ilam district at that time said that he came to know only when both EFA 2004–09 and SESP had been prepared, and only heard that BPEP was going to end and EFA 2004–09 would come into effect but didn’t know what it was. A DEO working in Western region at that time had a similar experience with regard to SESP.

### Resource allocation

In SESP, ADB loan (40%), DANIDA grant (40%) and matching funds (20%) from GON constitutes the total fund. The flexibility that EFA 2004–09 enjoys is not available in SESP as funds are already allocated by heading. The SESP mid-term review, however, has made the funding modality more flexible. Both DANIDA and ADB will have direct funding provisions to be utilized from their respective shares. For example, in the case of DANIDA 21 per cent of its total investment will be in the form of direct funding. Moreover, the Chief Technical Advisor of ESAT ‘will have some executive responsibilities in regard to parts of the direct DANIDA funding ...’ (Agreement between HMGN and the Government of the Kingdom of Denmark on the Secondary Education Support Programme, Nepal, March 2003, p. 6).

## 3.2 Wider Context In Which the SWAp Developed

In the short history of Nepal’s formal education system, the concept of gender and social inclusion has been able to secure its place in the policies and programmes only recently. Looking through development plans, consideration of gender equality was stated for the first time in the Fifth Five-year Plan (1975–80). This Plan advocated for the appointment of female teachers in order to increase girls’ enrolment. During this period many initiatives were undertaken. For example, the ‘Equal access of girls and women to education’ project was launched in 1971, focusing on increasing the number of female teachers. The ‘Education for rural development’ (1981–91) project, known as the Seti Project, followed. The impacts of these initiatives seem to have influenced subsequent development plans in addressing gender and social equity in education. By the Ninth Five-Year Plan (1997–2002) concepts of gender mainstreaming, gender inequality and empowerment were espoused with added programme options for education of all children in general and for girls’ and women’s education in particular. The Ninth Plan recommended at least one Dalit teacher per secondary school. Additionally, it recommended mobilization of district level committees for increased participation of indigenous and ethnic minority children in school, with arrangements for special formal and non-formal education to be operated by indigenous and ethnic groups themselves, priority in admission in higher technical education, and provision for primary education in mother tongue. The Tenth Plan (2002–06), which is also the Poverty Reduction Strategy of Nepal, showed commitment to continuity of the provisions made by the Ninth Plan. The Tenth Plan also advocated special programmes to increase women’s and Dalits’ access to both formal and non-formal educational opportunities, and scholarships for Dalits in technical education. It emphasized decentralized school managements and inclusive education to reduce disparities related to caste, ethnicity and gender. The Tenth Plan also recommended special programmes for creating educational opportunities for the disabled.

Along similar lines to the development plans, education commissions formed at different times in order to provide guidance to the government have also lately realized the need to advocate for social inclusion aspects in the education sector.

Recommendations made by the NNEPC (Nepal National Education Plan Commission) (1955) included free primary education, residential facility to secondary level students, and meritocracy based financial support to meet residency cost. The plan also proposed to improve women’s skill and knowledge but also to better equip them for traditional roles.

ARNEC (All Round National Education Commission) 1961, giving continuation to NNEPC's recommendations, included education appropriate for nation, society and individuals, free and compulsory primary education, social education to make everyone literate and to provide life skills training, and free-ship and/or scholarship to those studying Sanskrit. The commission also proposed community development, meeting people's basic needs (food, shelter, etc.) and equal access of girls and boys to school.

NESP (National Education System's Plan) (1970–75) aimed at achieving national unity through prioritizing standard curriculum, equality in education standard, and educational opportunity for many<sup>5</sup>. Some of the strategies identified included merit-based scholarships to poor students, and improvement of resource-poor schools. The plan also advocated for educational provision for the disabled to be immediately initiated in the Kathmandu Valley with gradual expansion to other districts.

Like NESP, the RHEC (Royal Higher Education Commission) 2040 BS (1983) also aimed at preparing citizens loyal towards the Panchayat System, and providing the environment for poor and 'backward' communities to access higher education, thereby minimizing geographical disparities.

NEC (National Education Commission) 2049 BS (1992) emphasized the inclusive approach to mainstream those who lagged behind in education. In order to do so it proposed measures for increased opportunity and participation of disabled, poor, women, deprived communities and geographically disadvantaged people.

However it is only the report of the HLNEC (High Level National Education Commission) 2055 BS (1998) that for the first time explicitly highlighted equal educational opportunity for socially, economically and geographically disadvantaged people. This report also considered social, cultural and economic reasons for low participation of deprived communities in education and emphasized women's literacy and non-formal education to provide knowledge, skills and information, education for the disabled, expansion of integrated schools, and a survey of the disabled. The commission also recommended women's increased access to managerial positions, female teachers, financial provision at village and municipality level for girls' increased access to education, scholarships and other facilities for girls and women at all levels of education, and women's hostels. It also recommended media mobilization for elimination of untouchability, a Dalit sensitization programme in all schools, priority to Dalits – particularly Dalit women – in teacher appointment, the legal provisions against caste discrimination to be included in the curriculum, free school education for Dalit children, a quota system in technical higher education to expand opportunity, and financial provisions for a Dalit education fund in higher education institutes. The report further recommended outreach schools for other deprived groups, teachers to be from students' own communities, scholarships to educationally deprived students from different ethnic groups, some seats made available in private schools for children from disadvantaged ethnic groups, and establishment of a higher education fund for students from deprived communities.

The Education Act (Seventh Amendment), 2001 includes certain provisions with regard to women in education, such as representation of women teachers in DECs (District Education Committees), women representatives in VECs (Village Education Committees) and SMCs

<sup>5</sup> It is interesting to note that not all but 'many' would be given educational opportunity.

(School Management Committees), scholarship provision for girls and students from Dalit and other underprivileged ethnic groups below the poverty line. The Act also has scholarship provision for lower secondary and secondary level Dalits and children from other deprived communities.

The Education Regulations 2059 (2002) have provision for merit-based scholarships in all grades, and stipulate that private schools should provide scholarships to 5 per cent of the poor, disabled, female, Dalit and ethnic minority students.

The above deliberations reveal that the issues of social inclusion in education received special attention only from the early 1990s. This development also needs to be viewed from the perspective of the political change of 1990, when a three-decade-long one-party system was overthrown and a multiparty system established. The documents prepared since then have made great leaps in raising issues of exclusion and making group-specific provisions to address these issues. The development plans, educational commissions, and educational legal provisions have attempted to address issues of social exclusion basically through financial support to students, curriculum revision, participation of women at different levels, and involvement of I/NGOs and Dalit and Janajati organizations.

With respect to girls, Dalits, Janajatis, religious groups, and 'disabled people', the BPEP Master Plan I (1992–97), National Language Policy Recommendation Commission 1993, BPEP II (1999–2004), HLEC 2055 (1998), Ninth Five Year Plan (1997–2002), Education Act Seventh Amendment (2001), Education Regulations (2002) and Tenth Five Year Plan (2002–07) cumulatively proposed gender mainstreaming, affirmative action for girls, Dalit sensitization, provision for mother tongue curriculum and textbook development, teaching in language translation method, establishment and operation of mother tongue primary schools with communities' own resources, provision of teaching/learning in mother tongue as an optional subject, and inclusive education. In order to materialize these proposals, programmes such as training on gender, scholarships for girls and Dalits, hostel facility for girls of remote rural areas, curriculum and textbook revision, partnership with I/NGOs, income generation for parents, literacy, community empowerment programmes, social mobilization, curriculum development in 12 languages, textbook preparation in 8 languages, language conservation and promotion activities, community empowerment, inclusive education, and Assessment Centres for special needs children have been proposed.

Besides the above provisions other specific provisions devised to protect the rights of women, Dalits, ethnic minorities and the disabled are also in place. These have direct bearing on the educational attainment of excluded groups. For example in 1997 the Dalit Development Committee and in 2002 the National Dalit Commission were established. All the members of the commission are Dalits and it was an 'esteemed institution that attempts to prevent the violation of the human rights of Dalits and mitigate the discrimination and social exclusion' (Dahal *et al.*, 2002, p. 57). The Dalit Development Committee is also represented by Dalits only. Similarly, a National Foundation for the Development of Indigenous Nationalities (Adibashi/Janajati Rastriya Utthan Pratisthan) 2002 was also established for the advancement of Janajatis. In order to systematically manage the issues of the internally displaced persons the government has also formulated the Policy Related to the Internally Displaced Person, 2006/07.

Further, in order to protect citizens from caste, ethnicity, gender, ability, and language based discrimination the Interim Constitution of Nepal 2063 (2007) has provisions of Rights Against Discrimination on the Basis of Caste and Ethnicity (Article 14), Children's Rights (Article 22),

Women's Rights (Article 20) and Rights to Social Justice (Article 21). Additionally, Rights Related to Education and Culture (Article 17) states that all the communities in accordance with the legal framework will have rights to basic education in mother tongue. The same article has provision of free education up to secondary level in accordance with the legal framework. Point 4 of the Children's Rights provides for special facilities to the disabled, victims of conflict, orphans, the displaced and vulnerable, and street children. With respect to language, Article 5 of the Interim Constitution 2063 (2007) states that 'All languages spoken in Nepal are national languages', 'Nepali language in Devanagari script will be the official language', and 'there will be no objection in the use of mother tongue in local bodies and offices. The state will translate languages used in that way into official language for documentation.'

Nepal has also already ratified 19 human rights related international treaties including CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women) 1979, CRC 1989, CERD (International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination) 1965, ICCPR (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights) 1966, ICESCR (International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights) 1966, and CAT (Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment) 1984.

The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act 1999, Act related to Children 1991, Ten Year National Plan of Action for Children (2004/05–2014/15), Master Plan related to Child Labour (2004–14), and district level Child Development Committees have also been formulated to protect child rights and to safeguard them from adverse situations. This shows that, though slowly, Nepal has been amending the national laws and also making new ones according to the provisions of the international human rights instruments. Additionally, Nepal has also made commitment to fulfil the MDGs.

*All citizens, from every culture, ethnicity and religion have swift access to all forms of state services provided by each branch of the state ... (Sustainable Development Agenda for Nepal, NPC and Ministry of Population and Environment, 2003, p. 6)*

The above mentioned provisions indicate that within a short period of time Nepal has made numerous efforts and commitments to ensure inclusion and equity. All these efforts and commitments have direct or indirect impact in the education sector. The above context also suggests that Nepal is rich in policies, plans and legal frameworks that ensure the rights of the excluded groups. Corresponding plans, programmes and provisions to ensure gender and social inclusion within sectors are also available. Commitments are also made at different forums. For example, Nepal has shown Commitments to Managing for Development Results (MfDR) as well. Educational programming also therefore embodies MfDR (Singh and Jensen, date not available)<sup>6</sup>. The school education sector theoretically follows all of the MfDR principles (Singh and Jensen, date not available).

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<sup>6</sup> www.adb.org.

## 4. The Challenge of Equity and Social Exclusion

### 4.1 Introduction

Nepali society is a web of multiplicities engendered by human made rules such as gender roles, the caste system, communal feeling, policy (e.g. language related policy) and socio-cultural taboos attached to disability. These many factors, interacting with economic status and geographical difficulties, have, over time, created significant disparities in education. Such disparities are reflected in all aspects of children's schooling, including access, quality, transition and achievement. In other words, overall participation of children in school education is influenced by the cultural beliefs related to the children's origin, to their location and to the economic status of their families and communities.

All the factors, issues or challenges are interlinked. However, for the purpose of understanding and analysis, the following sections explore the different dimensions separately, whilst attempting to demonstrate how each influences the other. The focus is on the consequences for children's ability to access and fully enjoy their right to education.

### 4.2 Patterns of Educational Participation and Achievement

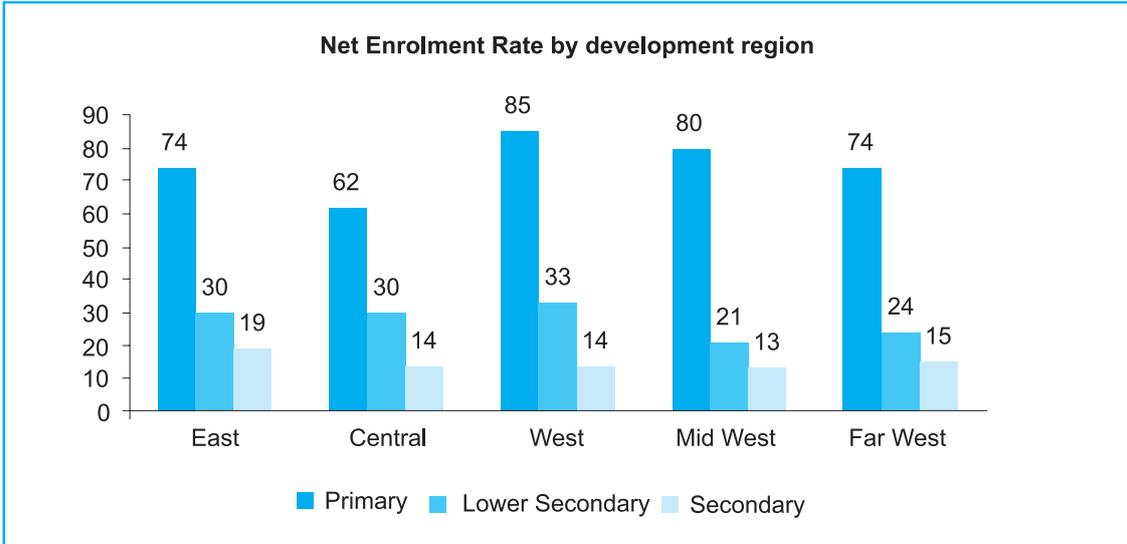
Due to both natural and human created conditions, human development indicators vary across the development regions of Nepal (Table 4.1). The Human Development Index (HDI) (UNDP, 2004) reveals a wide disparity between development regions. The Mid and Far Western regions have a lower HDI than that of other regions.

**TABLE 4.1 Human development index, 2001**

REGIONS	HDI	ADULT LITERACY (15+)	MEAN YEARS OF SCHOOLING	GDP PER CAPITA (PPP US\$)	LIFE EXPECTANCY INDEX	EDUCATION INDEX	INCOME INDEX	RATIO TO NATIONAL HDI
Nepal	0.471	48.6	2.75	1310	0.600	0.385	0.429	100.00
Eastern	0.493	50.3	2.90	1202	0.665	0.400	0.415	104.6
Central	0.490	47.7	2.89	1597	0.625	0.382	0.463	103.9
Western	0.491	52.9	2.93	1254	0.633	0.418	0.422	104.2
Mid-Western	0.402	42.5	2.18	988	0.492	0.332	0.382	85.3
Far Western	0.404	41.7	2.14	1079	0.488	0.326	0.397	85.6

Source: UNDP, 2004, p.141

The graph below shows NER in all five development regions.

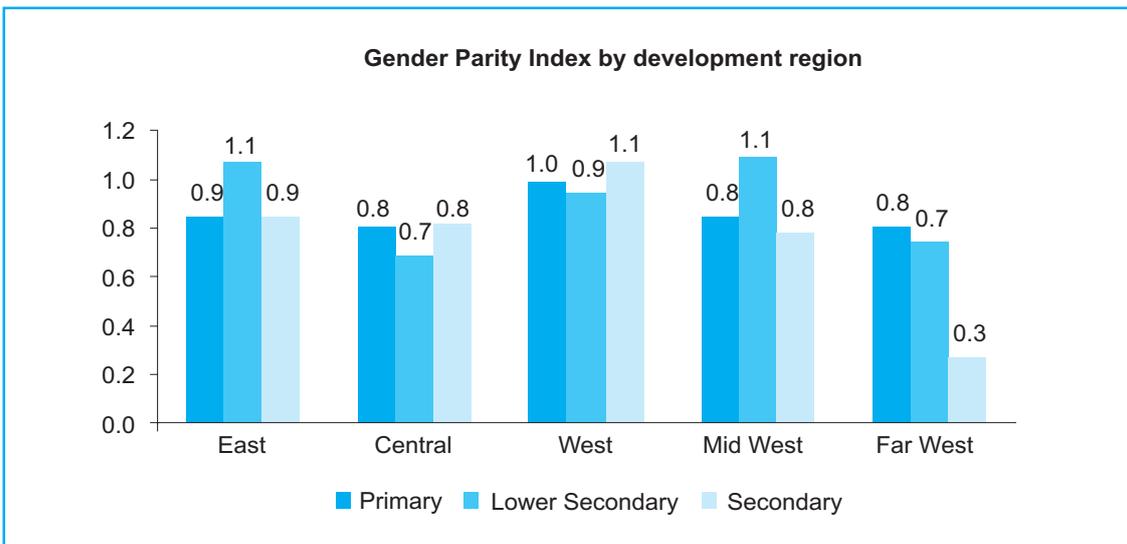


Source: NLSS, 2004

It is clear that in all the regions of Nepal, there is some way to go to achieve UPE and that even lower secondary education is accessed only by a minority of the population.

Central and Eastern regions, which are comparatively ahead in HDI, have low primary level NER as compared with other regions. In all five development regions primary level NER is above 60 per cent, but in all development regions lower secondary level NER is less than fifty per cent and secondary level NER is less than quarter of their primary level NERs. It can be assumed that the long intervention at primary level starting from early 1980s (e.g. ERD, PEP) has contributed to the levels of NER. Lower secondary and secondary levels have begun receiving comprehensive support only recently, with the initiation of SESP in 2004.

In the context of general gender disparity in Nepal, there are also differences across regions as well as across education levels within one region. These are illustrated in the Gender Parity Index (GPI) below.



Source: NLSS, 2004

The figures show that the secondary level of the Far West is at the bottom in terms of gender parity. Interestingly, though, the GPI of lower secondary of the Far West and Central regions is the same. The West is better in gender parity with 1.0, 0.9, 1.1, in primary, lower secondary and secondary levels respectively. The East follows the West in this trend. The primary level GPI of Central region is behind the Mid West. The Mid West has reached gender parity at primary level but still needs work at other levels. Viewed from population distribution of regions with low HDI, it is notable that the poorer regions have a significant proportion of socially excluded groups. Mid-west houses 24.5 per cent Dalits, Western region houses 14.8 per cent Dalits, and another low enrolment region (i.e. Central) houses 26.5 per cent Dalits and 46.9 per cent religious minorities. In the East, with the highest secondary level enrolment, the population compositions are 27.8 per cent Janajatis, 21.2 per cent Dalits and 22.4 per cent religious minorities (see Annex Table A7). Education attainment of all these three groups is lower, as explored in more detail presently.

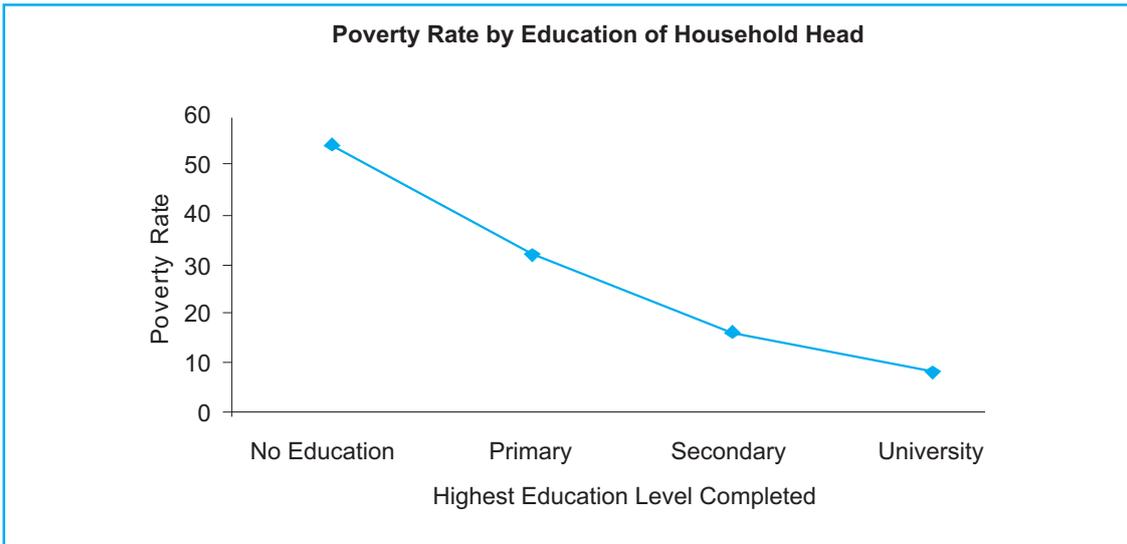
A comprehensive study on performance in the School Leaving Certificate (SLC) (ESAT, 2005) has revealed that disparity in SLC participation and performance cross-cuts gender and region. Regionally, HDI rating and population composition interface with gender, and regional disparity in SLC would indicate low performance and low participation of socially and economically disadvantaged children. In 2060 BS (2003) only 41 per cent of the regular female SLC candidates passed as opposed to 50 per cent of the male candidates and the number of candidates increases when climbing down from Mountain to Tarai areas. According to the same study, female candidates in the Kathmandu Valley outnumber those in the Mid and Far Western regions where their participation is at the lowest range. Far Western Mountain, Far Western Hill and Mid Western Mountain regions are at the bottom in terms of gender gap in SLC participation. Similar disparity is observed in the pass percentage.

The above examples clearly indicate an overall context of poverty but also regional disparities in education. There is also the suggestion of a correlation between low HDI, social exclusion and gender disparity, which is explored in detail below.

## 4.3 Exploring the Dimension of Educational Disparities

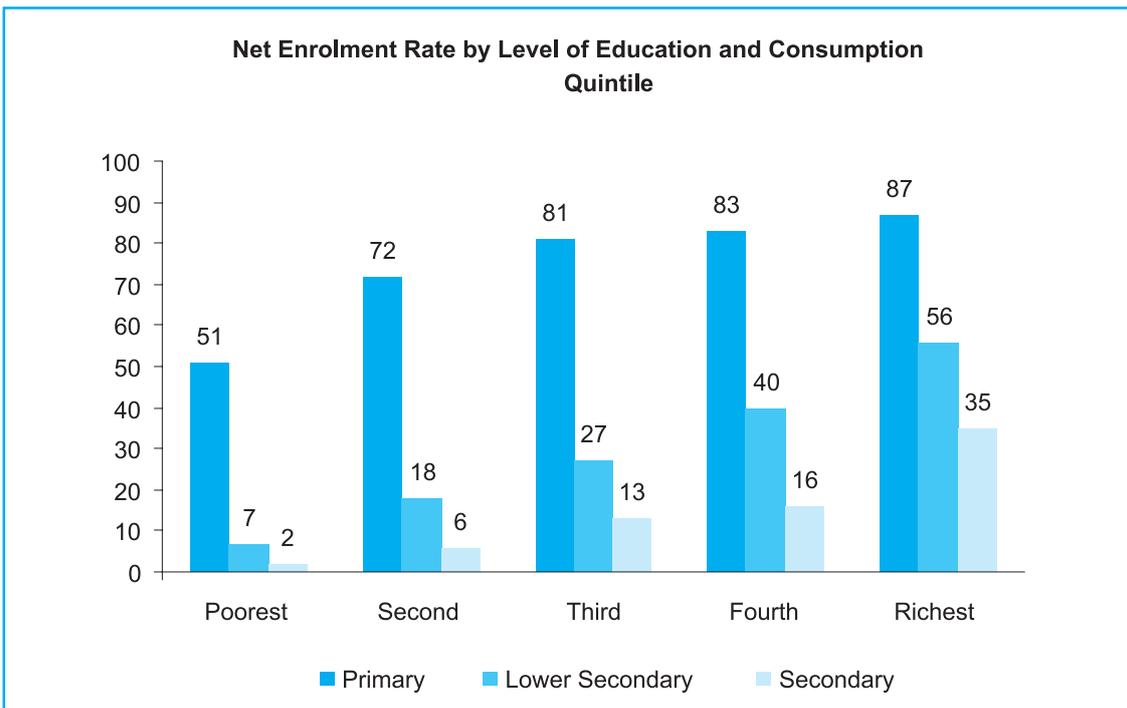
### 4.3.1 The poverty dimension

The following chart reconfirms the link between poverty and education. It shows that higher education levels lower the chances of being poor. The figure also shows a significant gap between the educational attainments of the poor and rich.



Source: Parajuli cited by Sigdel, 2005

The chart below reveals the correlation between poverty and school enrolment. The figures suggest that higher poverty levels lower the chances of higher education.



Source: NLSS, 2004

The figures further show that the enrolment of those in the richest group is higher from primary to university levels. This information corresponds with the findings of a study, sponsored by UNICEF Nepal, conducted by a community learning centre in Kathmandu among an internally displaced population. This study found that 53.8 per cent children do not go to school due to economic hardship (Educational Pages<sup>7</sup>, June 15–29, 2006).

<sup>7</sup> Educational Pages is a fortnightly bulletin funded by UNICEF Kathmandu Office, and features different aspects of school education across the country.

Table 4.2 suggests that in situations of poverty, girls' and women's education is more at risk than that of their male counterparts.

**TABLE 4.2 GPI by consumption quintiles**

CONSUMPTION QUINTILE	PRIMARY	LOWER SECONDARY	SECONDARY
Poorest	0.7	0.7	0.3
Second	0.8	0.9	0.2
Third	0.9	0.7	0.9
Fourth	1.0	1.0	0.7
Richest	1.0	1.0	1.0

Source: NLSS, 2004

This table indicates that in the poorest quintile the GPI is in favour of boys, while gender inequality is less evident in the higher quintiles. School dropout is higher among the poorer population and 13 per cent (DOE Flash Report I, 2006) of primary school age children who are out of school (14% girls and 11% boys) belong to acutely deprived families. But this data does not match with NLSS, 2004 data.<sup>8</sup>

Thus, there is a clear correlation between educational and economic status. However, in Nepal, the chances of being poor and economically marginalized are not 'equal', nor are they dependent only on geographic location. Instead, they are closely bound up with forms of social exclusion, as the following sections illustrate.

'My father seems to be less supportive to me. I have to ask my father at least 4 times to convince him about the necessity of buying books and pens.' (Ruby Bano Halwai, 10<sup>th</sup> grader from Nepalganj, Nepal Press Institute, Regional Media Resource Centre, no date.)

### 4.3.2 The caste dimension

In Nepal, Brahmins – the priest caste – are at the top of the caste hierarchy, followed by the Chhetris who are the protectors (or known as the warriors). Sudra, the peasants or business people, follow. Dalits, who are delegated specific functions in society, are the 'untouchables' and the lowest caste in the hierarchy. There are Hill Brahmins/Chhetris and Tarai Brahmins/Chhetris just like there are Hill Dalits and Tarai Dalits. Non-caste Janajatis are between 'pure' Brahmin/Chhetris and impure Dalits in the social hierarchy (World Bank and DFID, 2006). There are Hill Janajatis and Tarai Janajatis. Religious groups – Muslim and Christian – are placed between the Janajatis and Dalits in the hierarchy. They are 'impure' but not 'untouchable'. In other words, food or water is not accepted from them but unlike Dalits they are 'touchable'.

#### Overall educational status

Dalits are the most disadvantaged caste in the education sector. Their overall educational attainment, including literacy rate, is very low compared with other groups (Table 4.3). A combination of economic hardship and social exclusion has perpetuated the Dalits' low participation in education.

<sup>8</sup> The NLSS data shows that the Primary level NER is only 72% (68% for boys and 67% for girls), which means 28% as opposed to 13% are out of school.

TABLE 4.3 Literacy and educational attainments of Dalits

	LITERACY RATE OF SIX YEARS AND ABOVE			GRADUATE AND ABOVE (PERCENT OF LITERATE)		
	MALE	FEMALE	BOTH SEXES	MALE	FEMALE	BOTH SEXES
<b>Dalits (1 + 2)</b>	43.7	24.2	33.8	0.5	0.7	0.8
<b>1. Hill Dalits (2 to 5)</b>	52.9	31.8	41.9	0.5	0.4	0.5
2. Kami	53.1	31.4	41.8	0.5	0.1	0.4
3. Damai	55.0	35.0	44.6	0.4	0.1	0.3
4. Sarki	49.9	28.8	38.9	0.3	0.1	0.2
5. Badi, Gaine	54.4	37.5	45.6	0.0	0.6	0.2
5.1 Badi	47.1	32.0	39.2	0	0	0.0
5.2 Gaine	62.3	32.1	47.5	0	1.1	0.5
<b>2. Tarai Dalits (6 to 9)</b>	30.1	11.5	21.1	0.7	0.3	0.6
6. Chamar	27.9	9.0	18.9	0	0	0.0
7. Musahar	9.8	3.8	6.9	0.3	0.3	0.3
8. Dusadh Tatma, Khatwe, Bantar, Dom, Chidimar	29.6	8.9	19.7	0.7	0.2	0.5
8.1 Dusadh	28.5	8.6	19.1	0	0	0.2
8.2 Tatma	33.0	10.2	22.2	2	0	1.6
8.3 Khatwe	26.4	7.2	17.2	0.6	0	0.5
8.4 Bantar	35.9	10.2	23.4	0.2	0	—
8.5 Dom	14.9	5.2	10.3	0	0	0
8.6 Chidimar	34.0	14.9	25.1	0.2	0.6	0.3
9. Dhobi, Halkhor, Dalit/ Unidentified Dalit	47.1	22.5	34.8	1.1	0.5	0.9
9.1 Dhobi	46.5	19.1	33.6	2.1	0.9	1.8
9.2 Halkhor	38.1	21.7	30.1	0	0	0.0
9.3 Dalit/Unidentified Dalit	47.6	23.9	35.5	0.7	0.2	0.6

Source: Based on population census 2001 and extracted from Sahavagi (2004)

Table 4.3 illustrates the Dalits' disadvantaged position in the education sector. The percentage of those who have attained graduate or higher level of education is negligible among both Hill and Tarai Dalits. Only Tatma and Dhobi, both belonging to the Tarai Dalits, are in a slightly better position in this category, but both are below in literacy rate as compared with many other groupings. A survey carried out in six districts (3 Hills and 3 Tarai) shows that the literacy rate among the Hill Dalits is 54.9 per cent and among the Tarai Dalits it is only 20.2 per cent. Literacy rates by region and by gender also vary. For example, among the Hill Dalits, the male literacy rate is 74.2 per cent, whereas among the Tarai Dalits, male literacy is only 33.2 per

cent. Similarly, among Hill Dalits, the female literacy rate is 53.1 per cent, whereas it is only 14.6 per cent for Tarai Dalit females. Therefore, among Hill Dalits the male literacy rate is 74.2 per cent as opposed to 53.1 per cent for females. Likewise among the Tarai Dalits the male literacy rate is 33.2 per cent as opposed to 14.6 per cent for females (Nepal National Dalit Social Welfare Organization NNDSWO, 2006).

*'Caste discrimination is definitely diminishing in our communities. It's not just our programmes. Dalits are generally more aware. They'll raise their voice now if they're badly treated. But that doesn't mean that discrimination has been eliminated. It takes a long time to eradicate those kinds of habits. Most schoolteachers, for instance, don't discriminate in school, but not many of them would want us inside their homes, touching their kitchen utensils!' (Raj Kumari, a DAG motivator, Siraha District. Extracted from an unpublished report prepared in 2004 for Save the Children US.)*

#### *Caste-based discrimination and children's schooling*

Social exclusion of Dalits is still practised in the communities. Although incidents of exclusion have decreased in schools, Dalit students still feel inhibition. For example, investigation of Dalit children's participation in BPEP (DEVA, 2003) found that only 4 of the 53 Dalit children who dropped out of school did so due to adjustment problems with teachers and other students. Only 3 out of the 145 who did not attend school did so due to social discrimination. The four who dropped out from school belonged to Mountain and Hill groups; of the 3 who did not attend school each belonged to one of the three regions – Mountain, Hill and Tarai. Most of the Dalit children dropped out or didn't attend due to family economic problems and the family's need for the children to contribute to household and farm work. Gender disparity could not be determined from the available information. The same study identified several hindering forces for Dalit participation in BPEP: poverty, lack of awareness among Dalits, ineffective implementation of the policies, 'hatred of elites', and 'selfish attitude of the Dalit organizations'. The respondents of this study gave the second highest priority to 'attitudinal change of the school authority towards Dalit students' and highest priority to scholarship, which indicates the link of Dalit children's schooling with poverty and social discrimination. In other words their low participation in education is primarily caused by poverty but it is also caused partly by the social discrimination that they face in school and community. NNDSWO (2006) and a study undertaken by CERID (2005a) in three districts also support DEVA's findings.

Six and seven grade Dalit students of Fatke Dhunga lower secondary school located in Majhfant VDC of Parbat district were deprived of pre-vocational cooking examination because they would touch the food. According to a Dalit student who was prevented from taking the test, the teachers commented that 'during scholarship distribution you claim for Dalit's share, and now why would we eat food touched by you?' (Kantipur Daily, April 9, 2007)

Caste discrimination in school still prevails, but the degree may vary depending on where the school is located. For example, schools in the rural remote villages may still have higher incidence of caste related discrimination and harassment by teachers and peers than urban based schools. Atrocities against Dalits at community level also directly and indirectly impact Dalit children's schooling.

Eighty Paswan families left home due to the atrocities committed against them by Tarai non Dalit community and Muslims in Rautahat district. (Kantipur Daily, March 8, 2007)

'Psychological effect of caste discrimination is indeed "the mother of all problems" ... economic, social and political effects are also directly associated with psychological effect ... centuries of caste-based "untouchability" have brutally damaged their psychology paralyzing their effort not (only) to get rid of development problems associated with food security, education, health, etc. but also to protest against such inhuman discrimination' (Bhattachan *et al.*, 2001, p. 68). This finding corresponds with some of the findings derived below in relation to Dalit children's school experience. Dalit Impact Study (an unpublished draft submitted to Save the Children US in 2004) found the following as deterrents to the schooling of Dalit children:

- *Primary education is theoretically free, but enrolment fees, examination fees, text books, stationery and clothing can add up together to a significant part of household income. When children attend school, they can no longer contribute as much to family survival, whether through wages or household work.*
- *There are a number of incentive schemes to get Dalits into school, but many of these socially isolated people do not know about them.*
- *Many Dalit parents do not see education as an advantage for survival, since good jobs are perceived to depend on good family connections.*
- *There is a fear of ridicule or harassment from others in the community when Dalits send their children to school.*
- *Many Dalit children were not registered at birth, and so cannot register formally in the schools. (This is true for many non-Dalit children too, but is more likely to be the case for Dalits.)*

During the field work of the same study a fourth grader Dalit boy said, 'Recently, we got new school clothes from Bhawani (*partner NGO*). This made the other kids really jealous. One Sha girl told me that we got the clothes by begging, and that Dalits are all beggars. I was really upset and wanted to complain to the teacher, but then she shut up.' This kind of demeaning behaviour of school mates also discourages many Dalit children. As a result either they drop out of school or do not want to be identified as Dalits. They enrol but do not attend school, and those who attend do not want to mix with students belonging to so-called upper castes because of the annoying behaviour of the latter (CERID, 2005a). Unmet expectations also discourage Dalit children and parents from children's schooling. For example, Musahar children want to be involved in physical activities or sports in school, and their parents also want them to participate, but schools do not have the appropriate environment and resources to meet their expectation (CERID, 2005a). Moreover, existing materials are not adequate to address the educational needs of the marginalized children and move them up to par with other children (MOES, 2003c).

The chance of succeeding in school is very low for Dalit children who do attend. Among many factors, stories of school-failure and self-perception also adversely impact Dalit and other disadvantaged children's participation in education. Musahar and Danuwar think that they were born to dig the land and work in the field and therefore see no value in education (CERID, 2005a).

*My education is an embarrassment and a difficulty in my life. Musahar people are illiterate and don't believe that education will necessarily get their children jobs in the future. When I try to convince them to send children to school, they say that I should look in the mirror ... they don't want to make their children like me. I'm an educated Musahar, but I didn't get a school-leaving certificate, nor did I find a good job. I'm dependent on physical labour, just as my parents were. People in the community think I wasted my time and money. Many times I've heard people say that they don't want their children to be like Shyam Sundar. (Shyam Sundar Sada. Extracted from an unpublished report prepared in 2004 for Save the Children US)*

On the other hand, some do not want to be identified as Dalits. They do not like the incentives provided to them to be identified as Dalit incentives. For example, many Dalit scholarship recipients were reluctant to specify the kind of scholarships that they were receiving – they just wanted to call it scholarship rather than 'Dalit scholarship' (Acharya and Luitel, 2006). They argued that they were receiving the scholarship because they were disciplined and good.

#### *Social exclusion and schooling*

The enrolment of Dalit children, which has increased over the years in primary level, decreases in upper grades. Though the enrolment GPI (0.93) is satisfactory the total enrolment of Dalit children in primary, lower secondary and secondary levels is only 17.7 per cent, 9.5 per cent and 5.3 per cent respectively (MOES/DOE, 2006, Flash Report I). But in the absence of comparative data (e.g. school age population) it is difficult to draw any conclusion.<sup>9</sup> Dalit children's promotion, repetition and dropout rates (Table 4.4) are alarming but help explain their low enrolment in higher grades.

**TABLE 4.4 Promotion, repetition and dropout of total Dalit students (%), 2005/06**

GRADE	PROMOTION			REPETITION			DROPOUT			SURVIVAL		
	GIRLS	BOYS	TOTAL	GIRLS	BOYS	TOTAL	GIRLS	BOYS	TOTAL	GIRLS	BOYS	TOTAL
1	46.9	26.6	34.1	22.4	12.5	16.2	30.7	60.9	49.7	100.0	100.0	100.0
2	71.5	38.7	49.5	22.1	9.5	13.7	6.4	51.8	36.9	60.5	30.4	40.7
3	74.7	42.7	53.0	19.2	8.0	11.6	6.1	49.3	35.3	55.5	13.0	23.3
4	71.1	39.1	49.4	19.6	9.1	12.5	9.3	51.9	38.1	41.7	7.4	14.0
5	60.2	30.8	40.1	15.1	8.0	10.3	24.6	61.2	49.6	36.8	3.2	7.9
6	67.6	71.1	69.3	17.4	15.3	16.4	15.1	13.6	14.3	26.1	1.1	3.5
7	71.7	84.8	78.7	15.4	12.8	14.0	12.9	2.4	7.3	21.3	0.9	2.9
8	71.6	61.0	65.7	23.2	17.5	20.0	5.2	21.5	14.4	18.0	0.9	2.7
9	70.7	60.4	64.8	16.3	14.0	15.0	13.0	25.5	20.2	16.7	0.6	2.2
10				11.4	8.8	10.0						

Source: TRSE, 2006

<sup>9</sup> The proportion of Dalit population is a contested issue. For example according to NNDSWO (2006) the proportion of Dalit population is 21.3% but according to the population census 2001 it is only 13%.

Table 4.4 indicates that almost 50 per cent of the Dalit students enrolled in Grades 1 and 5 drop out. Only 7.9 per cent survive to Grade 5. In the case of Dalit girls the situation correlates with the national trend. That is, those who survive the lower grades will be more likely to continue in upper grades. The findings of previous studies can very well explain the situation presented by these figures. The conclusion derived by Williams and Parajuli in different studies (cited by Sigdel, 2005) in the early and late 1990s that Dalit children's enrolment is very low, and repetition and dropout are very high among those who attend, is still true. In the alternative schooling programme also, among the participants only 20 per cent belonged to the Dalit community and 30 per cent were from higher caste groups such as Brahmins, Chhetris, Newars, Marwadi and Rajput (IFCD, 2004). IFCD (Innovative Forum for Community Development) also found that only 31 per cent of the fathers and 12.5 per cent of the mothers of the alternative schooling participants were literate, and irrespective of the caste, children came from households with inadequate agricultural production for family consumption. Therefore some parents were wage labourers (IFCD, 2004). This indicates family economy and parental education as major determinants of children's schooling.

The low level of education attainment has resulted in a low level of Dalits' participation in teaching as well as other areas of the education system. Most of the female teachers belong to so-called high castes (Brahmin and Chhetris) (Bista, 2005). Among male teachers the situation is similar. There are only 2.5 per cent, 1.6 per cent and 1 per cent Dalit teachers in primary, lower secondary and secondary levels respectively (DOE, 2006, Flash Report I). The share of Dalits among the head teachers at primary level is 3 per cent (TRSE, 2005). Their participation in managerial/administrative positions is negligible.

Dalit children lag behind in education for many reasons. The above deliberations indicate that the reasons can broadly be understood from three perspectives – sociological, pedagogical and economic. Dalits are historically excluded from education primarily for social reasons. This continued to produce illiterate parents who are the influencing factors in any children's education. The reason for dropping out of school is associated with the classroom culture as well. The teachers are not oriented to give examples from the Dalit community nor does the curriculum demand it. Furthermore, the way that teachers teach and the way the Dalit children are taught at home is different in many ways. The teaching at home is more practice based but in school it is more theory based. This reason can also be applied in the case of other children in general and girls in particular, but due to the absence of 'culture of education' at home the pedagogical gap puts a Dalit child more at a disadvantage. The language used in school, which is more hierarchical and 'cultured' than the language used at home, also makes Dalit children uncomfortable in school. The mismatch between the cultures and the languages pave the way for a Dalit child to leave the school.

Structural oppression which cultivates an inferiority complex within Dalits also inhibits them from accessing and enjoying public services like school. Due to this oppression they cannot feel that they are equal to their friends and teachers. This feeling of 'inequality' either prevents a Dalit child from entering the school system or pushes them out of school if she or he managed to enter. The sex stereotypical role of girls is another form of exclusion that prevents Dalit girls more than the boys from being schooled.

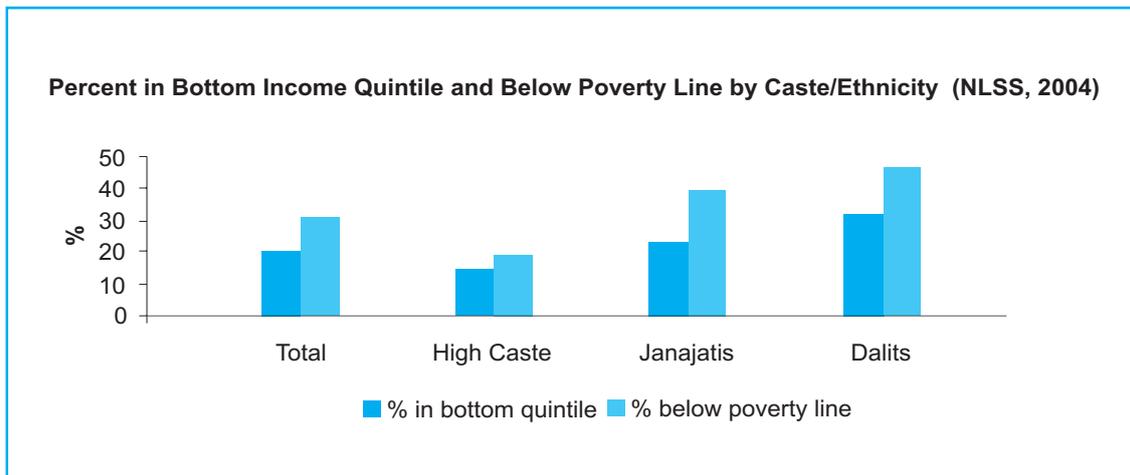
In Kaski district a Dalit woman who has been forced to leave her home and village in allegation of being a witch has been staying with her parents and has appealed for help for her return so that her daughter can go back to school. (Kantipur Daily, April 16, 2007)

A Dalit child is deprived of school also because of the fear that a schooled child might discontinue the parental occupation that has been feeding the Dalits for years. This fear, from a Dalit parents' perspective, is genuine because they have seen and been brought up only with their traditional occupations for their livelihood. Therefore they hardly have any idea about other occupational options for their educated children. Moreover, they do not see the use of education to continue their traditional occupation and thus they are hesitant to send their children to school.

Education, although said to be free, is not so in reality. Dalits, who are mostly poor, cannot pay the cost of schooling. For example, a Dalit child is a bread winner for him/herself and in some cases for the family. Even if she/he does not earn, the parents will pay opportunity costs to buy education. In this case there is a high chance that a Dalit child either never attends or drops out from school.

The pattern of caste-based discrimination is complex, and there is evidence that some Dalits who have accessed formal education, have become better off, and that discrimination against them might be lessened. For example Biswokarma (2006) witnessed differential treatment to wealthy and poor Dalit brothers in a village; respectful treatment given to a Dalit medical doctor tenant by a Brahmin house owner; and an advance rent payment made by a Dalit Commission member rejected by a non-Dalit house owner once the tenant's identity was disclosed. This dual disposition is observed in relation to children's education as well. Dalit students are accepted in the classroom, they sit next to non-Dalit children and eat together, but the same students are labelled as dull or stupid by teachers, and the same students are denied renting rooms in non-Dalit residences (Parajuli, 2006). These scenarios establish the fact that education attainment can be a powerful tool to eliminate caste-based discrimination and poverty on one hand but that caste-based discrimination itself is a major deterrent to Dalit children's education on the other. In this situation lack of unity among Dalits has also negatively contributed to Dalits' rights to education from emerging as a movement (Lamichhane, 2007). This assertion and the emergence of individual Dalit NGOs as opposed to a collective ownership – noted in the review of DFID's Dalit Empowerment and Inclusion Project (Koirala, Appave and Khadka, 2006) – correspond with INGO representatives' views. They say that Dalit organizations are segregated under different banners, and the coalition even among themselves is not strong enough. This has made it difficult to support Dalit issues.

The Human Development Report 2004 (UNDP, 2004) has revealed a correlation between economic stratification and social stratification. In other words, higher castes have lower poverty and lower castes have higher poverty. The following chart supports this assertion.



The earlier discussions and data have shown that the higher castes have better educational attainment and the lower castes have lower educational attainment rates. These two facts and the chart above adequately correlate with poverty, social group and education attainment.

Poverty also correlates with regional variation found in education attainment. For instance, among Dalits, though not significant, 48 per cent from Hill areas and 46 per cent from the Tarai are poor (World Bank and DFID, 2006). Although the literacy rate among Hill Dalits is higher than Tarai Dalits, among the reasons for not attending school, the NNDSWO (2006) survey revealed that 66.1 per cent and 30.8 per cent respectively in the Hills and Tarai indicate adverse economic situations.

Not getting consent from the family to attend school is another main reason which also varies regionally, but corresponds with the poverty level of Dalits. It is reported that 36.5 per cent of the Dalit children from Hills where the percentage of poor Dalits is higher said that they did not get consent to go to school, while only 15.6 per cent of the Dalit children from the Tarai where the percentage of poor Dalits is lower said so (NNDSWO, 2006). This survey reveals that 'untouchability' 'did not pose any problem in going to school' (p. 19). Among the illiterate population as well, the majority named economic hardship (male 79% and female 65%) as the deterrent for not being schooled. However, more Dalit women than men said that they had to work therefore could not attend school. This study also found that an equal number (17%) of Dalit boys and girls from the 10–14 years of age group are in employment. The above study indicates a connection between the economic hardship and the family's decision about children's schooling among Dalit communities. This message correlates with what Kantipur Daily found. In Parbat district 12 Dalit children dropped out because they could not pay the fees which the Examination Committee of the school decided to charge. A parent questioned how to pay as they could only manage food by putting children to work (Kantipur Daily, February 23, 2007).

#### 4.3.3 The gender dimension

*'Barriers to social inclusion in Nepal include gender-based stratification, which in turn must be placed in the prevailing ethnic, and caste based hierarchies that structure economic and social relationships in Nepal.'* (Bhatia and Turin, 2004, p.15).

Women and girls are in a more disadvantaged position than their male counterparts in all caste, ethnic or economic groups. The higher the social position and economy, or more accessible the location, the higher the chances of being formally schooled. For higher caste women it is perhaps home culture that puts them at disadvantage. But since exclusion is practised at community level, Dalit women are disadvantaged in both domestic and public spheres. Poverty, which most Dalits face, adds another layer of restriction on Dalit women's lives. The multiple barriers thus limit participation in school for Dalit girls and young women.

Several reasons can be attributed to gender disparity in education across regions. Research (Acharya *et al.*, 2003) in the Learning Environment, which is one of the four areas of SESP conducted in Doti and Humla of the Far West development region, revealed that in addition to the problems associated with gender discrimination, gender based taboos, caste based taboos, language difficulties and families' economic hardship, the gap between the learning environment of the home and school, gap between parental expectations and school reality, non-applicable knowledge, and indifferent learning materials also discouraged children's learning. The research concluded that 'caste taboo, hierarchical mindset of the local stakeholders and non-applicability of acquired knowledge and skills push the first generation children out of school' (p. 6).

The higher enrolment in primary level but lower in secondary level and SLC graduates in regions with lower HDI index indicate the positive effect of inputs including incentives in the form of scholarships provided to the primary level for many years. Interventions in lower secondary and secondary have just begun, and therefore the situation at secondary level may take a few more years to yield results in the regions with low HDI rate.

#### *Gender within social groups*

The gender gap within the social groups in primary is near to the national scenario (see Annex Tables A2.3, A4.3 and A4.4). Primary level Dalit and Janajati girls' enrolment, which is 48.3 per cent and 49.3 per cent respectively of total enrolment for these groups, is similar to that of the national average which is 48.3 per cent. At lower and secondary levels the gender gap across social groups is slightly higher than that of primary level. At lower and secondary level, Dalit girls' enrolment is 44.1 per cent and 41.7 per cent of total Dalit enrolment, whereas for Janajati girls it is 47.9 per cent and 47 per cent respectively. The overall GPI of primary level enrolment across social groups, however, gives a different picture. It is 0.93, 0.97 and 0.91 for Dalits, Janajatis and other social groups respectively (see Annex Table A1). In this case the GPI of Janajatis is better than that of the national average which is 0.94.

Table 4.5, showing female education attainment ratio across caste, ethnicity and region further illustrates the existing situation of gender disparity in education across social groups.

**TABLE 4.5 Female/male ratio by educational attainments and ethnicity/caste (women per hundred men) (6 years and over)**

CASTE/ETHNIC GROUPS	LITERATE		SLC & ABOVE		GRADUATE AND ABOVE	
	1991	2001	1991	2001	1991	2001
<b>Upper Caste</b>	<b>54.3</b>	<b>72.5</b>	<b>27.0</b>	<b>46.0</b>	<b>17.6</b>	<b>20.5</b>
Hill Upper Caste	54.3	72.8	27.0	45.9	17.6	19.5
Tarai Upper Caste	55.1	69.1	27.0	46.1	17.2	29.9
Tarai Middle Caste	27.0	42.4	9.4	20.3	7.1	11.2
<b>Dalits</b>	<b>36.6</b>	<b>57.2</b>	<b>15.2</b>	<b>27.4</b>	<b>15.7</b>	<b>18.6</b>
Hill Dalits	39.1	65.4	16.6	32.3	17.8	19.5
Tarai Dalits	21.6	36.1	12.2	18.7	12.3	17.1
<b>Janajatis</b>	<b>48.5</b>	<b>68.9</b>	<b>40.4</b>	<b>50.2</b>	<b>38.1</b>	<b>35.3</b>
Hill Janajatis	52.9	73.1	45.3	56.4	40.0	39.1
Newar\Thakali	65.8	77.9	52.1	61.8	42.2	43.6
Other Hill Janajatis	47.9	71.4	31.2	50.5	30.5	30.6
<b>Tarai Janajatis</b>	<b>28.4</b>	<b>53.1</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>19.7</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>8.3</b>
<b>Religious Minorities</b>	<b>31.8</b>	<b>46.3</b>	<b>13.2</b>	<b>24.8</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>22.0</b>
Others	33.6	61.2	22.1	46.6	26.4	32.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>47.4</b>	<b>65.8</b>	<b>28.2</b>	<b>43.6</b>	<b>22.4</b>	<b>22.9</b>

Source: (Based on population census 2001) Sahavagi, 2004

The table reveals the persistent inter- and intra-group variation in male/female educational attainment ratio. Though progress has been made over the years, participation of Dalit and middle caste women of Tarai in all three levels of education is significantly low as compared with upper caste women of all ecological regions.

#### *Gender in the classroom and school*

Girls reach the classroom much later than their male counterparts. Though lately their presence has increased, a gender gap in the classroom still exists and it widens as the grade increases. In 2005, girls' GER in primary level and secondary level was 141.8 per cent and 45.5 per cent respectively as opposed to 94.2 per cent and 22.4 per cent respectively in 1995. Girls' NER in 1995 was 55.6 per cent in primary level and 12 per cent in secondary level. In 2005 Girls' primary level NER reached 83.4 per cent but for secondary level the data is not available (see Annex Tables A2.1 and A2.2).

Most of those who do enrol in grade one are unlikely to survive and succeed in their studies. They are more likely to fail, be absent, drop out of school or repeat grades (see Annex Table A3). This data if further probed will show that children, mostly girls belonging to remote rural areas, poor families and more conservative ethnic or religious groups, are less likely to enrol or survive in mainstream school. However, interestingly, most of the girls who transit from primary to lower secondary are likely to survive till Grade 10 (see Annex Tables A4.1 and A4.2).

*Gender and learning achievement*

The learning achievement of those who survive is also not encouraging. National assessment of the core subjects of Grades 3 and 5 undertaken in the 1990s revealed the fact that most of those who reach the end of the grade or level do so with a very low learning achievement. No such study has been conducted since then. Generally girls lag behind more in so-called hard subjects like science and maths. Various factors contribute to this situation. A study on girls' participation in science and technology related subjects in Grades 4 to 12 found that girls scored higher in science in the lower grades than in higher grades (Koirala and Acharya, 2005). Moreover, girls from so-called upper castes and Newars from the Janajati group scored comparatively higher in science and maths as compared with Dalit and other Janajati girls. A Pilot Social Audit of three schools including Basuki and Sarada undertaken in 2004 by the DoE and ECECO, however, showed that in a resource poor school with students from economically difficult households, no significant and/or consistent gap is found in the learning achievements of girls and boys, and Dalit and non-Dalit children. Though the data on the actual enrolment and attendance was not available to make comparison with the score, this trend corresponds with what is found in other developing countries (EFA Global Monitoring Report, UNESCO, 2004).

Subject-wise gender disparity in the SLC pass rate is also noticeable in the sense that males are ahead of females in all the subjects. Males are ahead even in so-called soft subjects in which females might have been presumed to do better (Table 4.6).

**TABLE 4.6 Subject-wise difference in pass rate at SLC (girls vs. boys)**

SUBJECT (1)	GIRLS		BOYS		GIRLS-BOYS DIFFERENCE	
	PASS % (2)	COEFF OF VARIATION <sup>10</sup> (3)	PASS % (4)	COEFF OF VARIATION (5)	DIFFERENCE IN PASS % (6)	DIFFERENCE IN COEFF OF VARIATION (7)
English	70.76	0.47	75.67	0.38	-4.91	0.09
Nepali	89.97	0.21	91.76	0.16	-1.79	0.05
Mathematics	61.40	0.55	71.60	0.38	-10.20	0.17
Science	71.00	0.44	78.36	0.33	-7.36	0.12
Soc. Studies	86.44	0.26	91.21	0.18	-4.77	0.08
HPE	97.21	0.10	98.04	0.07	-0.84	0.03

Source: ESAT, 2005

High absenteeism among girl students, their inhibition to interact in science and maths classes, unfriendly classroom setting, inadequate access to labs and libraries, limited career options, the mismatch between the girls' ways of learning science and the classroom pedagogy, inadequate study time at home, no additional tutorial support, no link between the girls' practical knowledge and content delivery, and ceiling created by girls themselves, their families and communities with respect to girls' higher education are some of the commonly found factors that contributed to the girls' low participation in science and technology related subjects (Koirala and Acharya, 2005). Most of these factors are applicable to the girls' participation and/or performance in school

<sup>10</sup> Gap between the lowest and highest scores.

education in general as well. Additionally, distance to secondary school has also tended to prevent older girls from attending school. Due to security reasons as well as the need for them to help at home, girls are often not sent to a far away school. INGO personnel report a case in a district where there is no secondary school within walking distance – boys are renting rooms where the school is, but girls are kept at home.

### *Gender in teaching*

Longstanding classroom/school gender disparity obviously is reflected in the teaching force. The number of female teachers over the years has increased but as compared with males their presence is still very low. The increase in number of female teachers at primary level is much higher than at other levels, much of the credit for which can be attributed to the female teacher policy intervention initiated in BPEP II. In the public schools in 2004 out of total teachers there were 23.4 per cent, 10.1 per cent and 6 per cent females in primary, lower secondary and secondary levels respectively, but in 2006 their share was 30.6 per cent in primary level, 14 per cent in lower secondary level and 7.4 per cent in secondary level (DOE, Flash Report I, 2006). The share of female teachers declines in higher grades. Their presence is higher in urban areas and more developed districts. Consequently there still are primary schools without a single female teacher, particularly in remote and rural areas. At lower secondary and secondary levels, 70 per cent and 77 per cent of the sample schools are without female teachers (TRSE, 2007). Despite the target of two female teachers for each primary school set by the Core Document for EFA 2004–09, 23 per cent of schools are without female teachers at the primary level and only 42 per cent of the primary schools have two or more female teachers (TRSE, 2007).

The basic academic qualifications required to join teaching are SLC for primary level, intermediate college degree or equivalent for lower secondary, and Bachelor's degree for secondary level. Primary level teachers are provided with 10 months in-service training and those who have completed this are considered fully trained. Before 2006, short term subject-specific in-service training was provided for lower secondary and secondary levels. However, this has been reformed. In 2006 the National Centre for Educational Development (NCED) started a 10 month in-service training which consists of both generic and subject-specific areas. The first batch has not completed yet so the participants' information is not available. The generic package deals with the issues of social exclusion in society in general and in school education in particular. Those who joined lower secondary with Intermediate in Education (IEd) and secondary with Bachelor's in Education (BEd) degrees are considered fully trained and are not provided with this new 10 month in-service training. According to NCED personnel, resource constraints and the possible absence of a large number of teachers from the classroom at once during residential sessions are among the main reasons for not offering it to the formal education degree holders.

According to 2002 data, the number of fully trained females is higher than male teachers at all three levels (Bista, 2005). This indicates that at lower secondary and secondary levels, women entered with IEd and BEd degrees whereas at primary level the system's emphasis on retaining as well as training more female teachers worked in women's favour. However, many women could not take time off for 10 month training due to personal/family reasons and problems of child care and so took longer time to complete the training (CERID, 2004a).

In attainment of short-term training, male teachers outnumber female teachers at all levels. (Bista, 2005). The same research also supports the universally prevalent gender disparity in specialization. It found more males teaching so-called hard subjects such as science and mathematics and more females teaching Nepali language and social studies.

Problems with transfer of female teachers to home locality, manoeuvring by schools to favour male teachers over female in teacher transfer, and reluctance by families of young female teachers to go to remote/risky areas are some of the gender concerns reported for teacher deployment (CERID, 2004a). Female teachers also reported being denied promotion, difficulty in working as a single woman in an all-male environment, and sexual harassment as some of the challenges that they face (VSO, 2005).

#### *Gender in management and administration*

Women's representation in management of the education system is very low. At primary level 90 per cent of the head teachers are male (TRSE, 2006). Table 4.7 shows women's educational attainment and sheds some light on why their representation in managerial and administrative positions is so low.

**TABLE 4.7 Selected educational indicators, 1981–2001**

INDICATORS/YEARS	1981	1991	2001
Female percent among full time students	27.2	34.7	43.1
Number of women per 100 men			
<i>Literate</i>	33.8	46.3	65.8
<i>With Primary Education</i>	41.5	53.5	76.8
<i>With SLC</i>	22.2	31.2	55.5
<i>SLC and Above</i>	21.0	28.2	43.2
<i>Graduates and above</i>	18.4	22.5	22.9

Source: Sahavagi, 2004

The table indicates that while progress in women's educational attainment has almost doubled in three decades, very few literate women move up the education ladder. As a result very few graduate women are available to be placed in managerial and administrative positions which demand a higher level of academic qualification.

Within the MOES, among 19 Class I positions there is only 1 female. In Class II positions, there are only 9 out of 138, and in Class III, there are 46 out of 789 (source: MOES administration, 2007). In total there are around 6 per cent women in administration/management of MOES. Similarly, in School Management Committees (SMCs), the proportion of females (who are 51% of the total population) is also very low at only 15 per cent. The share of females in Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) is 21 per cent, which is 6 per cent higher than the proportion of females in SMCs (TRSE, 2006).

Even those who reach the upper level of administration/management are not free from experiencing gender discrimination and exclusion. 'Structural arrangement, personal inhibition, patriarchal attitude of the male members, and social as well as familial responsibility reduce women's access and control over their desired end' (Acharya, 2002, p.7). Some women from the MOES system report that social, cultural and family constraints make women constantly negotiate the criterion for promotion; twelve years service in Kathmandu as against 4.61 years of service in other selected geographic regions to secure the maximum marks does not favour women employees; men listen to women colleagues as long as they (women) are in position of power; men's social networks, which are also active outside the professional sphere, help

continue their closeness whether they are in positions of power or not, which it is not possible for women to do; the attitude of men co-workers shaped by the stereotypical notion of men's and women's roles restrain women's professional development; use of derogatory and indecent expressions, languages and jokes by men ignoring the presence of women in training situations also restrains women from actively participating in their professional growth (Acharya, 2002).

In Nepal when analysing education from gender perspective it is clear that both demand side and supply side barriers perpetuate the disparity. Necessity of marriage, societal restriction on women's sexuality and mobility, patrilocality, patrilineality, property rights, the Daizo (Dowry) system particularly in the Tarai, self-perceived roles and images (Sahavagi, 2004) embedded in social values/norms and economic structure are major barriers observed on the supply side. Orientation towards marriage and household duties, restricted mobility, patrilocality, and patrilineality jointly contribute in shaping girls' self-perception about their roles and images and negatively impact their study. For example, despite the knowledge that the science and technology related subjects give more opportunity later in life, some girls said that these subjects are more beneficial for boys because boys can go anywhere for the sake of jobs (Koirala and Acharya, 2005).

Supply side barriers in girls' education include teachers' attitude and behaviour; physical and academic learning environments; administrator/managers and policy makers' attitude, behaviour, analytical skill and depth of knowledge; gender parity and equality monitoring; and sharing of policies and plans at parents and guardians' level. Teachers, administrator/managers and policy makers who are also products of the norms and value system mentioned above often tend to pay less attention to girl students' educational attainment, and lack deeper knowledge and analytical skills required to mitigate gender issues. One simple requirement which makes a tremendous impact in women's and girls' lives and their participation in education is appropriate physical facilities. However, separate toilets with water for girls are still lacking in many schools (CERID, 2006a). Lack of resources, as well as lack of sensitivity that women's and girls' natural needs should be taken care of and that such needs should not hinder their participation, has contributed to this situation. At school level, School Improvement Plans are an appropriate avenue to institutionalize gender based needs but determinants of gender friendly school environments are not included in SIPs (CERID, 2006a).

The above barriers can be applied to understand not only girls' schooling but also women's participation in the education system as a whole. For example, Bista (2005) in his research found that male teachers often hold negative attitudes and stereotypical notions towards their female colleagues. Some of the negative traits belonging to the female teachers identified by their male counterparts and parents included less competent, less regular, less prepared, unqualified, unmotivated, and weak in administration. Teachers, parents and students however admired the caring ability and compassion of the female teachers. They are thus considered more appropriate for lower grades than higher grades. Other studies also support these views to some extent. CERID (2004a) and VSO (2005) found that despite their dedication and sense of responsibility, female teachers have to deal with many adverse attitudes, practical barriers and undesirable behaviour from male colleagues. In this context measuring and/or monitoring gender parity and equality is not easy. Both quantitative and qualitative tools are required. The quantitative instrument is incomplete whereas qualitative tools and skills are still missing in the system.

### 4.3.4 The ethnicity dimension

Each with their own language, ethnic identity, cultural traditions and also religion (e.g. some are Buddhist or maintain ancient shamanic practices), Janajatis are in many respects ethnically distinct from Nepali speaking caste Hindus including Brahmin/Chhetri and Dalits. However, there is considerable diversity among Janajatis related to wealth and educational attainment. For example, there is an immeasurable gap between the status of the 24 highly marginalized Janajati groups<sup>11</sup> (Pradhan *et al.*, 2006) and other groups such as Gurungs, Sherpas, Newars and Thakalis in all aspects. The Janajatis are not untouchables and have fewer problems than Dalits at community levels, where they enjoy their own cultural tradition, ethnic identity and language, sometimes with greater gender equality. However, they are rather disadvantaged at the level of state (World Bank and DFID, 2006), which is reflected in their low representation in all three bodies of the state – legislative, judiciary and executive.

Generally speaking, the education status of different Janajatis in Nepal varies across region and between genders. Three definite conclusions can be derived from the available information (see Annex Table A5). One, gender disparity in favour of males prevails across all Janajati groups in their literacy and higher level of education attainment. Two, graduate and above population is very low even among those with higher literate population. For example Newar (72.1 %) and Thakali (72.6%) who have literacy rates almost close to Hill Brahmin (75.5%) have only 5.8 per cent and 3.3 per cent graduates respectively as opposed to 7.5 per cent of Hill Brahmin. Three, Hill Janajatis are in better position in both categories than Tarai Janajatis. Those who are at the bottom in education attainment belong to the highly marginalized Janajatis with ‘miserable economic situation, low education status, extreme socio-political disempowerment and exclusion and restricted access to resources and opportunities’ (Pradhan *et al.*, 2006, p. 1). Moreover, when analysing the education of Janajati girls, the socio-cultural dimension also appears to be a major determinant. Maslak (2003) in her investigation of the education of Tharu girls therefore found that a simple single-dimensional analysis does not give a complete picture:

*‘A study of girls’ participation requires complex and interrelated methods to collect and analyze the factors and circumstances that influenced a decision to educate daughters. In order to thoroughly investigate them, we examine how people live and how social, cultural and religious elements influence the decision to educate a daughter.’ (Maslak, 2003, p. 166)*

#### *In-school scenario*

Regarding the enrolment of Janajati children, they are in higher position than that of the Dalits but lower than that of other social groups. Janajati children’s primary, lower secondary and secondary level enrolment is 38.8 per cent, 38.6 per cent and 29.9 per cent respectively (see Annex Tables A2.3, A4.3 and A4.4). GPI among Janajati children in primary level has reached equality with 0.97.

As indicated by the data above, Janajati children’s enrolment may be higher but unless other variables (age-wise population, attendance, repetition, dropout, learning achievement) are examined no definite conclusion can be drawn. For example, it is reported that enrolment is high but attendance is very low among Danuwar children of Kavrepalanchowk district. Most Danuwar parents work in the brick factories in Bhaktapur where their children also migrate with parents.

<sup>11</sup> Baseline study of highly marginalized Janajatis has identified 24 Janajati groups as highly marginalized.

According to one head teacher, Danuwars have their own culture and tradition so they do not listen to others (Educational Pages, July/August 2006). It is also reported that despite teachers' home visits to bring them to school they do not want to come. Often administrators, teachers and managers view this situation as parents' lack of awareness. This indicates the gap between teachers and Janajatis' beliefs regarding education and its relevance. For instance in Humla, the cultural urge to be Tope and Topini (monks and nuns) in early age especially among Lamas was reported to be a hindrance in children's education (Acharya *et al.*, 2003). But from the community's perspective this perhaps is relevant and a requirement to respectfully survive in one's own community. A combination of all of the above factors has left many Janajatis far behind in formal education.

*'No matter how much the government invests it has not been able to yield result due to the tendency among the ethnic communities to leave study because of the traditional perception that going to foreign land for work can earn money quickly'. (Sunil Kumar Tumbahamphe, a campus chief in Tehrathum district, Educational Pages, May 15–29, 2006.)*

The above situation and statements indicate that family and/or community culture and what they believe to be more beneficial cannot be ignored. In some Janajati groups, formal or mainstream education has never been the culture due to roles other than teaching and learning that they have been playing for centuries. They would rather be provided with education relevant to their context and culture. This has resulted in formal education being seen as culture of the 'others' and a self-perception that 'we are not good at education because it is not our field'.

#### *Janajatis in teaching and management*

Low participation of Janajatis in formal education for years has resulted in their low participation at other levels as well. For example, the share of Janajatis in the total number of teachers is still nominal with only 17.8 per cent, 23.4 per cent and 15.4 per cent at primary, lower secondary and secondary levels respectively (DOE, Flash Report I, 2006). SMCs are also largely dominated by individuals from high caste groups. New Era (cited by World Bank and DFID, 2006) found Dalit representation in only one third of the SMCs. The data showed that only 3 per cent and 12 per cent of SMC members are from Janajatis and Dalits (TRSE, 2006). According to the same source, PTAs are more inclusive compared with SMCs. This indicates that there are more students from these groups in schools but less representation of their parents in school management.

The education of Janajati children can be viewed from different perspectives. As groups with varied socio-cultural backgrounds Janajatis have their own identity, culture, language, and in some cases religion. Though some assimilated into Hinduism, most have kept their own religious identity which they observe along with Hindu ceremonies. Teachers (whether Janajatis or non-Janajatis) are trained in conventional teaching and hardly understand these issues, nor are they prepared to incorporate Janajati children's cultural qualities – which form their identity, culture, language, and religious representation – into teaching and learning, preferring to promote so-called high class/caste culture. A mainstream school which is governed by elites and/or high caste groups, and which expects behaviour different from a Janajati child's known culture, may dilute or submerge her/his identity. Even the schools which are governed by Janajatis also fail to incorporate their identity-related issues in the school curriculum and contexts because they too feel either unaware about them or are assimilated into the mainstream school culture.

For example, schools in a Janajati dominated community may not depict the society. The absence of a Gumba<sup>12</sup> but presence of a temple of goddess Saraswati<sup>13</sup> in a school with a Tamang dominated community is an example. In this situation finding a space and feeling a sense of belonging in a school is difficult for a Janajati child. For Hill Janajati girls it is even more difficult because most of them come from a fairly open society in terms of gender relations. Most schools on the other hand are more regimented and governed by Hindu norms and values which are more conservative. This situation discourages Janajati children in general and Janajati girls in particular from freely enjoying the schooling. The historical trend of Janajatis to join the workforce at an early age compounded with a curriculum irrelevant to Janajatis' lives also discourages Janajati children from continuing their education. They have seen their elders who have gone abroad to join the army or do other work returning with an amount of wealth. Thus Janajati children, especially boys, are rather tempted to follow this path. And particularly among Hill Janajatis, what counts most is girls finding someone with wealth and living a comfortable married life, as this has been a practice for many years. This discussion indicates that Janajati boys do not find the curriculum relevant for their career and at the same time they do not see the linkages of the study with the home culture in which they are living. The use of the 'alien language' Nepali with the Gurung students for example without adequate code switching supports such as dictionaries and bilingual teachers aggravate the situation.

Along with the mismatch between school and home culture, insensitive teaching and learning practices, persisting poverty, and more conservative culture, for Tarai Janajatis it is more beneficial to marry off young daughters than to educate them. Educating them means more dowry and less chance of finding a suitable groom. The socially interwoven shame of having an unmarried daughter at home also compels the parents to prefer early marriage of their daughter. When asked why girls are married early, a Kalwar woman of Bara district said 'Kalwar ki beti kumari rahajai' meaning their daughters will remain spinsters. The urge to marry off daughters early also stems from the fact that after the parents' death their maintenance will be at stake. In the Nepali culture parents are supposed to take the responsibility of their children's marriage. This responsibility compounded with the financial load of the dowry has compelled parents to force their daughters into early marriage.

#### 4.3.5 The language dimension

Ethnic communities of Nepal represent a wide range of culture, socio-economic status and language. All of these have influence in all aspects of their lives. On one hand Nepali is the official language of the nation and the language of instruction in public schools. This has prevented most ethnic communities from climbing up the education ladder. There is a common perception among teachers and educationists that most of the non-Nepali speaking children drop out of school in Grade 1 due to language problems. This perception is justified by the government's recent move to implement a bilingual approach in the first three years of primary level.

Language is not only a tool to decode or encode the text or words. It also carries culture, and traits which help or hinder children's learning. Language also determines students' position (academic, social, cultural) in schools and others' viewpoint about them. In this context students who do not belong to a mainstream language grouping are very likely to be excluded in school

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<sup>12</sup> Buddhist monastery.

<sup>13</sup> Hindu Goddess of wisdom.

life. It was reported that those whose mother tongue is Nepali speak first, fast and sit in the front but Tharu children speak slow, late and sit at the back (Awasthi, 2004). This indicates that those who are slow and late speakers are academically, socially and culturally behind in the classroom (Acharya, 2005).

In a classroom where the majority of the children belonged to the Tharu language background, some to Awadhi and rest were Nepali speakers, Awasthi (2004) found division according to the language groups. Moreover, a Tharu speaking teacher revealed that his sister failed because she didn't understand the questions in the examination and she eventually gave up and stopped going to school (Awasthi, 2004). This particular incident indicates that one is not necessarily academically competent even though one is able to identify Nepali letters and words; and in order to understand the intent of a sentence a higher level of language competency is required (Acharya, 2005). This corresponds with CHIRAG's (2001) finding that Nepali speaking children have problems comprehending correct meanings. The lecture method, which is still widely practised in schools, does not help to enhance comprehension skills.

Etiquette differs according to the language one belongs to. Schools or teachers feel that a certain norm is the standard norm or the right norm, therefore all students must follow it. In this situation students who are aware of such norms are accepted by the institution (school) and are more advantaged than those who are not aware. Indifferent attitude and ignorance of the teachers towards the culture of a particular language group creates as well as reinforces this situation. For example, a head teacher said 'Tharu children don't even greet their teachers. They don't know how to say Namaste! Parents don't even teach how to say Namaskar' (Awasthi, 2004, p. 260). This situation indicates the head teacher's ignorance or indifference towards Tharu culture, and the school culture that promotes one way as the right way to greet (Acharya, 2005). Awasthi's research concludes that use of Nepali language as the medium of instruction has reinforced the linguistic and social hierarchies on one hand and on the other it has contributed to the increased dropout, repetition and failure in primary level among students whose mother tongue is not Nepali.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland (2006) has also identified several language related issues and challenges that negatively impact student learning and quality education. For example, provision of language teaching as an optional subject is likely to discourage even those with literate traditions from studying minority languages. Although some reports argue that the non-Nepali linguistic community prefer their children to be taught in Nepali, it was also reported that they strongly demand to have their children taught in their mother tongue. Despite the efforts, the Finland study found that schools are not promoting bilingualism, teachers are hardly trained to manage non-Nepali classrooms, very few teachers are available who can teach in children's mother tongue or deliver bilingual education, and teachers and parents are unaware of the language related discourses. The findings, however, could have been analysed from multiple perspectives. For example, parents who wanted their children to be taught in Nepali look at the phenomenon from a mobility perspective. Tamang 'fathers expected that the children would learn Nepali, gain knowledge and be able to live easily in any part of Nepal' (Acharya, 2004b, p. 6).

*Basuki, keeping in view the demand of the parents, labour market and required competency in higher grades, has been offering English course from grade one for the last six years. Especially the mothers pointed out the English teaching from grade one as one of factors preventing dropout ... Teachers and parents said that since the children have no one to observe, imitate, and interact with other than their own community, i.e. Tamang they have limited learning opportunity. Particularly exposure to culture of education and Nepali language was felt lacking by both the groups. (Social Audit of Basuki Primary School, Acharya, 2004b, p. 6)*

The above example indicates that the issue of language is not limited to Nepali versus other languages only. The issue is also linked to the opportunities that parents are foreseeing for their children. Given this and increasing out-migration which has increased demand for a skilled workforce on one hand, and the school community's growing tendency to teach English from Grade 1 on the other, then the parents' and guardians' informed choice is crucial. Despite these realities, the SSA concept paper has proposed that English teaching should start only from grade four. The argument is that young children face difficulty in managing three languages simultaneously. In this background immediate challenges therefore are to (a) convince the parents about the long term academic benefit of using mother tongue in early years of schooling, (b) help them make an informed choice, (c) prepare teachers for bilingual teaching and (d) support the school community's decision.

The language issue in relation to children's education can be viewed from the perspective of children's comfort for learning, language promotion and preservation, and linguistic identity. Over the years Nepal has used different language policies. For example in the late 1950s and during the 1960s the country allowed Hindi and the lingua franca in the southern plain and Nepali in the mid and high hills. From the 1970s to the 1990s it enforced a one-language policy, i.e. Nepali. In the mid-1990s the country took mother tongue teaching in two forms. In one form it became a means of communication if needed and in the other form it was used as a curricular subject for primary grades. But the language activists wanted mother tongue schools for all. This situation indicates the hazy language policy and mindset of central to ground level educational practitioners. Besides, the presence of Nepali speaking teachers in the Janajati dominated schools made many non-Nepali speaking children uncomfortable in schools. The reason was that most of the teachers were monolingual and very few of them are able to learn students' mother language other than Nepali. Because of this hard reality the non-Nepali speaking children do gain mechanical language skills but often cannot fathom the intent of the lesson because the lessons are foreign to their language and culture.

CHIRAG (2001) in this regard found that students are hesitant to generate and voice their knowledge in the classroom; teachers undermine students' knowledge; there is no verbal interaction between teachers and students; and teachers are not properly trained in applying bilingualism in the classroom context. In this situation children from a non-Nepali language background are very likely to drop out or get through schools with limited knowledge and skills. Analysis of students' scores also supports this finding, which says Janajati students score less than other students (Koirala and Acharya, 2005). In other words it is likely that they graduate only with bookish knowledge which is hardly applied in their everyday lives. Moreover, they dwell between two languages neither of which completely helps them to compete in the outside world. The absence of smooth language transfer policy and code switching practice in the classroom has compounded the students' problem.

A one-fits-all design applied from policy to classroom practice welcomed some children but distanced others. Mostly Janajatis who come from different language backgrounds belong to the latter. Janajati children have their own traditional learning styles (e.g. Limbus learn through songs) but mainstream schools lack a pluralist approach to teaching and learning. The reason is that teachers lack orientation about pluralism and various ways to address it. Furthermore, Janajati parents, particularly those with limited resources, would rather send their children to work than to school. The reason is that their cultural capital is different from the cultural capital of the mainstream children, and teachers are unaware of it.

#### 4.3.6 The religious dimension

Normally, the madrassas of the Muslims, the Gumbas of the Buddhists and the Gurukul of the Hindus are reported under the religious schools in Nepal. However, there has been little study of them and only sporadic information is available. According to the record of the Gumba Management and Development Committee, approximately sixteen hundred Gumbas in 57 districts are registered (Kantipur Daily, January 28, 2007). How many madrassas and/or Gumbas are actually in operation? How many children are studying in those systems? What kind of education is provided? What kind of disparities are faced in madrassas and Gumbas? All these issues are pretty much unknown. Table 4.8, based on population census data, gives a picture of the educational status of some religious minorities including Muslims.

**TABLE 4.8 Literacy and educational attainments by religious groups**

	LITERACY RATE OF SIX YEARS AND ABOVE			GRADUATE AND ABOVE (PERCENT OF LITERATE)		
	MALE	FEMALE	BOTH SEXES	MALE	FEMALE	BOTH SEXES
<b>Religious Minorities</b>	45.2	22.7	34.5	1.9	0.9	0.2
1. Muslim, Churaute	45.2	22.7	34.4	1.9	0.8	1.6
1.1 Muslim	45.1	22.6	34.4	1.9	0.8	1.5
1.2 Churaute	67.9	42.4	55.6	6.2	3.3	5.1
2. Punjabi/Sikh	60.5	45.8	53.3	8.7	12.3	10.2

*Extracted from Sahavagi, 2004*

Tables 4.3, 4.5 and 4.8 indicate that the Muslim population's literacy rate is lower than that of Hill Dalits and Janajatis. The literacy rates of Hill and Tarai Dalits are 41.9 per cent and 21.1 per cent respectively. For Janajatis it is 56.2 per cent and 44.8 per cent respectively. In terms of higher education (graduate and above) Dalits are below Muslim, and Hill Janajatis are above all the others (Muslim, Dalits, Tarai Janajatis). Muslims' poverty, however, is lower (41%) (World Bank and DFID, 2006) than that of Dalits and Janajatis.

According to a study conducted by CERID (2004b) 41 per cent of the school age Muslim children were out of school. Flow towards madrassas was higher with 41.22 per cent children going there as opposed to only 14.12 per cent attending mainstream schools. Furthermore, the study found that among those attending madrassas, the majority were girls; and in mainstream schools Muslim girls' repetition and dropout was higher than that of their male counterparts. Lack of religious education, difference in children's language and medium of instruction, reluctance of the parents to send their girls to mainstream school and absence of female teachers were some of the

reasons reported as the factors preventing Muslim children's participation in mainstream schools (CERID, 2004b). It also has to be noted that madrassas provide free education, whereas mainstream education, though it claims to be free, is not in reality. Some parents are not motivated to send their children to mainstream education because they doubt that their children would get a job in the government with mainstream education (CERID, 2003). Parents interviewed said that graduating from a madrassa however gives their children a respectable position such as Maulavi or preacher (CERID, 2003). Another study undertaken recently by CERID (2006b) under the Formative Research Project found that parents are anxious about the government's possible interference in madrassas once they are mainstreamed. It also noted that teachers from madrassas lack the knowledge required to teach mainstream curricula, madrassas are short of teachers and physical facilities, and learning materials are not adequate. Even where the mainstream curriculum has been incorporated, Maulavis end up teaching only Islamic religion and culture due to the difficulty in teaching other curriculum subjects. The head teacher of the madrassa operating under Nepal Jame Masjid also reported that in most madrassas teachers are not capable of teaching any other subjects except religious ones.

The oldest madrassa in Nepal, established in 1939/40 AD, offers the government curriculum and teaches Grades 1 to 8. Additionally, students study Urdu language, Kuran and Islamic history. The medium of instruction is Nepali except in these subjects. The madrassa has its own management committee to take care of daily management. Major decisions such as matters regarding finance, construction and madrassa management committee election are taken by the Nepal Jame Masjid (Mosque) management committee because the madrassa is under the patronage of the Mosque. The madrassa is registered in the Kathmandu DEO under a private trust. The total financial support comes from Nepal Jame Masjid. It has not yet received any support from the government, though they argue that it should receive the support that other community schools are receiving. Recently the Mosque decided to levy fees to those who can afford to pay in order to make the parents more accountable towards their children's education. Still around 70 per cent of the students are exempt from fees due to their economic condition. The madrassa operates within the Mosque premises therefore it lacks a school environment. There is a religious wing of the madrassa in which boys exclusively study Kuran in a residential facility. Boys from neighbouring countries also come to study here. *(Based on a discussion with Nepal Jame Masjid and adjoining madrassa representatives.)*

According to the Nepal Jame Masjid management committee members, madrassas should not be viewed in isolation. Madrassas are linked with Islam and Muslims. Other religious and caste groups know very little about Muslims, and curricula are spreading misleading information about Islam and Muslims. Public property (e.g. cemetery) of the Islamic community cannot be registered, Muslims are forced to put surnames which they don't have in the official documents like citizenship cards, and the degree earned from religious schools is not recognized. Nepali Muslims, who have about 700 hundred years old history, are not trusted and the contributions that they have made so far in nation building have not been recognized. 'We have realized that religious education is not enough, therefore we are also looking for a way out. But in the race of modern education we don't want our identity to be lost,' said the Mosque management committee member. Regarding CDC's initiative on curriculum adjustment, both the Mosque and madrassa representatives were of the opinion that the authentic institutions like this madrassa and/or Nepal Jame Masjid should have been consulted rather than consulting just one individual because that individual cannot represent the voice of the larger Nepali Muslim community.

Madrassas in Nepal do not have an umbrella institution/organization. They function in their own ways. Regarding the financial sources, madrassas mobilize their own community and some may even receive support from other countries through personal connections. In the rich countries people do not find a place to provide their 'Jakat' (mandatory contribution of one's income to the poor). In this situation people from those countries send 'Jakat' to the poor Muslims of other countries. But since the money does not come through an authentic or official channel the income is not reflected in any official record of either Nepal government or the Mosque.

#### 4.3.7 The disability dimension

Mentally and/or physically challenged children are among those most excluded from access to school and education (Bhatia and Turin, 2004). The population of 'disabled people', however, is a contested topic in Nepal. Different groups suggest different figures. Nonetheless it has been revealed that 68.2 per cent of disabled people have no education (UNICEF/NPC, cited by Bhatia and Turin, 2004). The same source shows that 34 per cent of disabled children age 10 to 14 have no education. According to UNICEF (2006) it is estimated that 10 per cent of primary school age children have physical and mental disabilities, and most of them are out of school. In many Nepali cultures disability is viewed as a sin of the previous life. Therefore disabled children are a shame to the family and having a disabled child is both a shortage of family income source and an additional burden. In a country where children are needed as economic assets, disabled children are subject to rejection and marginalization (Lansdown, cited by Bhatia and Turin, 2004). In this context children feel useless because of being unable to support their family.

The Flash Report I of 2006 (see Annex Table A1) shows that in primary level enrolment male disabled children's proportion is higher (55%) than that of female (45%). The GPI is 0.82, which is lower than that of all the other social groups. The proportion of teachers with disability is also negligible with 1.1 per cent, 0.6 per cent and 0.6 per cent in primary, lower secondary and secondary levels respectively.

*'It is a great help for me and my parents because they are poor and I can't work like my other siblings. I wanted to help them a lot. Now I feel that after the completion of my studies, I will be a teacher and able to help my family. This support has inspired me to continue my studies. Now my parents will have less tension about my studies.'* (Disability Scholarship recipient Usha Kumari Bhagat from Grade 4, UNESCO, 2005)

Despite the government's financial support in the form of scholarships to mainstream disabled children, the school environment is still not favourable. In this respect Bhatia and Turin (2004) conclude that the 'mainstream schools and teachers are poorly equipped to include children with disabilities and provide the required learning environment that would enable their inclusion' (p. 27). Findings of CERID (2006c) correspond with this conclusion. Examples from the study include: lack of adequately qualified human resources at Assessment Centres; RPs (Resource Persons) and school supervisors do not have responsibility for overseeing the activities of the Assessment Centre; teachers are inadequately equipped to practise inclusive education in the classroom; there is absence of linkage between the Resource Centre, the Assessment Centre and the inclusive education class at operation level; SIPs do not reflect the inclusive education programme. Moreover, very few efforts have been made to facilitate learning of the intellectually challenged or mentally disabled. In other words only the physically disabled, including deaf children, get some attention.

The government has introduced a two-track system to address the educational needs of disabled children. In one track children have special classes, e.g. a class for the deaf and a class for the blind. In the second track it has introduced an inclusive classroom policy with the intent to accommodate the disabled in the able-bodied students' classroom. But the experiences of some of the schools give impression that these provisions are inadequate to fulfil disabled children's learning needs. Another dimension of the education of disabled children is the gap between the school/hostel and home environment. The hearing impaired students reported that they prefer staying in the hostel even during the vacation and parents too reported that they rather leave their children in the hostel than bring them home (Thapa, 2007). The reasons included the absence of entertainment and/or recreation, someone to communicate with and physical facilities at home. But the schools are provided a budget only covering the costs of 10 months because the remaining 2 months are vacation when parents are supposed to take their children home.

In relation to the schooling of disabled children, the issue can be viewed from a rights perspective, humanist values, and types of disability and educational opportunities. From a rights perspective, the disabled need a different environment in the classroom, which they lack in school. So is the case at home because parents are either unaware of or cannot satisfy the special needs of their disabled children. From the humanist lens, these differently-abled children need empathy and attention in school and at home. The topography, school environment and attitude shaped by cultural belief towards the disabled challenge the creation of such an environment. To date, inadequate efforts have been made to overcome these challenges.

#### 4.3.8 The exacerbating factors of conflict

The decade-long armed conflict between the state and the CPN (Maoist), which has currently halted, has severely damaged the school education sector resulting in a high number of displaced, traumatized and abducted children and a sharp increase in dropouts. 'Psychological problems are seen and are increasing in children due to armed conflict' (CWIN, Save the Children Norway, 2005, p. 4). In all, 424 children (300 boys and 124 girls) were killed, about 40,000 children were displaced and 8000 lost their parents (CWIN, Save the Children Norway, 2005). Moreover, the conflict increased child labour on one hand and put tremendous pressure on urban based schools on the other.

During armed conflict schools became targets of both parties of the conflict. The CPN (Maoist) in most cases abducted students and teachers to give them political education, and to gather for their cultural programmes and mass meetings. Schools were often used for various activities by the CPN (Maoist), and then became the target of the government security forces. As a result many schools were bombed and students were killed. CPN (Maoist) also attacked and destroyed schools. For example, according to the Asian Centre for Human Rights records, CPN attacked 23 schools and bombed six in one day in Rukum District in May 2005.<sup>14</sup> Inaccessibility caused by conflict left the government unable to utilize the budget allocated for rehabilitation of school physical facilities and delivery of teaching/learning materials on time (Footnote 14). One of the challenges in meeting the MDGs has been a loss of a significant number of school days caused both by armed conflict and other strikes (NPC, 2005).

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<sup>14</sup> www.IRINnews.org.

*The situation with regard to education has become so bad that it will take several decades to restore what we had achieved before the conflict ... Many children in the village are dropping out of schools due to lack of teachers and proper educational materials. The conflict has been the main cause. (Deepak Roka, a school teacher in Rukum District, [www.IRINnews.org](http://www.IRINnews.org))*

Increased poverty caused by armed conflict has also been a major cause for children dropping out from school.<sup>15</sup> Among the interviewed women who lost their husbands due to killing, abduction or disappearance, the majority confessed that they had to take at least one child out of school for livelihood (Footnote 15). In Nepal the number of displaced children and incidences of child labour increased during the armed conflict.<sup>16</sup> Many school age children who fled homes or were sent away by parents have ended up working either as domestic help or conductors (Khalasi) in urban areas, and many from the Western part of the country have gone to India in search of work and shelter (Footnote 16).

Due to the absence of criteria-based identification it is difficult to identify IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons) (CERID, 2006d). Those identified are living in economic hardship, therefore it is unlikely that the children will be sent to and/or continue school (CERID, 2006d). Schools on the other hand have to take care of the psychological effect on children who are haunted by scenes of atrocities (CERID, 2006d). A 16 year old school-going girl, who was living a displaced life after her father was brutally disabled, faced relentless enquiry by the Nepal Army, both of which incidents enraged her (Gurung, 2007). Similarly a poor displaced Dalit boy was completely subdued after his father was shot dead by the government security force while participating in a wedding party (Gurung, 2007). Being the eldest and from a poor family background this boy is now responsible for the family's well-being. In this situation he is likely to quit school. Nevertheless, it is reported that socio-psychological counselling is slowly helping both children regain their self.

*'I saw two Maoists killed by the road side, and there were police and army people all around. I was really frightened and told my mother. She said not to stay outside.' A Siraha girl. (Source: Save the Children Norway and Save the Children US, 2007)*

Teachers were also indiscriminately victimized during the armed conflict. CPN (Maoist) killed or abducted many teachers accusing them of being informants to the government and the Nepal Army killed or detained them in accusation of being Maoist sympathizers or informants. Teachers 'are often subjected to extortion, torture, kidnapping and forced participation in Maoist activities' (VSO, 2005, p. 5). The use of school premises for armed activities and the abduction of teachers and students have been identified as challenges in achieving the PRSP goal (NPC, 2004).

Though the armed conflict has ceased, the school environment is not yet conducive for children. Students of Saraswoti High School in Sankhuwasabha district are still scared to go to school because of the bunkers built in their school premises by the Maoists. Maoists had built such bunkers in many schools and now parents of Saraswoti High School are demanding that the DEO takes care of their removal (Kantipur Daily, March 12, 2007).

<sup>15</sup> [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org).

<sup>16</sup> [www.oneworld.net](http://www.oneworld.net).

The above deliberations indicate that a major challenge to the schools is to identify and understand the children and help both the teachers and children to manage the psychological impact and thereby prepare them for teaching and learning in a post-conflict context.

### 4.3.9 Multiple vulnerability and hard-to-reach children

#### *Multiple vulnerability*

The above sections tried to portray how natural and socially constructed differences positively and negatively influence children's right and ability to access quality education. The interconnectedness of the differences pushes children to more difficult circumstances. For example, where gender based discrimination, caste based discrimination, poverty and armed conflict come into play, family disintegration is likely to occur. When families are disintegrated and/or dysfunctional, the incidences of child abandonment and abuse (sexual and other), the migration of children for work and children's involvement in harmful activities are likely to increase. Besides the mismatch between family expectation and children's interest, mismatch between children's expectation and family resources, and mismatch between traditional values/norms and children's values/norms also push children into difficult circumstances. Moreover, parents' temptation towards monetary benefit also denies children their rights. In Nepal the combination of all the above factors has resulted in multiple effects on children's lives.

#### *Working children and street children*

It is estimated that 2.6 million children between the ages of 5 and 14 are engaged in different forms of labour, only 64 per cent of them go to school and a girl child labourer works double the hours that boys work (Pradhan, 2006). Banskota *et al.* (2005) found that among children between the ages of 6 and 13 from poor households, 14 per cent were engaged in labour, 43 per cent were studying, 5 per cent were working and studying and 38 per cent were idle. However, lack of information and different definitions of economically active population used by NLSS and NLFS (National Labour Force Survey) make it difficult to compare the data (Banskota *et al.*, 2005).

*... the large economic costs that would need to be borne by society to eliminate child labour in Nepal are, in almost every scenario, adequately compensated by the economic benefits ... it should not be forgotten that there are implicit social gains to be made by curtailing child labour and expanding education that are not measurable in economic terms. (Banskota et al., 2005, pp. 39–40)*

About 5000 children are working and living in the streets of urban centres of Nepal.<sup>17</sup> UNESCO, Sath Sath and Child Welfare Scheme (2006) estimate that there are 2123 (290 female and 1833 male) and 215 (40 female and 175 male) street children in Kathmandu and Pokhara respectively. Most of these children do rag picking for survival. Rag picking is considered to be one of the worst forms of child labour. The number of rag pickers is estimated to be about 4000 with boys outnumbering the girls (KC *et al.*, 2001). Moreover, Dalit, Tamang and Magar children are more likely to end up being rag pickers. (KC *et al.*, 2001).

<sup>17</sup> www.CWIN.org.np.

*A 13 year old boy belonging to an ethnic group who is working in a tea shop in Kathmandu was taken out of school and sent to Kathmandu city by his father while he was in grade three for the purpose of earning money. Similarly, another Gurung boy who is also 13 and is working as a domestic help in Kathmandu left his home district in search of work as his father died the same year he was enrolled in school. (Extracted from Educational Pages, May/June 2006)*

It is very challenging to trace street children because they are so mobile. They are also at high risk of exposure to different kinds of misdeeds such as substance abuse, prostitution and theft. Due to their lack of trust in authorities and tendency of enjoying carefree lives, it is even more difficult for duty bearers to bring them to mainstream programmes like education.

#### *Trafficking and prostitution*

It is estimated that around 12,000 children are trafficked each year from Nepal (KC *et al.*, 2001). Among others, poverty, ignorance and social exclusion are identified as the reasons associated with trafficking. Though trafficking is not a phenomenon of specific groups, some are at higher risk than others. For example, Hill Janajatis and lower castes are the most vulnerable (KC *et al.*, 2001). Prevention as well as social integration upon return are both very challenging in the case of trafficking.

Due to its sensitive nature, the sexual abuse of children is not often discussed, but it is slowly getting the attention of the service providers. CWIN and Save the Children Norway (2003), in research conducted in Kathmandu valley among in-school and out-of-school children, found that often neighbours or other acquaintances are the abusers, and due to shame to the family and threat by the abusers, victims keep silent. Child respondents reported that those who have family problems or conflict in the family and those unattended are more vulnerable than those who are living in close and functional families.

*Many children drop out of school before completing primary education (Grades 1–5). This pushes them into a vulnerable situation where they do not qualify for available economic/employment opportunities in the society. More or less, a majority of respondent children had followed this pattern before ending up in prostitution. (Suwal and Amatya, 2002, p. 37)*

According to Suwal and Amatya (2002), parents' or guardians' disagreement and family problems were commonly reported reasons for not attending schools by child and youth prostitutes.

#### *Children affected by HIV/AIDS*

HIV/AIDS is an emerging phenomenon from which school age children are likely to be affected. Not much has been explored about HIV/AIDS and its impact on children's education.

Nevertheless, Bennell *et al.* (2003) have grouped school age children directly affected by HIV/AIDS into three categories: children who are HIV positive, children living with a sick family member, and children whose guardians or parents have died due to AIDS. They assert that education of all these children is at great risk. However, Bennell *et al.* did not find any children directly affected by HIV/AIDS in the selected schools (12 primary and 12 secondary) of three districts. Nevertheless, their analysis of the prevalence of absenteeism, repetition and dropout among one-parent orphans revealed that these children are more likely to drop out and repeat than those with both parents. One-parent male orphans repeat and drop out more often than

female ones. The study has also revealed that it is difficult to trace risky behaviour as talking about sex is a taboo and/or socially constrained topic. The conclusion of the study indicates the stigmatization and discrimination that the AIDS orphans and children from AIDS affected households are likely to face. In addition, Gilligan and Rajbhandari (2004) warn that in Nepal on one hand the incidence of children driven to labour due to the HIV infections and deaths of parents is growing and, on the other, a child labourer has a high risk of contracting HIV. UNESCO, Sath Sath and Child Welfare Scheme (2006) have also revealed the high vulnerability of street children to HIV/AIDS.

'I am ill. I couldn't send my son to school in time. For this reason, he is back than his equal aged friends. He is in Grade 7 at the age of 16, whereas most of his friends are already in Grade 10.' (An HIV positive parent. Regional Media Resource Centre, no date.)

#### *Children in isolated and multiply-deprived situations*

Children at risk and/or 'hard to reach' from educational and other aspects are scattered throughout the country. Scenes picked up from a daily Nepali newspaper illustrate the situation and the magnitude of the problem associated with it. A group of Tarai Janajatis and Muslim children between the age of seven and nine who speak Abadhi from Holia VDC of Banke district (West) do not go to school because one school is too far and another is across the Rapti river; these children can neither walk to the school nor ride bikes (Kantipur Daily, March 2, 2007). There is another group of 20 to 22 children in Khandbari municipality of Sankhuwasabha district (East) who walk as long as 2 hours to collect firewood to sell for family livelihood; some of them dropped out of school and some never attended (Kantipur Daily, March 2, 2007). Around 250 Kumal children from Arghakhanchi (West) do not go to school due to economic hardship while Abadhi speaking parents of Mathuraharidwar of Bardiya district fetch children to graze the cattle in the middle of the school day due to economic hardship and lack of awareness (Kantipur Daily, March 17, 2007). Likewise in a village in Mugu (Far West), primary level children study on open dusty ground because the school does not have adequate building facility (Kantipur Daily, January, 28, 2007). Similarly, Himal primary school, with 67 students in Kimathanka, a remote village of Sankhuwasabha district, is close to collapse, and children sit on the floor with wooden planks supported by stones in front of them to read and write (Kantipur Daily, March 5, 2007). According to the news Maoists helped rehabilitate the building when it collapsed last year.

Children identified above are either not schooled or are likely to obtain poor quality or inadequate education. They therefore are likely to end up on the street or in low paid jobs or to get involved in other undesirable activities because they would not qualify for better opportunities. Due to poverty and/or absence of family assets they would have no other choices. The print media time and again highlights the issues related to the schooling of underprivileged children. Such news helps in identifying and locating the 'hard to reach' children but how much the system responds to the news is an issue. According to DOE personnel, news clippings related to education are collected by the Education Administration Division of MOES and a letter of enquiry with suggestion to take necessary action is sent to the relevant sections of DOE. But whether any action is taken is not followed up.

#### *Children affected by violence, bullying or harassment in school*

There is yet another group of vulnerable children to mention. These children, though getting opportunity to study in better schools, are at risk due to disciplinary actions taken by the schools or the behaviour of their peers. Though not much has been reported in written form, it has been established that certain behaviour practised by teachers and schools, and bullying by

classmates, also contributes to student dropout, repetition and low learning achievement. With this background it is important to probe into the known impact caused by physical and psychological punishments practised in the schools. CVICT (Center for Victims of Torture) and UNICEF (2004) have reported tragedies resulting from physical punishment leading to a student's death in the toilet and psychological punishment leading to depression and suicide among students in the worst cases. Teachers think that verbal or physical punishment is the best way to discipline the children and that this will prevent students from becoming careless and disobedient (CVICT and UNICEF, 2004).

#### 4.3.10 Disparities in education budget and resource allocation

Despite considerable variation in poverty and social exclusion across the regions, the education budget distribution trend over the years does not seem to favour the Mid and Far West regions (see Annex Table A6). Though a more equitable distribution pattern has been observed in recent years, the Mid and Far Western regions still receive only 20.1 per cent and 9.2 per cent respectively of the EFA 2004–09 programme budget.

In SESP the case is different. In both regions the percentage allocation is much higher in secondary level as compared with primary. Due to severely poor infrastructure in these districts, a large portion of the SESP budget is allocated for infrastructure development. Out of the total budget intended for the districts a small portion is kept at the centre and used at the centre's discretion later on. Therefore Table 4.9 does not fully reflect the total budget intended for the region.

**TABLE 4.9 Regional disparity in budget allocation in fiscal year 2006/07\***

REGIONS	EFA	SESP
Far Western	9.2 %	14.4 %
Mid Western	20.1 %	27.1 %
Western	21.8 %	21.7 %
Central	26.9 %	21.1 %
Eastern	22.1 %	15.6 %

Source: AWPB, Annex 43 and Annex 56, DOE

\* Excluding unallocated budget.

TRSE (2006) asserts that 'generally per capita expenditure (funds received from DEO only) is low in those schools where the enrolment of Dalit students is higher. The correlation between per capita expenditure and the number of Dalit students is  $-0.38$  in those schools where the proportion of Dalit students is more than 30 per cent of total enrolment at primary level' (p. 52). These schools are already resource-poor, therefore they could not lobby for more support.

Inequity in resource allocation needs to be reviewed in relation to resource allocation patterns of other levels of education as well. The government subsidies allocated to higher secondary level and tertiary level have been enjoyed by those with higher incomes, mostly belonging to the richest 20 per cent of the households, while 16 per cent of the children from the poorest households and most disadvantaged communities are still out of school (Sigdel, 2005).

## 4.4 Summary

The above deliberations highlight multiple factors causing inequity and social exclusion in education. A close look at the factors and the impacts on children indicates that the types of educational arrangement being offered are working in favour of some but not others. Children facing the cumulative impact of poverty, social exclusion and conflict (armed or family) are severely restricted from enjoying their basic rights including education. If disability is added to this then the situation is even more miserable.

Poverty has pulled out many students from school for work and/or compelled them never to enrol. Social exclusion has pushed them out from their classroom because of the culturally built-in caste or other types of taboos. Systemic barriers such as overcrowded classrooms, particularly in the Tarai, and lack of female teachers and inadequate physical facilities make the situation worse. Conflict has terrorized, depressed, cultivated reclusive behaviour, and inculcated a revenge-oriented mindset among some students eventually making them disinterested in study.

In this context, the education system is unable to address the multiple challenges that children bring to schools. As illustrated above, many children and parents are not finding the current education relevant and inclusive in the sense that school has no feeding provisions for hungry children, no social exclusionary issue discussion forums in the school, no pedagogical practice to promote the morals of the socially excluded children, no disability friendly environment in school, and no counselling support to the children of the armed conflict. As a result many either drop out or graduate with hardly any saleable skill. Moreover, in a society where traditional family organization is disappearing and traditional means of livelihood is either inadequate or irrelevant, families are bound to disintegrate.

There is no provision in the local government to support these runaway/pushed away children. In this situation, children themselves are responsible for their own and their family's survival. Poor quality and rigid education in this situation has no meaning. If by any chance these children enter education, they either end up in resource-poor schools or NFE classes which still have not been recognized as complementary to formal education. Even if they join NFE there is no systematic ladder to go from one level to another and get an equivalency certificate. Many who join NFE classes either come out with sub-standard academic skills or their family conditions do not allow them to transfer to and survive in mainstream schools (see Annex Tables A13 and A14). Overall, the institutional culture of a resource-poor school is very likely to perpetuate social exclusion.

## Dimensions of educational challenges in Nepal

DEMAND SIDE	SUPPLY SIDE
<p><b>Poverty dimension</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The higher the poverty levels the lower the chances of being schooled. Poverty is intertwined with caste and gender. The lower the caste the higher the chances of being poor. In the poorest quintile GPI is in favour of boys. Poverty demands children to support the family livelihood. Being poor also means having formally uneducated parents, poor health due to lack of adequate and proper food and need to migrate in search of work at young ages. Even if a Dalit child may not earn, the parents will have to pay opportunity costs to buy education. In this case there is a high chance that a Dalit child either never attends or drops from school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Though a more equitable distribution pattern is observed in recent years, the regions with low HDI still receive less support. Inadequate analysis of multiple disparities and inadequate use of available information while planning, programming, capacity building and budgeting have also contributed to the continued exclusion of poor children from education. For example, scholarships are not targeted and a blanket approach is used in distribution with resource-poor schools continuing to receive inadequate funding. Moreover, the government subsidies allocated to higher secondary level and tertiary level have been enjoyed by those with higher incomes, mostly belonging to the richest 20% of the households, while 16% of the children from the poorest households and most disadvantaged communities are still out of school.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Caste-based dimension</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A combination of economic hardship and social exclusion perpetuates Dalits' low participation in education. Social exclusion and atrocities against Dalits are still practised in the communities and in schools. Schools in the rural remote villages may still have higher incidence of caste related discrimination and harassment by teachers and peers than in urban based schools. Stories of school-failure and self-perception also adversely impact Dalit and other disadvantaged children's participation in education. Structural oppression which cultivates inferiority complexes within Dalits also inhibits them from accessing and enjoying public services like school. Fear among parents that a schooled Dalit child might discontinue the parental occupation that has been feeding the Dalits for years is also a reason to deprive a Dalit child of formal schooling.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The mismatch between home and school culture and languages (discourse), teachers' insensitivity and discriminatory behaviour pushes Dalit children from school. Teacher training does not adequately change teacher behaviour. Service providers including teachers' recruitment and promotion are not tied to their attitude and behaviour aspects that favour some and disfavour others. Scholarships are not adequate enough even to meet the direct cost of schooling. Inadequate knowledge and skills provided by schools jointly attributed to the negative outlook of the parents towards formal education.</li> <li>■ No mandate for Dalits' representation in SMC.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Gender-based dimension</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Both demand side and supply side barriers perpetuate gender disparity. Necessity of marriage, societal restriction on women's sexuality and mobility, patrilocality, patrilineality, property rights, Daizo (Dowry)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Supply side barriers in girls education include teacher's attitude and behaviour; inadequate and inappropriate physical and academic learning environments; administrator/ managers and policy makers' biased attitude</li> </ul>

DEMAND SIDE	SUPPLY SIDE
<p>system particularly in the Tarai, self-perceived roles and images embedded in social values/norms and economic structure are major barriers at supply side. Inadequate study time at home due to the need for helping in household chores also makes it very difficult for girls to keep up with study. Due to security reasons and need of helping hands at home, girls are not sent to a far away school. All these jointly contribute in shaping girls self-perception about their roles and images which negatively impact their study. Since exclusion is practised at community level, Dalit women are disadvantaged in both domestic and public spheres. Poverty which most Dalits face adds another layer of restriction on Dalit women's lives. The multiple barriers thus limit participation in school for Dalit girls and young women.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ At management level institutional, social, cultural and family constraints make it difficult for women to meet the criteria for promotion. The attitude of men co-workers shaped by the stereotypical notion of men's and women's roles also hamper women's professional development. Use of derogatory and indecent expressions, language and jokes by men ignoring the presence of women also discourages women from actively participating in their professional growth. Difficulty in working as a single woman in an all-male environment, and sexual harassment are also the challenges that women teachers face.</li> </ul>	<p>and behaviour; absence of analytical skill and depth of knowledge; incomplete gender parity and equality monitoring; and absence of information sharing about the policy and plans at parents and guardians' level. Mismatch between girls' ways of learning and classroom pedagogy, no link between girls' practical knowledge and content, distance to school (particularly secondary school) have also stood as barriers to girls' schooling.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Problems with transfer of female teachers to home locality, manoeuvring by schools to favour male teachers over female in teacher transfer, and reluctance by families of young female teachers to go to remote/risky areas are some of the gender concerns related to female teachers. Difficulty in working as a single woman in an all-male environment and sexual harassment are some of the additional challenges that female teachers face.</li> <li>■ For those who have reached the management level twelve years service in Kathmandu as against 4.61 years of service in other selected geographic region to secure the maximum marks is not favourable; men's social networks, which are also active outside the professional sphere; attitude of men co-workers shaped by the stereotypical notion of men's and women's roles also hampers women's professional development. Additionally, use of derogatory and indecent expressions, language and jokes by men ignoring the presence of women in training situations also discourages women from actively participating in their professional growth. And again neither does capacity building adequately change attitudes and behaviour nor do the evaluation criteria demand changed attitudes and behaviour regarding gender relations.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Ethnicity dimension</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Poverty is the biggest challenge among highly marginalized Janajatis. Among Tarai Janajatis due to poverty and cultural norms it is more beneficial to marry off young daughters than to educate them. Educating them means more dowry and less chance of finding a suitable groom. Socially interwoven shame of having an unmarried daughter at home also compels the parents to choose early marriage of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Irrelevant curriculum and no link between the study and home culture in which rural Janajati children live. Totally alien school environment from their culture, religion and languages pushes Janajatis' children out from school.</li> <li>■ No mandate for Janajatis' representation in SMC.</li> </ul>

DEMAND SIDE	SUPPLY SIDE
<p>their daughter. The security and livelihood of unmarried daughters after the death of parents are also concerns. Socio-cultural responsibility compounded with the financial load of the dowry compels parents to force their daughters into early marriage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The historical trend of Janajatis to join the work force at early ages and bring an amount of wealth tempts young Janajati boys to follow this path. Particularly among Hill Janajatis, girls finding someone with wealth and living a comfortable married life counts most, as this has been a practice for many years.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Language dimension</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Nepali medium of instruction makes it difficult for many non-Nepali speaking children to comprehend the lessons. They gain mechanical language skills but cannot fathom the intent of the lesson because the lessons are foreign to their language and culture. In this situation children from a non-Nepali language background are very likely to drop out or get through school with limited knowledge and skills.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Most of the teachers are monolingual and very few of them are able to learn students' mother language other than Nepali. Due to language difficulty students are hesitant to generate and voice their knowledge in the classroom; teachers undermine students' knowledge; there is no verbal interaction between teachers and students; and teachers are not properly trained in applying bilingualism in the classroom context. Moreover, students dwell between two languages neither of which completely helps them to compete in the outside world. The absence of smooth language transfer policy and code switching practice in the classroom has compounded the students' problem.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Religious dimension</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Particularly in the case of Muslims, lack of religious education, difference in children's language and medium of instruction results in parents being reluctant to send their children to mainstream schools. Madrassas provide free education, whereas mainstream education, though it claims to be free, is not in reality. Some parents are not motivated to send their children to mainstream education because they doubt that their children would get a job in the government with mainstream education. Graduating from a madrassa gives their children a respectable position such as Maulavi or preacher. Parents are anxious about the government's possible interference in madrassas once they are mainstreamed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ No definite plan or programme to address the needs issues related to religious schools.</li> <li>■ No wider consultation with religious leaders regarding the mainstreaming of curriculum and/or schools.</li> <li>■ There is inadequate information and absence of systematic process to examine the situation of religious schools. In this situation decisions are made on the basis of partial or no evidence.</li> </ul>

DEMAND SIDE	SUPPLY SIDE
<p>Limited knowledge of other religious and caste groups about Muslims and Islam has contributed in spreading misleading information about Islam and Muslims. Very cautious about losing their identity in pursuit of modern education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Financial support to madrassas does not come from authentic and formal channels. Often people contribute through personal connection as a religious responsibility, therefore the income is not reflected in any official record of either Nepal government or the Mosque. About Gumbas there is still a dearth of information.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Disability dimension</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Culturally disability is mostly viewed as a sin of the previous life. Disabled children are therefore a shame to the family and having a disabled child is both the shortage of family income source and an additional burden. As a result disabled children are subject to rejection and marginalization. In this context disabled children too feel useless because of being unable to support their family. The gap between the school/hostel and home environment also makes families to not bring disabled children home for vacation from school and children would rather stay away from homes. Absence of entertainment and/or recreation, physical facilities and someone to communicate with, particularly for children with hearing difficulty, make it difficult for children to cope at home. The topography, school environment and attitude shaped by cultural belief towards the disabled people jointly discourage disabled children's education.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Schools lack enough facilities to assist disabled children's learning needs. In most cases school infrastructure is not friendly to the physically disabled people. No consideration is given by schools in this matter and no mechanism is in place to mandate it.</li> <li>■ Teachers' and peers' discriminatory attitudes and behaviour also discourage disabled students. There are not adequate teachers with knowledge and skills with regard to the education of disabled children.</li> <li>■ Resource schools are not adequately funded.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Exacerbating factor of conflict</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The decade long conflict physically damaged the school infrastructures making children feel insecure in school. Increased poverty caused by armed conflict augmented child labour and migration. A high number of children were displaced, abducted and traumatized causing increased school dropout and psychological problems among children.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Teachers were also indiscriminately victimized during the armed conflict. CPN (Maoist) killed or abducted many teachers accusing them of being informants to the government and the Nepal Army killed or detained them in accusation of being Maoist sympathizers or informants.</li> <li>■ Inaccessibility caused by conflict left the government unable to utilize the budget allocated for rehabilitation of school physical facilities and delivery of teaching/learning materials on time.</li> </ul>

DEMAND SIDE	SUPPLY SIDE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Pressure built on urban based schools. IDP children are still not systematically identified and supported.</li> <li>■ Schools are still suffering from the aftermath of armed conflict.</li> <li>■ Government is relying only on the sporadic initiatives made by I/NGOs regarding socio-psychological counselling to the children affected by conflict.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Multiple vulnerability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The interconnectedness of gender based discrimination, caste based discrimination, poverty and armed conflict on one hand pushes children out from school and on the other family disintegration is likely to occur. Family disintegration causing child abandonment and abuse (sexual and other), the migration of children for work and children's involvement in harmful activities have resulted in multiple effects on children. Such children are at high risk of exposure to different kinds of misdeeds such as substance abuse, prostitution and theft. Poverty, ignorance and social exclusion are identified as the reasons associated with trafficking. Prevention as well as social integration upon return are both very challenging in the case of trafficked children. Not many cases have been brought to light but the incidence of children driven to labour due to the HIV infections and deaths of parents is growing on one hand and a child labourer has a high risk of contracting HIV on the other. Children at risk and/or 'hard to reach' from educational and other aspects are scattered throughout the country. Children identified here are likely to end up on the street or in low paid jobs or to get involved in other undesirable activities because they would not qualify for better opportunities. Due to poverty and/or absence of family assets they would have no other choices.</li> <li>■ Though getting opportunity to study in better schools some children are at risk due to disciplinary actions taken by the schools. Certain behaviours practised by teachers, and schools, and bullying by classmates have been contributing to student dropout, repetition and low learning achievement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The monitoring system gathers in-school data only, therefore the system does not have information about 'hard to reach' children. On the other hand information gathered by other sources is not adequately utilized.</li> <li>■ The issues, identification and location related to the 'hard to reach' children's schooling highlighted by print media is not followed through by the system.</li> <li>■ Physical and psychological punishments practised in the schools have left both psychological and physical scars on children to the extent that they either leave school or divert to other undesirable activities.</li> <li>■ Teachers' mindset is that verbal or physical punishment is the best way to discipline the children and this will prevent students from becoming careless and disobedient. In many cases this has negatively affected children.</li> <li>■ If by any chance the multiply-vulnerable children enter education, they either end up in resource-poor schools or NFE classes which still have not been recognized as complementary to formal education. Even if they join NFE there is no systematic ladder to go from one level to another and get equivalency certificate. On the other hand many who join NFE classes either come out with sub-standard academic skills or their family conditions do not allow them to transfer to and survive in mainstream schools. Moreover, the institutional culture of a resource-poor school is very likely to perpetuate social exclusion.</li> </ul>

## 5. Equity and Social Inclusion: Concepts, Approaches and Strategies

### 5.1 Overall Approach

Currently, Nepal's school education (Grades 1–12) is divided into three parts: Primary (1–5); Lower Secondary and Secondary (6–10); and Higher Secondary (11–12). ECD, Primary level and NFE are under one sub-sector and are covered by the EFA 2004–09 programme. Lower Secondary and Secondary levels are supported by SESP. Higher Secondary is managed under a separate Board – HSEB (Higher Secondary Education Board). Therefore for the purpose of SWAp/PBA analysis the two sub-sectors primary (EFA 2004–09) and secondary (SESP) are considered.

#### 5.1.1 The equity analysis on which the programmes are based

##### *Design phase: EFA*

Equity analysis is undertaken at two phases of the programme. First before or during the design phase, and second during the implementation phase. In the EFA 2004–09 design phase adequate information and analysis, particularly in relation to caste, ethnicity, disability and language, were not available. The preliminary work of EFA (2001 and 2002), i.e. thematic report and EFA NPA preparation, primarily focused on area-specific technicalities. In other words gender and social inclusion were not widely recognized perspectives and so not considered adequately. For example, a goal/theme analysis reveals that ECD talks about the inclusion of children from 'vulnerable' groups but does not specify who they are. The life skills goal specifically included Dalits, but it can be argued that the Dalits were included because they have a variety of their own skills which could not be ignored when talking about life-skills related matters. The adult education and literacy related NPA has considered women's literacy but not other areas of social inclusion. Documents (NPA, Thematic reports), except Gender Equity and Social Parity, have not viewed the subject matter in cultural and social contexts. Even the indigenous language thematic report and plan of action have treated the indigenous and those from specific ethnic groups as one homogenous group; and gender issues are not considered. Theme (goal) analysis of NPA from a gender perspective reveals that the NPAs are either gender blind and/or insensitive (Acharya, 2006). Other than the gender related NPA, none propose strategies and indicators useful to ensure gender parity and equality (Acharya, 2006). The NPA therefore has not been able to espouse the EFA's spirit of gender equality.

The analysis of major documents of EFA indicates that the issues of gender and social inclusion are compartmentalized. In part, this situation questions the adequacy of orientation of team members in matters of utilizing gender and social inclusion as cross-cutting themes. In other words, gender disparity and social exclusion were not recognized as cross-cutting issues during the preparation of EFA NPA.

Nevertheless the EFA 2004–2009 Core Document, which is the EFA five-year strategic programme document, has made a leap in recognizing the issues of gender and social exclusion. Additionally, the review revealed that the economic context of the country has also been adequately considered by the Core Document. The Core Document primarily utilized the Gender Audit (Koirala *et al.*, 2002) of BPEP II. Yet issues related to the education of religious groups and religious schools are not addressed in the document.

A consultant who has been involved in many of the developments in Nepal's education system also feels that the equity analysis available is not reflected in EFA 2004–09 to a very large extent. 'Although the Core Document is good in this respect, implementation still does not reflect the equity perspective adequately. It still does not target where it is most required and such targeted plans have not been developed and tested at the community level which would have yielded a good strategy.' However, on the positive side, EFA 2004–09 is wider in scope than BPEP II, which did not focus on poverty and district/regional and other differences – rather, focus was more on capacity building of MOES or central level mechanisms.

Generally, donors/lenders mostly did not carry out separate equity analysis for EFA 2004–09. However, they did an appraisal of the programme before joining the funding pool. Since gender equality is a priority for all the donor countries and financial institutions like ADB and the World Bank, they particularly reviewed gender related aspects of EFA 2004–09.

#### *Design phase: SESP*

SESP is a five year support to be undertaken from 2003 to 2007 with a vision of a 15 year support programme. The programme period however has since been modified to 2003–09 (Aide Memoire, 15–16 June, 2006). The joint review mission of March 2004 subscribed 'to the view that support for secondary education should be seen in the context established by the education for all movement' (Aide Memoire, 25–27 March, 2004, p. 1). The reasons for secondary education support are based on the realization that a well developed secondary education sub-sector is important to keep the primary level graduates in the school system; to fulfil parents' wishes to educate their children up to secondary level so that they are more likely to get stable wage earning work; to prepare positive role models and thereby increase the disadvantaged groups' participation in education; to increase the workforce capacity both in the internal and external labour market; and to improve all aspects of human capabilities including citizenship and health. SESP is informed by the OECD's DAC guidelines for poverty reduction and PRSP. Social inequity and regional disparity is also considered in the selection of districts for intensive input. Some development partners report that the equity related issues are raised and analysed in joint review missions because equity assurance provisions are prioritized areas both in EFA 2004–09 and SESP. How much of the gender analysis carried out for the purpose of secondary education development plan was utilized is not clear. Issues related to the education of religious groups and religious schools are not addressed in the SESP Core Document either. The overall analysis of SESP thus reveals that equity aspects have been recognized in its preparation, with more emphasis on poverty reduction. There is disagreement among DoE staff as to whether it is poverty focused, although since it is concentrated in low HDI districts, some feel this is an indicator of poverty-focus.

#### *Implementation phase: EFA and SESP*

During the implementation phase, EMIS, Flash reports, Formative Research reports, TRSE, TMIS (Training Management Information System) and mini researches sponsored by DOE have helped educate both the government and the donors in matters related to social exclusion in education. As a result new initiatives and strategies have been added and some changed. Development partners feel that Flash reports and EMIS collect school level data only, but in order to address exclusion then household level data is also necessary. DOE personnel also agree that there is a need for further data disaggregation in terms of language, gender, caste, ethnicity, religion etc. which school level data alone cannot make possible. All agree that without such information, the analysis may not cover the issues of all of the excluded groups.

Four trends are observed on the side of donors in relation to the equity analysis approach:

- Some donors do their own analysis based on the information obtained from Flash reports and other sources like UNESCO EDI.
- Some do a comprehensive social inclusion analysis utilizing their own resources. The *Unequal Citizens: Gender, Caste, Ethnicity Exclusion in Nepal* of the World Bank and DFID, and the *Vulnerable Communities Development Plan (VCDP)* (Bhatia and Turin, 2004) of the World Bank and ESAT are two examples. VCDP was a requirement of the World Bank and was rather an appraisal document.
- Some donors carry out the social inclusion analysis for the purpose of the technical assistance that they are planning to support or are supporting. For example ADB undertook social analysis and identified 12 districts for the pre-service teacher training scholarship scheme for disadvantaged women in which Dalit females are the first priority.
- Some donors do analyses for wider purposes and apply some findings to their participation in national programmes. For ESAT/DANIDA equity related issues are visible in the household survey undertaken for VEP (Village Education Plan) so there is no need to do another equity analysis. For UNICEF since it is mandated to work for women and children it undertakes studies through NGOs or media on issues related to children and women's education. The information and analysis derived from the studies are utilized in UNICEF's initiatives. Their support to the system is also informed by the information generated from the studies. For example, UNICEF sponsored 'Community Based Action Research on Girls' Education in Nepal' in early 2003. The findings of this study guided the types of support provided to the then WES and UNICEF's own initiatives. UNESCO also conducts mostly mini researches around the EFA goals. The outcomes are disseminated widely within the MOES system.

For most EFA 2004–09 donors the core document and PRSP are the guides and they rely on the government data sources. Moreover, they also emphasize or pursue the priority areas set in relation to the development aid by their respective governments. For example, Norway, Finland and Denmark have clear policy mandates for gender equality and human rights. For UNICEF and UNESCO also, gender and human rights are fundamental aspects in any support which they provide. Similarly, for ADB gender is the main concern and for the World Bank, gender and other forms of social exclusion are major priorities. It is thus clear from the documents that focus of the donors in relation to social exclusion is very much based on their respective institutional focuses.

How much of the outcome of the analysis is utilized in the programme implementation is a crucial question. Most government personnel claim that they are actively doing it. They admit that previously studies and researches were put aside while formulating plans and strategies, but now the culture of looking at the findings of the study reports for the purpose of policy and strategy development has begun. For example, even before MOES approved the study report of SLC performance, a certain budget was allocated in SESP for reforming the SLC examination. Increases in the amount of girls' and Dalit incentives were also based on the findings of the Formative Research Project, a joint initiative of CERID and MOES. The learning of EFA 2004–09 was used to determine the incentives in SESP. For example, the rate of scholarships is not the same in SESP. It varies according to the situation so it is no longer a blanket provision. To curb the situation where children would come only to pick up the scholarship money, as shown by the studies, the strategy was changed. Now children have to meet an 80 per cent attendance requirement to receive the scholarship money and it is distributed twice yearly. The policy to mainstream religious schools was also informed by studies on madrassas conducted by

Formative Research. During the direct rule of the King, the link with religious schools was sought through the King's liaison, to which DOE responded through MOES but without any consultation with the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC). Three thousand Nepalese rupees was distributed to many madrassas and Gumbas through the Cabinet decision. The impact of the initiative is not known yet.

Government personnel report that, generally, recommendations made by the joint review meetings are implemented as agreed. But the donors have mixed opinions. Some are of the opinion that the government is not responsive and does not actively implement the recommendations. But some other DPs feel that the development partners are also not focused. Each comes with their own organization's issues and recommendations. As a result the government is left with many issues and recommendations to be fulfilled by the next review meeting, which often is not possible given the diversity of the requirements of the donor organizations.

### 5.1.2 EFA 2004–09 objectives/components

The EFA 2004–09 strategic programmes have the following three objectives and six components.

#### Objectives:

- a) Ensuring access and equity in primary education
- b) Enhancing quality and relevance of primary education, and
- c) Improving efficiency and institutional capacity.

#### Components:

- a) Expanding and improving early childhood development
- b) Ensuring access to education for all children
- c) Meeting the learning needs of all children including indigenous peoples and linguistic minorities
- d) Reducing adult illiteracy
- e) Eliminating gender disparity, and
- f) Improving all aspects of quality education.

Though all contribute in one way or other in ensuring gender and social inclusion in primary education, objective (a) and components (b), (c), (d) and (e) are directly related to gender and social inclusion. The guiding principles of programme implementation which embrace 'gender mainstreaming and social inclusion' and 'pro-poor' also reflect the commitment towards gender and social inclusion. The strategies devised to achieve the objectives include incentives to girls, Dalits, poor and indigenous children; inclusive education; adult literacy; and gender, caste, ethnicity and geographically disaggregated data. Other significant strategies such as SIP, improving teaching learning, transfer of school management to the communities and curriculum revision have not been able to adequately embrace gender and social inclusion perspectives. Similarly, component monitoring indicators are also not consistent in covering the gender and social inclusion aspects. Indicators related to improvement in levels of literacy include only women as the variable related to gender and social inclusion. The reason might be the availability of other sources such as population census and NLSS. If this is the case then need of analysing available data from other sources, and identifying target population accordingly, should have been mentioned in the EFA 2004–09 Core Document. Except the outcome

indicators of the component related to ‘meeting the learning needs of all children’, the components do not adequately specify the variables necessary to ensure gender and social inclusion. The Indicative Action Plan for EFA 2004–09 included in the Core Document serves as a practical guide for programme implementers and education practitioners. It is more likely to be adhered to than the elaborations made in the main text. Therefore coverage, particularly that of outcome indicators, requires more elaboration on caste and ethnicity. Nevertheless JFA<sup>18</sup> (Joint Financial Arrangement) has provisions to monitor the progress of EFA 2004–09 by a Flash reporting system with the mechanism of collecting data at a more disaggregated level, e.g. Dalits, Janajatis. The Flash report thus addressed the gap identified in the EFA 2004–09 component-wise monitoring indicators.

The ‘resulting visions’ of EFA with regard to children, school, teacher, and classroom is an attempt to have an inclusive vision. For example, a child by 2015 will have ‘a right to receive education of good quality, which is ensured by legal provisions. Each child in the age group of 6–10 in Nepal has access to and completion of free and compulsory quality basic and primary education irrespective of gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, and geographic location’ (EFA 2004–09 Core Document, p. 9). By 2015 it envisions that ‘schools are centres for cross-cultural integration of different cultural groups living together in the society enhancing tolerance, peace and co-existence. The cultural activities carried out in schools represent the cultural values and practices of different groups inculcating mutual respect for cultural diversity in the community’ (EFA 2004–09 Core Document, p. 10).

*The Tenth Plan in its policy objectives for education has focused on expanding and developing quality education and producing an internationally competitive human resource for supporting the national economy, enhancing social development, and contributing to poverty reduction. It has also emphasized implementing programmes on literacy, post-literacy, income generation and non-formal education with a view to assist the disadvantaged communities and women in increasing their living standard. (EFA 2004–09 Core Document, p. 18)*

The EFA frame is guided by the policy objectives set by the Tenth Five Year Plan/PRSP. Issues of gender and social inclusion that the plan has advocated to be addressed are picked up by EFA 2004–09 and strategies are formulated accordingly. The strategies of EFA 2004–09 are geared more towards meeting the national agenda of poverty reduction and improved human resources. The document indicates the CRC (Convention on the Rights of the Child) 1989 and rights-based approach, but it is more based on national development targets. The concept of a rights-based approach is utilized in a limited or compartmentalized sense. For example, one of the activities in relation to meeting the learning needs of indigenous and linguistic minority children is ‘the rights-based approach to education emphasized in the curriculum through civic education’ (EFA 2004–09 Core Document, p. 25).

Regarding gender and social inclusion in addition to what has been pointed out in the EFA 2004–09 document, joint review meetings and consultative meetings are also found to be raising the issues and making recommendations. The need for clear reflection of social inclusion in the future business plans, expediting gender mainstreaming, following the recommendation made by the Gender Audit (2002) with respect to girls’ education, are some important recommendations

<sup>18</sup> JFA provides a joint frame for financial support. It is also a coordinating frame for EFA 2004–09 signatories in matters related to monitoring, reporting, audit, reviews, etc. of the programme.

and reminders made in review meetings (Aide Memoire, 5–7 December, 2005). Concerns such as low retention and high repetition in Grade 1; and need of gender-wise disaggregated data on retention of Dalit and Janajati children are also discussed in these meetings (Aide Memoire, 12–14 June, 2006). Similarly, developing a school block-grant system framework to address the overall diversity of the nation and the disparities existing in school conditions were reminders in the Combined Joint Review Mission report (Aide Memoire, March 19–24, 2004).

### 5.1.3 EFA 2004–09 institutional arrangement

Two major strategies adopted for the implementation of EFA 2004–09 are decentralization and inclusive education (Aide Memoire, 9 December, 2004). The institutional arrangement is also made accordingly. The MOES is responsible for policy analysis and direction for EFA 2004–09 while DOE as the facilitating agency is responsible for implementation. The Director General of DOE manages the programme in coordination with other line agencies (e.g. NCED, DEC, CDC, NFEC), I/NGOs and other organizations. At present, both EFA 2004–09 and SESP follow the existing MOES structure to implement the programme at district and school level. Under the decentralized management the salaries of the primary teachers flow through the DDC (District Development Committee), but other programme related funds flow through the regular channel of MOES, i.e. DOE to DEO to School.

Stakeholders at school cluster, community and district levels are involved in the preparation of plans according to their felt needs. Plans prepared through this approach are synchronized with and consolidated into a central level plan (e.g. ASIP/AWPB). The actual implementation of the programme takes place through district level mechanisms, Resource Centres and community level stakeholders. DOE concentrates in monitoring and providing technical backstopping.

*Gender equity in planning and programme implementation in general, and activities targeted specifically to girls and women in particular, are emphasized in order to eliminate gender disparity. (EFA 2004–09 Core Document, p. 6)*

There are provisions for committees to facilitate and oversee the EFA 2004–09 implementation. The Programme Executive Board (PEB) is a high level body which oversees the whole school (Grades 1–10) programme. The committee is expected to provide long-term strategic and policy directions. Members of PEB include secretaries of NPC, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Law and Justice, Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, Ministry of Local Development, Housing and Physical Planning; Chief of FCGO, Joint Secretary of Planning Division of MOES, and Executive Director of NCED. The Secretary of MOES is the Chairperson and the DG (Director General) of DOE is member secretary of PEB. Representatives from other organizations and agencies are invited to the PEB meetings when required. The PEB meets twice a year and advises on issues and overall progress related to the implementation of the programme, effectiveness of external support and coordination with other national institutions.

The Programme Management Committee (PMC) is responsible for overall programme management, monitoring and coordination of the programme and ensures that PEB guidelines and decisions are followed. PMC members include DG of DOE, DG of CDC, Director of Planning and Administration DOE, Executive Director of NCED, Director of Distance Education Centre (DEC)<sup>19</sup>, Director of NFEC, Joint Secretary of Ministry of Local Development. Chairperson of

<sup>19</sup> Currently DEC is under NCED leadership.

PMC is Joint Secretary of the Planning Division MOES and Member Secretary is Director of School Education Division DOE. Representatives from other organizations and agencies are invited to the PMC meetings when required. The committee meets at least four times a year and carries out the instructions of PEB, initiates necessary amendments to the regulatory framework for the education sector in order to facilitate implementation of the sub-sector program, facilitates the preparation of the ASIP and AWPB, monitors progress of ASIP implementation, identifies the technical assistance needs of MOES, DOE and other central and district level institutions, and reviews the sequencing of various activities, policy coherence within the programme, sector, and across sectors, and other related programme management requirements.

#### 5.1.4 EFA 2004–09 financial arrangement

In accordance with the JFA, EFA 2004–09 is financed through a pool funding modality, with major donors being Denmark, DFID, IDA, Finland and Norway. Ten budget headings are included in the pool funding. UNICEF and ADB, who previously provided support under separate arrangements, also joined in pool funding in the 2006/07 fiscal year. JICA is continuing its support through a separate funding arrangement.

The pool money is managed by an agreed system of accounting and reporting. All donors who join in pool funding put their money in a single account which is managed by the Ministry of Finance. The non-pooled support comes both 'in kind' and in cash forms. JICA's physical infrastructure support and WFP's mid-day meal and GIP are examples of in-kind support. UNICEF's non-pool support has been monetary. However, some other budget headings are also incorporated in the non-pooled funding but supported by donors, particularly technical assistance (TA). TA for ADB's teacher education project designed for primary teacher training<sup>20</sup>; ESAT/DANIDA's support to VEP and planning/monitoring section of DOE; and CSSP (Community School Support Programme) of the World Bank are examples.

The overall EFA funding modality is based on a sector-wide approach and so resource allocation is made on the basis of the primary education sub-sector. However, the EFA 2004–09 funding modality does not have a contingency pool to be used in times of difficulty. One donor representative notes that since very little contingency funding is available, the EFA 2004–09 funds cannot meet the growing education needs created by the armed conflict.

#### 5.1.5 SESP objectives/components

Among SESP's four objectives the third one is directly related to gender and social inclusion<sup>21</sup>. These objectives are 'framed with three sets of intermediate objectives: Access/Equity, Quality and Institutional capacity' (HMG, ADB and DANIDA, 2002, p. 41).

<sup>20</sup> TEP was initiated later to support the EFA because the EFA frame did not cover the teacher development aspect.

<sup>21</sup> Objective # 3: To ensure equity in access to secondary schooling, especially the equal participation of girls, and children of disadvantaged ethnic groups. Other objectives of SESP are: to enhance the quality of secondary education, including the standards of teaching and learning; promote the relevance of secondary education to national needs; and enhance both the internal and external efficiency of the secondary education sub-sector.

The Access/Equity policy objective includes the following three secondary objectives:

- a) Provision of secondary education to all who complete primary education
- b) Provision of secondary education that reflects the needs of all sections of society including those marginalized on the basis of race, religion, caste, ethnicity, locality or physical disadvantage
- c) Provision of secondary education that fulfils the particular needs of the girl child.

The programmes to achieve the objectives are grouped under the following four components:

- a) Learning environment
- b) Curriculum and assessment
- c) Institutional management
- d) Teacher development.

SESP focuses on an enhanced learning environment in order to achieve the access and equity objective. Some of the measures identified to address the issues of gender and social inclusion are: improved physical facilities of schools; scholarship and/or freeship to girls and other disadvantaged students including the disabled; locally determined curriculum; teacher training in local language; teacher sensitization about the needs of girls, Dalits and students with special needs; female teacher hostels in 10 Programme Intensive Districts (PIDs); teacher training scholarships to women from disadvantaged groups. The gender and social inclusion dimension is reflected more in the learning environment and teacher development components – the rest of the components do not explicitly and adequately cover this dimension. The same trend is found in output indicators. Mainstreaming gender and poverty reduction are repeatedly listed as risk and assumption. Though not explicitly mentioned in the core document, data disaggregated by gender and caste is available for the secondary level through the Flash reporting system.

*Teacher will be made sensitive to and capable of assessing all children, addressing gender issues, understanding the different or special learning needs of caste or ethnically marginalized non assertive children, and those with disabilities. (SESP Core Document, p. 44)*

As in EFA 2004–09, the SESP joint review meetings also time and again raise issues and make recommendations with respect to social inclusion in secondary education. Examples include: a revised scholarship management programme targeting more girls and specifically Chepang, Raute, Mushara children and the disabled; scholarships for hostel students (Aide Memoire, 15–16 June, 2006); the need to reallocate resources for additional classroom construction in PIDs; free textbooks for disadvantaged children; and SLC examination reform plan expected to be prepared by July 2005 to address the quality and efficiency issues raised by the SLC study (Aide Memoire, 3–6 May, 2005).

### 5.1.6 SESP institutional arrangement

The implementation process and institutional arrangement of SESP is similar to that of EFA 2004–09. The PEB of SESP has 7 members as opposed to 11 of EFA 2004–09, but those seven represent the same institutions and hold the same positions as in the EFA 2004–09 PEB. According to the EFA 2004–09 Core document, 'in order to ensure a holistic approach of school level education, both the Secondary Education Support Programme and EFA 2004–2009 will be directed by the same PEB' (p. 42).

The arrangement whereby the PMC facilitates the preparation of ASIP and AWPB for school level education (Grades 1–10) and monitors implementation progress also presumes that the implementation process and institutional arrangement of SESP is no different from that of EFA 2004–09.

### 5.1.7 SESP financial arrangement

The pool funding concept is also applied in SESP. However, SESP funding basically followed a project approach until the MTR was held in 2006. It was then proposed that DOE would prepare position papers which should elaborate the government's position and provide background information to support the changes proposed in SESP. The areas identified for position papers included requests for (a) a fund to trial school-based funding modality on a pilot basis, (b) emergency relief for secondary schools affected by armed conflict, (c) fund to provide textbooks to disadvantaged secondary level students with particular attention to equity issues in textbook availability under the MOES SSA framework, and (d) fund to support secondary teacher salary for an interim period. Recommendation was also made in the previous review meeting 'to aim at assessing the feasibility of bringing a range of changes into programme implementation and financing modalities, including possibilities of moving towards a broadly-defined sector approach' (Aide Memoire, 3–6 May, 2005, p. 3). In SESP there are three partners: ADB, DANIDA and GON. The share is 40 per cent loan from ADB, 40 per cent grant from DANIDA and 20 per cent matching funds from GON. Major activities are more focused on 10 PIDs and are defined in the Core Document. However, the partner funds are targeted to particular activities, and thus the share of the partners is different in different activities envisioned in the document.

### 5.1.8 Move towards merging of EFA 2004–09 and SESP

Two sub-sectors – primary (Grades 1–5) and secondary (Grades 6–10) – are funded and managed through the two different programmes, EFA 2004–09 and SESP. Nevertheless, certain significant activities of the two sub-sectors are undertaken jointly, including preparation of a unified school level (Grade 1–10) ASIP and AWPB. The Flash reporting system initiated under EFA 2004–09 also produces school level data for both sub-sectors. A single SIP is prepared in schools where both levels (primary and secondary) are operated. Similarly, DEPs (District Education Plans) are also all-inclusive.

The ASIP and AWPB is annually reviewed and approved by the joint review missions. As all the development partners intended, the synchronization between EFA and SESP has been initiated (Aide Memoire, 1–7 December, 2004). 'Support for secondary education is connected with EFA and is seen in this broader policy context' (Aide Memoire, 3–6 May, 2005). The review meetings for both sub-sectors are scheduled at the same time with EFA followed by SESP immediately. For these reasons, the review of ASIP and AWPB is not logistically complicated. The Concept Paper of SSA was discussed and endorsed, and partners agreed to develop it into a Core Document in the annual consultative meetings of both EFA 2004–09 and SESP held in December 2006 (Aide Memoire, 4–6 December, 2006; Aide Memoire 7–8 December, 2006). In this way, the schools are supported through (sub) sector wide approaches of EFA 2004–09 and SESP by jointly completing critical tasks such as planning, review of annual plans, and data collection/generation. The total school (Grades 1–10) is treated as one sector.

Currently there are thirty-four ETCs (B) in which 25 SEDUs have been merged. These ETCs (B) operate as satellite to 9 ETCs (A), which were previously called PTTCs. The merger of

secondary education development centres into NCED and SEDUs into Education Training Centres (ETC) also demonstrates the merging of EFA 2004–09 and SESP.

## 5.2 Capacity-Building and Organizational Development

Capacity building in gender and social inclusion has been targeted by various agencies. Though the EFA NPA related to 'Ensuring social equity and gender parity' has not paid much attention to the need of capacity building, interventions initiated during the programme implementation phase have attempted to include gender and social inclusion perspectives.

The EFA 2004–09 Core Document suggests the undertaking of relevant activities proposed by the HRD plan, which MOES has yet to approve. The SESP Core Document also has provision to revise the HRD plan, and to strengthen WES (which is now GEDS – Gender Equality Development Section). The overall capacity building viewed from an equity perspective reveals that emphasis is given more to increasing the number of female teachers and female students through scholarships/incentives. There is no explicit indication of institutional capacity building in equity related areas. The Output and Means of Verification are also silent in this matter. Mainstreaming gender and poverty reduction is rather indicated under risk and assumption even within capacity building component elaboration (i.e. SESP Log Frame). Nevertheless, the SESP Core document has provision for NCED to develop training packages and conduct training inclusive of equity and gender awareness. Need, strategy, activities and progress regarding capacity building in general has been discussed in the joint review meetings of both EFA 2004–09 and SESP, but the records are not elaborate enough to determine how inclusive the activities are and to what extent such capacity building activities attempted to address the equity related issues.

NCED is mandated to take care of the capacity building needs of the education sector in general, and more specifically of school education. A policy document on the human resource development for MOES has also been prepared. Equity consideration is one of the areas of the policy document.

*Serious efforts will be made to maintain gender sensitive and gender balanced behaviours and practices in all programmes ... All forms of social disparities will be explored and approaches will be developed by NCED and universities to ensure parity in relation to gender, caste, ethnicity, region, religion and language by linking these issues in the training curricula and processes. (MOES/NCED, 2005, p. 9)*

One of the provisions related to the 10 month pre-service teacher preparation training policy is to introduce a course to prepare teachers to address the diversity that students bring to the classroom. Similarly there is also a provision of tuition subsidies and paid leave to temporary female teachers and teachers from other disadvantaged groups to encourage them to receive the 10 month teacher training course.

The training policy is geared towards ensuring social equity both in the processes and the outcome. But it is not clear how the managerial level stakeholders will be oriented in equity related analysis. The focus is on giving more facilities to female teachers and teachers from other disadvantaged groups, and equipping teachers to manage the classroom diversity.

NFE personnel are not as fortunate as others in terms of capacity building opportunities. UNESCO sponsors exposure visits and participation in seminars or conferences in NFE, but otherwise there is little capacity building of the NFE system. NFEC is understaffed and is functioning with low capacity. Previously it was primarily filled with temporary positions. The government decision to remove the temporary staff left NFEC with inadequate and untrained people.

Additionally, a significant number of capacity building opportunities, particularly for central and district level stakeholders, is available through direct funding. For example, UNESCO has been continuously providing technical backstopping and skill enhancement opportunity in relation to the Flash reporting system. UNESCO also sponsors skill and knowledge enhancement training and exposure visits in other different subjects including gender. DANIDA does the same in gender and education and other areas. UNICEF has also been providing capacity building opportunities to GEDS (previously WES) staff. For the last few years UNICEF and a national NGO, World Education, have been supporting a micro-planning exercise in 26 districts in partnership with DOE and the REDs. It includes both capacity building and technical backstopping in micro-planning. JICA also sponsors 1–3 month long training cum exposure visits to Japan. Recently distance education staff and GEDS staff completed this training/exposure visit. JICA also sponsors short term higher education courses for different levels of stakeholders including school supervisors and teachers.

Development partners are also supporting capacity building outside the EFA 2004–09 and SESP framework. The Norwegian Embassy, for example, has channelled a social inclusion research fund through SNV. Proposals are solicited twice a year. The intent is to prepare the researchers from among Dalits and other disadvantaged groups. A team consisting of both national and international experts screen and select the proposals. A separate fund but linked to the social inclusion research is channelled through Social Science Baha. Those selected will participate in a workshop on research methodology, theory and analysis. If the proposed topic is interesting and relevant but the proposal is not convincing or incomplete, the Social Science Baha provides assistance to improve the proposal. This is a five year project which started in 2006, so there are no results as yet. Embassy personnel report that the findings will not be used to push for change in EFA 2004–09, but will be utilized when preparing for SSA.

Often I/NGOs through their own initiative provide training to district and sub-district level stakeholders in education, particularly on gender and child friendly teaching/learning. Such training is basically intended to protect and promote the educational rights of the excluded through equal opportunity to access the educational facilities.

### **5.3 Strategies and Efforts to Address Gender Disparity and Social Exclusion**

A major strategy adopted in both EFA 2004–09 and SESP to address gender disparity and social exclusion is provision of scholarships (see Annex Tables A10 and A11). Other strategies adopted to address equity related issues, particularly in EFA 2004–09, are improvement of school physical facilities conducive to female students and teachers, female teacher appointment, establishment of Assessment Centres and resources classes, inclusive curricular material, inclusive teacher training packages, and school incentives. Major strategies identified by SESP are provision of residential facilities for female trainers, construction of remote

mountain hostels for girls, construction of 150 schools in 10 PID districts and development of an inclusive National Curriculum Framework. Some of the major strategies and efforts are discussed and analysed below by category.

### 5.3.1 Access related strategies/efforts

The major strategies and activities of EFA 2004–09 for addressing access related issues are reducing direct and indirect costs of schooling through monetary incentives, and establishment of RCs and ACs. Additionally, NFE has been a major strategy of EFA 2004–09 to reduce adult illiteracy and increase access of disadvantaged children to education. In SESP, major strategies for access are construction of hostels for female teachers and students, and scholarships.

Among the strategies mentioned above, monetary scholarship is the major one in both EFA 2004–09 and SESP to increase access to primary and secondary level. Several strategies and activities have been added to increase access in primary level during the course of time, especially including community mobilization. A brief overview of the major strategies employed to increase access in general are briefly discussed below.

#### NFE

Adult literacy classes, income generation activities, school outreach and flexible schooling programmes are integral to this strategy. Programmes are supposed to be allocated according to needs identified by the VEP where it has been prepared. Both the process and the outcome of the VEP are equity focused. A SLC passed woman is selected as social mobilizer for the survey work and women with Grade 8 education are selected for the actual survey. The ward makes the recommendation from among the available women in the community and only if a woman is not available then is a man hired. This happened for example in Jumla. Only VDCs with less than 50 per cent women's literacy, 30 per cent Dalit literacy and 20 per cent Janajatis' literacy rates are selected for VEP.

*Children from disadvantaged communities, Dalit and girl children, children with disabilities, children living in difficult circumstances due to poverty or conflict will be provided with incentives and scholarships to attend primary schools. Similarly, given the linkage between illiteracy and poverty, need-based literacy classes and non-formal education programmes will be launched in poverty stricken areas. (EFA 2004–09 Core Document, p. 6)*

There is, however, a growing concern over the appropriateness of existing NFE in addressing equity in education. Some critics are more radical than others in this respect. For some, NFE should provide an equivalent ladder for those who cannot join the formal education system, otherwise this further creates disparity. Some view that NFE makes very little contribution to raising literacy so the focus should rather be on the formal system. For others, NFE does not provide proper education to all, it rather discriminates against marginalized children, so the state therefore should take full responsibility for full schooling of all children. In the opinion of ASAMAN (NGO) personnel, a major obstacle is that parents are willing to send their children to school but children do not have faith in the school.

Studies (TRSE, 2007; Acharya and Koirala, 2006; IFCD, 2004) have also indicated that due to lack of its own structure or designated mechanism at district and field levels, NFEC has not been effective in providing necessary institutional support to its programmes and activities. There

is a gap between the ground and NFEC. There is no reliable mechanism to feed NFEC with the field reality, including statistics. Additionally, the issue of delayed delivery of curricular materials is an ongoing issue in NFE, as in formal education. Materials printing and distribution are centrally managed – they are neither available in the market to buy nor does NFEC provide for free. In this situation those who want to organize NFE or who want to study on their own are deprived of the reading materials.

### *Scholarships*

Scholarship schemes have been popular among many agencies for addressing inequity in education (Acharya and Luitel, 2006). Agencies provide different types of scholarship/incentives to different target groups. The government also has different kinds of scholarships (see Annex Table A12). The Business Plan of MOES also focuses on scholarships as a measure to improve access of girls, Dalits and other disadvantaged children.

Though multiple categories of children were identified in the EFA 2004–09 Core Document, at the implementation level support is provided only to 50 per cent girls, Dalits, and a limited number of street children (only in four districts). Additional scholarships are also provided to four indigenous groups in four districts. Unfortunately, those who are eligible are not getting scholarships on time and the stipulated amount is too low even to cover the direct cost of schooling (TRSE, 2006).

The Booster scholarship scheme, which was provided to the first child of a family without any history of formal education, has been terminated. It is reported that this decision was made because other scholarships are available for the same purpose. However, some development partners think it a very regressive decision. The debate on scholarship schemes is thus continued.

According to the conventional meaning of a scholarship, it should be based on merit. However, according to the modern definition it is a means to bring children to school and retain them irrespective of their academic performance. In Nepal most schools are guided by the conventional meaning but the centre functions according to the modern definition. 'While our education system itself still values merit-based performance right from the early grades, scholarship schemes that do not consider the improvement of educational achievement do not seem unjustifiable for the local actors' (Acharya and Luitel, 2006, p. 58).

Mismanagement of scholarship money in the schools has posed a serious issue in relation to school accountability and politically correct commitments. A survey conducted in 11 schools of Sunsari district found that some schools used the Dalit scholarship for teacher salary and construction; some for no articulated reason deprived students from getting scholarships; some promised to reimburse to the students; but one simply said that it cannot reimburse and if the survey team insisted, 'perhaps they would rather take over the school management and run the school' (Gajmer, 2006).

Mismatch between the centrally determined objective and the ground reality, and issues related to management, monitoring and effectiveness of scholarships, required changes in the modality. The strategy of revisiting and refining the scholarship mechanism as well as the ground reality therefore led to the piloting of a new modality. This modality is purely based on poverty mapping. One hundred and fifty schools will be oriented on how poverty targeting can be done. Proxy means testing will be conducted. Schools willing to test the modality will be provided additional technical assistance. The community will monitor the initiative but follow-up will be provided by the system.

### *Community mobilization*

The Welcome to School (WTS) movement, organized at the beginning of the school year, has emerged as a forceful strategy to increase access. The initial result of the strategy is always quite promising, but schools often cannot meet the resource need created by the inflow of students. Teacher Union representatives view that WTS was introduced without adequate ground work. As a result in many cases children gradually begin to drop out. Realizing the schools' inability to manage to meet the demand created by the movement, DOE personnel identified a need for proper planning before launching such a movement (Educational Pages, April 14–28, 2006). In this kind of situation the number of dropouts strikingly increases the national statistics on dropout rate. This might explain why in 2005/06, a large gap between the number of enrollees and those who survived till the end of the year was observed (Educational Pages, July 15–29, 2006).

The above deliberations reveal that the government has no rigorous strategy to meet the learning needs of 'hard to reach' children including street children, conflict affected children, and children attending religious schools. It has been observed that rather than a systematic and/or visionary intervention, often ad hoc decisions are made regarding the needs of these groups of children.

### **5.3.2 Quality related strategies/efforts**

The major quality assurance strategies identified in EFA 2004–09 are female teacher recruitment, construction of schools with higher Dalit and girls' enrolment, gender sensitive curricular materials and gender sensitive teacher training materials. In SESP, the major strategies are construction of schools in PIDs, development of a curriculum framework, and capacity building in curriculum and assessment. Female teachers are relevant from both access and quality perspectives, therefore the decision has been made to increase female teachers, particularly at primary level. There is provision to recruit female teachers according to the number of teacher positions in school, ranging from a minimum of one to a maximum of three, subject to a vacancy arising.

Construction, rehabilitation and renovation of schools in EFA 2004–09 have been undertaken both through pool funding and non-pool funding. JICA under Japanese Grant Aid has been supporting this initiative since the 1990s<sup>22</sup> (Koirala, Devkota and Shrestha, 2006). Schools not covered by JICA have been served through pool funding. Grants are directly allocated to the schools for construction supported through pool funding, but the design is provided. JICA support was 'in-kind'. Two Japanese companies were contracted for design, supervision, monitoring and material supply<sup>23</sup> (Koirala, Devkota and Shrestha, 2006). Additionally I/NGOs have been providing construction support to the schools in their respective programme areas. In SESP the construction initiatives concentrate in PIDs, covered totally by pool funding and managed by DOE/DEO. The originally identified locations for construction support have been changed because DOE identified more needy locations.

As discussed in later sections of this report, there is an absence of functional coordination between the sections and institutions, absence of strong comprehensive monitoring and

<sup>22</sup> In 23 districts JICA has so far constructed/rehabilitated 6248 classrooms, 1178 toilets, 690 water supply units, 78 RCs and provided school furniture to 247 schools.

<sup>23</sup> This support of JICA ended in the 2006/07 fiscal year. No decision has been made yet regarding the future support in this area.

evaluation measures, and fragmented activities mostly initiated by direct funding. Thus the strategies and activities adopted to address equity issues in access and quality are rather scattered and ad hoc. The business plan has also identified several hurdles faced in materializing its vision<sup>24</sup> in general and achieving the equitable quality school education in particular. As discussed by Bhatia and Turin (2004), the business plan highlights the contradictions between LSGA and education regulations, and the contradiction between the policy of free primary education and the government's inability to even pay teachers' salaries according to the norms.

### 5.3.3 Efforts to address issues exacerbated by conflict

There is no explicit strategy to address the educational issues exacerbated by armed conflict in SWAPs. MOES/DOE, however, initiated scholarships in the amount of 7200 rupees per child to around 4200 conflict affected children from Grades 6 to 10. The fund was channelled through NGOs and the IDP district level committees selected the recipients. The fund was derived from the SESP pool as an emergency relief, but since this was out of the SESP frame it required some adjustments to justify the utilization. Therefore in the 2006/07 fiscal year the scheme was not implemented. Nevertheless, EFA 2004–09 gives flexibility to the ASIP to guide the yearly activities so that provisions to meet the requirements originated by armed conflict could be identified. One example of this would be construction of temporary classrooms in overcrowded schools.

I/NGOs and bilateral agencies are also working to address the situation caused by the conflict, in collaboration with government. The support provided by these agencies includes school rehabilitation, incentives to students and parents and socio-psychological counselling to the children. Save the Children US, Save the Children Norway and CWIN have been working in different conflict-affected districts. UNICEF through NGOs has been supporting the 'Child as Zone of Peace' project in three districts. Schools as Zone of Peace is a collaborative initiative to free schools and children from any political activities. Political party representatives and other stakeholders at the district level are brought together and a code of conduct regarding schools and children is discussed and agreed.

The SSA Concept Paper (MOES, 2006a) has not explicitly recognized the issues related to the education of conflict affected children. Nevertheless, one of the seven thematic areas is 'gender and social inclusion'. This theme has the responsibility of discussing the multiple challenges and proposing possible measures to address those challenges. The draft of the three-year interim plan of MOES (MOES, 2006b) has recognized the challenge related to the education of conflict-affected children. It has therefore advocated for provisions to address the educational needs of the conflict-affected children and IDPs. The SSA cannot be developed independently of the three-year plan.

Despite the availability of variety of strategies, activities and experiments, TRSE (2006; 2007) has raised serious issues with regard to access and quality. Examples include: pass and survival rates are still low, particularly in higher grades; the distribution of the student/teacher

<sup>24</sup> The vision of the education sector as stated in the Education Sector Business Plan (MOES, 2004a) 'is to contribute to national development and poverty reduction by enabling its citizens to acquire knowledge and skills compatible with the needs of the national and international economy, enhancing their employability and personal development, nurturing in them social values to promote social harmony and equity, and by developing the knowledge and technological base to enable Nepal to compete in the global economy.'

ratio is not balanced across the nation; investments to schools are not adequate to meet the objective of gender and social inclusion; SIPs are prepared and PTAs are formed in more than 90 per cent of schools but utilization of the SIP and participation of the PTA are very limited; girls' regularity is higher in primary level than in other levels; textbooks do not reach schools on time (the continuing problem with textbook distribution was raised in the EFA 2004–09 consultative meeting of December 2006 as well); scholarships are distributed at different rates; schools are still operating without subject teachers in lower secondary and secondary levels; Dalits and other disadvantaged children's participation is still low in lower secondary and secondary levels; and lower secondary is likely to face pressure from increased enrolment (TRSE, 2006; 2007).

## 5.4 Monitoring and Evaluation

The business plan for the education sector prepared by MOES (2004a) has explained the monitoring and evaluation mechanism of school education. The school education mechanism is based on the Poverty Monitoring and Analysis System proposed by the Tenth Five Year Plan with additional tools to address the needs of school education in total.

The monitoring system of EFA 2004–09 consists of two reports. These reports are supposed to be made available within six months of the beginning and end of an academic year. These are known as Flash reports. The Flash reports include key indicators related to the process, input and outcome. Besides Flash reports, a comprehensive EMIS report of schools is published every year. Both the Flash reports and EMIS report are prepared and published by DOE.

The Flash and EMIS reports include data for secondary level as well. But SESP has a set of indicators which the Flash report does not. In this case it would be desirable to include these indicators in the Flash reporting system (MOES, 2004a). The data generated by DOE through the above mechanisms is supplemented by other surveys such as population census, NLSS and other independent studies.

Additionally, the Formative Research Project (jointly undertaken by CERID and MOES under direct funding from Norway) produces huge amounts of both qualitative and quantitative information. This has also served the purpose of monitoring and evaluation of EFA 2004–09. The objective of FRP is to continuously feed the system (EFA 2004–09) with research based status updates and action plans to improve primary level education. TRSE had also been providing both quantitative and qualitative information. Though TRSE primarily used the DOE/EMIS generated data for analysis it also did its own data gathering from 1000 sample schools of 20 districts in each round of the survey. However, TRSE has been discontinued and FRP is only initiated on a project basis.

DOE also sponsors qualitative studies on different aspects of school education including gender and social inclusion. But such studies are not built into the EMIS system and so are undertaken on an ad hoc and/or sporadic basis. Therefore after the completion of FRP there will be an absence of the systematic and independent information gathering and analysis mechanisms which have proved to be very useful to the MOES system as well as outside practitioners, researchers and educationists. One donor representative thinks that an initiative like this should be continued but in a different funding modality.

There is a provision for biannual joint review missions for both EFA 2004–09 and SESP. Additionally there is also a provision for a monthly local donors' meeting. Flash reports, annual review reports, EMIS, financial monitoring reports, and audit reports are the major sources of information for these review meetings. In every joint review mission an independent review report is also prepared and presented. For example, TRSE was serving this purpose for EFA 2004–09. The JFA, however, allows all donors to monitor the programme implementation according to their own requirements.

Flash reports, status reports and formative reports are in-built regular mechanisms for EFA 2004–09 and SESP monitoring. For outcome monitoring and verification of the Flash reports, NDHS (Nepal Demographic Health Survey) and NLSS are identified as additional mechanisms by the business plan. Both the finance and programme monitoring of TA or projects implemented through direct funding are directly dealt with by the concerned donors. For UNESCO and UNICEF, financial and programme monitoring/evaluation is undertaken according to UN modalities. Monitoring of the programmes (e.g. DACAW of UNICEF) signed by the government NPC is also involved, but at the central level. Monitoring/evaluation of the projects/programmes funded through donors is different from monitoring/evaluation of those funded through the regular budget of UNICEF and UNESCO. For example, in the case of programmes not funded through the regular budget the donors may themselves undertake the evaluation using their own modalities.

Despite the above mentioned provisions, people have mixed feelings about the monitoring system of MOES. For example, one experienced associate of the government thinks that monitoring is almost non-existent and accountability at the ground level is not ensured. SIP based grants in fact prompted some schools to inflate the data – according to one official, a single child was found enrolled in three different schools. Therefore child tracking and liberal promotion were initiated to avoid the data inflation emerging at school level<sup>25</sup>.

Liberal promotion has been a debatable strategy because many, including the teachers, view that student performance and quality rather declined when liberal promotion was introduced. A DOE associate also observes that monitoring has improved due to Flash reporting but school level monitoring still needs strengthening. He is of the opinion that TA should have been given to improve schools' and communities' capacity to monitor school/classroom practices. School supervisors and RPs could be teamed up or combined. In this way, each could cover about 20/22 schools.

Development partners also have mixed observations regarding monitoring and evaluation. Some think that the government does not properly and adequately analyse the data and that donors and the government do not properly assess the function of policy implementation. One said, 'By now we should be engaged in discussing outcome and indicators, not inputs.' Similarly, others said, 'We funded for outcome, but ASIP does not have outcome. It is input-based not outcome-based.' They added that the governance has to improve to see improvement in other aspects, and that donors should put more emphasis on outcome.

<sup>25</sup> The block grant or SIP based funding is allocated on the basis of student population of a school. Some schools therefore inflate the student numbers in order to obtain more funding.

Not many people seem to be concerned about monitoring of NFE. NFEC has no updated information. Information about FSP (Flexible School Programme) and SOP (School Outreach Programme) has not been updated since June/July 2002. Complete information never comes from the district, said NFEC personnel. For example, in 2006 only 40 districts sent the information. NFEC does not have a separate mechanism or a designated person accountable to oversee the NFE activities at the district level. A study conducted in 2002 found that 'it is anticipated that the already established system would take the responsibility of supervising FSP and SOP as well. However in reality this has not quite happened' (Acharya and Singh, 2002, p. 14). Staff acknowledge that this is still true.

Social audit at school level has been introduced for monitoring and accountability purposes. Schools are supposed to undertake social audit as it is mandated by the School Operation Grant Directives. But in practice this is not linked with the grant eligibility. This may be the reason that it is not widely practised. According to the World Bank personnel, most of the community managed schools undertake social audit, though they are at different stages of development. He observed that some schools provide a financial description only, while others have specified indicators and some even hold meetings for the purpose of social audit.

In the bureaucratic norms, certain fixed criteria such as seniority (age and years of service) are used to evaluate and reward the civil servants. In development programmes, positive evaluation often rests on achievements of intended outcomes, e.g. outcome of the efforts made to address gender and social inclusion in education. The norms of the civil service and expectations of development endeavours therefore contradict to a large extent. This contradiction is reflected in the education sector as well. For example, it is not felt to be necessary to include contribution to gender and social inclusion in the outcome evaluation of the training (in-country and out of country) that central and district level service providers receive.

## 5.5 Overall Implementation Process

The implementation processes of both EFA 2004–09 and SESP from an inclusion perspective need to be viewed from three angles. One, the way people's voices are heard; two, the actual implementation of the strategies; and three, funding mechanisms.

### 5.5.1 People's participation

There are venues and rooms where the parents, guardians and community members can put their perspectives and opinions. SIP, VEP, DEP and ASIP preparation processes utilize such venues to gather the views of the stakeholders. Apart from these there are also interaction programmes, radio and television programmes and print media through which stakeholders can voice their opinions and send their messages to the concerned authorities. Sharing and voicing ideas or issues related to social exclusion also takes place during community mobilization. The regular meetings held in the resource centres and DEOs also provide a forum to present the ideas of the school community. But DOE personnel admit that all these consultation and interaction opportunities are not truly participatory or inclusive. They are rather often used to provide information and directives of the higher authorities.

### 5.5.2 Implementation strategy

When talking about the actual implementation of EFA and SESP from a social inclusion perspective, it is necessary to discuss the processes adopted in SIP, DEP and ASIP preparation. Theoretically these are the basis for funding and activity prioritization as well as mechanisms for people's participation. DPs approve funding on the basis of the ASIP. DOE allocates funds to the districts and schools on the basis of DEPs and SIPs respectively.

Decentralization is one of the initiatives in the education sector aimed both at empowering the school community and reaching the unreached. SIPs, DEPs and ASIP were thus introduced as the means to achieve the aim of decentralization. Therefore theoretically ASIP, DEP and SIP preparation should be participatory with maximum involvement of local and district level stakeholders. In particular, SIP and DEP preparation is assumed to provide the parents, guardians and other members of the community with a forum to voice their perspectives, views and needs. Therefore a SIP is intended to be prepared through a micro-planning exercise with maximum participation of the community. But in reality in most cases head teachers and a few knowledgeable teachers put together the SIP document. Many, including some DEOs and DOE and INGO personnel, are of the view that the SIP has become a means to obtain government grant only. Many are of the opinion that the parents and community do not participate in SIP preparation because the SIP is developed within a fixed format, and the government cannot provide programmes that would meet their expectations. Some donors also think that SIP is framework based and the money guaranteed does not match the money required. But high level DOE personnel think that SIPs do not turn out to be plans because understanding differs and preparation at the ground level is not enough. That is, SMCs do not adequately understand the intent and the method of SIP preparation.

INGOs who have been providing technical support in SIP preparation and community mobilization claim that SIPs prepared together by school and community are very good. According to them PTA mobilization is high, PRA tools have been used and SIP implementation is also good in these schools. But they said that their participation in ASIP and DEP is only a ritual. 'We tried by inviting local partners to discuss and contribute to DEP and ASIP. Our concerns were not incorporated. DEO was not responsive,' was the experience of one INGO. In their experience consultation is also a ritual, no in-depth discussion or analysis is done. 'Our openness to collaboration was not responded,' is a complaint.

Consulted DEOs also admitted that ASIP and DEPs are made by DEO. Consultation was initiated at the beginning but no substantial inputs came on one hand and on the other it is 'a time bound activity and DOE demands it within a very short span of time so they are just prepared and sent,' they said. The headings are also fixed and DOE asks for ASIP to be prepared with a 10 per cent increase in the budget from the previous year. In DEOs' experience five thousand rupees given to them for preparation of ASIP is also not enough to have an elaborated process.

Community management of schools, which is popularly known as community handover of schools, is another major strategy to ensure people's participation in education. From the inclusion perspective the initiative has schemes to promote the access of marginalized groups in schools. CSSP (Community School Support Programme) was primarily introduced to support government's school transfer policy, i.e. handover of school management to the community. CSSP has four components: school grants, scholarships, capacity building, and monitoring and

evaluation. The support also includes grants to those schools with improved access and promotion rates, and scholarships to out-of-school children to enrol and retain them in school. DOE has been gradually adopting the CSSP modality into its regular programme.

Conflicting opinions have surfaced about the school handover scheme. DOE personnel view that the World Bank moved ahead with this initiative before the government prepared the community for it. Communities are still not ready, is their observation. But for the former Vice Chairperson of NPC the concept of community management of schools is not bad in itself. According to him, though not much difference has been observed between the handed over schools and those not handed over, it is a good beginning of transfer of governance at local level. However, it was initiated at a difficult time when the conflict was intensifying, and at the time of handover communities were not adequately oriented and adequate technical support was not provided to those who accepted to take over the management, he said. MOES did not work towards solving institutional problems, he added. The indirect intention was to give a grant to schools but not increase teacher positions because the government cannot create any more pensionable positions. A DOE associate also views that the legal framework never allowed community schools to grow and make decisions regarding school matters (resource management, operation schedule, etc.) therefore eventually the management handover began to be viewed only in relation to the one hundred thousand rupees that the schools could bag.

Additionally, the handover grant is given on the basis of level handover. In other words, even if a school is operating from grade one to ten the handover is done only for primary level (1 to 5) and the school is eligible to receive around USD 1700. Schools, irrespective of the levels that they have, operate under one management. The separation of management for the purpose of handover may disrupt the financial and operational management of the schools. It may also get in the way of SSA.

From a social inclusion perspective there is no requirement to have Dalits or Janajatis in SMCs, though there is a requirement of one woman member. Both TRSE (see Chapter 4) and New Era (cited by World Bank and DFID, 2006) found very low representation of Dalits in SMCs. In this context in a socially stratified society, how much or whether gender and social inclusion will be addressed or ensured in community managed schools has yet to be seen.

In the view of World Bank personnel, schools with credible SMCs are doing better. Therefore those who were more knowledgeable took over the management. They were good and now they are doing better, one said. He observed that the sense of ownership has increased, resource generation has enhanced and teacher recruitment has begun according to the schools' requirement.

### 5.5.3 Funding mechanisms

Seven donors are supporting EFA 2004–09 through a pool funding modality. The initial total budget of the programme is USD 158 million, but from 2007 ADB is joining the pool with USD 30 million and UNICEF with USD 1 million. Some of this money from the partners is grant, and some is loan. UNICEF has been providing an earmarked grant for girls' education to the government, but now that it has joined the EFA 2004–09 pool fund this earmarked provision will not exist from the next fiscal year. The World Bank is also adding its share, particularly for teacher support. Funds are allocated through direct funding mechanisms as well. Direct funding is usually utilized from outside the regular programme in the form of projects or technical

advisors (TA). Depending on donors, TA comes in different forms which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6. Table 5.1 is an example of the budget allocation pattern in relation to gender and social inclusion. Broader categories are used for the purpose of discussion. The literacy related budget is not specified.

**TABLE 5.1 Total budget allocation under EFA 2004-09 pool financing<sup>26</sup> for inclusive education and eliminating gender disparity** in NRs 000

ACTIVITIES	FISCAL YEAR 2005/06		FISCAL YEAR 2006/07	
	TOTAL BUDGET	% OF TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL BUDGET	% OF TOTAL BUDGET
<b>Total Primary Budget</b>	<b>11,362,354</b>		<b>12,224,840</b>	
1 Inclusive education (dist level only)	88,895	0.8	75,076	0.6
2 Eliminating gender disparity (dist level only)	573,800	5.1	506,554	4.1
3 SOP (dist level only)	9789	0.1	27,045	0.2
4 ECD (dist level only)	26,710	0.2	235,872	1.9
<b>Total Budget for Equity and inclusion</b>	<b>699,194</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>844,548</b>	<b>6.9</b>

Source: ASIP, 2005/06 and 2006/07, DOE

The government has set a target to achieve gender equality by 2015 in both primary and secondary education. Accordingly numerical targets are set both in EFA 2004–09 and SESP, but there are no social group specific numerical targets in either sub-sector. Nevertheless, for EFA 2004–09 social inclusion is one of the strategies for achieving the EFA goals, and for SESP the emphasis is on economically marginalized and socially excluded children. The block grant or SIP based grant therefore varies according to the ecological zones as the price index varies.<sup>27</sup> In SESP also, the scholarship and construction grants vary according to the ecological zones. But several reports of TRSE came up with the conclusion that the government is unable to fulfil its policy commitments. The above Table 5.1 also suggests that for social inclusion and increased gender parity, the resource allocation is too little and even does not match with the direct cost of schooling.

According to TRSE, in FY 2005/06 the allocation for scholarships at primary level was more than required compared with the eligibility criteria. However, in 2006/07 it has been reduced substantially. Therefore the share of budget in categories 1 and 2 (Table 5.1) is less than the previous year. TRSE (2007), however, reveals that in 2006/07 FY the budget allocated for 1.2 million students is not enough when compared with enrolment and eligibility criteria. It is reported that the adjustment was made because the budget was more than required in the previous year and also due to a problem related to the reporting of Dalit enrolment which fluctuated between the years 2004 to 2006.

<sup>26</sup> This includes both government and donors' budget.

<sup>27</sup> Due to difficult topography and absence of minimum infrastructure like access to a motorable road, the price index and cost of living is higher resulting in higher education cost in some places. Keeping this in view the SIP based grant and construction grant for example varies. The teachers working in remote areas also receive additional allowance as per the government rule.

The total budget of SESP is USD 75 million and the donors/lenders are Denmark and ADB. The activities related to gender and social inclusion are spread over several budget headings. As per the government's request in SESP the donors have approved provision of scholarships to 60,000 students for secondary level, two thirds of whom will be girls. The scholarship amount is NRs 1700 which is quite substantial compared with primary level scholarships. Stipends to the residents of girls' hostels are also available. Outside the SESP frame, in accordance with the SGOG (School Grants Operation Guidelines 2004), all the community schools are eligible to receive NRs 500 per year for each of the Dalit students enrolled at the lower secondary and secondary levels. This provision is implemented to stop schools from charging fees to Dalit students.

Regarding the financial management of EFA 2004–09 and SESP, six issues surfaced: (a) prioritization and budgeting of MOES; (b) inflexible resource allocation frame particularly in the case of SESP; (c) matching fund; (d) teacher management; (e) incomplete account of education budget; and (f) management of TA and direct funding by the donors/lenders. For the purpose of this section a, b, c, d and e are discussed. The sixth issue is discussed in the 'donor harmonization' section of Chapter 6.

#### *Prioritization and budgeting of MOES*

Ongoing tension has been observed between MOES and MOF regarding the resource allocation in education. Although the EFA 2004–09 funding modality is more flexible and school-focused, MOF views that MOES does not pay much attention to social inclusion in budgeting. The observation is that the non-priority areas like training, seminars, foreign trips, maintenance of MOES building, construction and rehabilitation of RED, construction and rehabilitation of DEO, etc. get priority. One example given: Why does RED with only 14/15 staff need thousands of rupees in construction while construction of primary schools and teacher allocation are the necessities? Others who have had experience working in high levels of government also agree that MOES emphasizes 'soft' expenditure like training and seminars.

#### *Inflexible framework*

Generally it is viewed that SESP is more conservative than EFA 2004–09 in terms of resource management. In EFA 2004–09 at least schools are given money directly, though with constraints. The block grant or SIP based grant modality has given some flexibility to the schools. This is good because it maintains fairness among schools but is not a means of equity within schools, say DP personnel. From an inclusion perspective some argue that the current EFA 2004–09 budgeting system indirectly supports schools with a stable enrolment pattern, but those likely to face a sudden increase get less money. Therefore the budget allocation approach needs redesigning and, they observe, a fair amount of data is available to do it.

SESP is more rigid and the portion of the money that goes direct to the school is also less. For example, SESP has a large proportion of budget in school construction. But this is managed directly by DEOs. MOF has concern over this provision and questions why the construction money cannot be given to the schools directly as in EFA 2004–09. Similarly, it was reported that the donors in SESP do not allow adjustments according to the country's need. According to a DOE associate, NRs 500 per Dalit child to be allocated to lower secondary and secondary levels was proposed, calculated on the basis of the enrolled Dalit children at those levels. SESP donors did not agree to fund it because it was something out of the SESP frame. Nevertheless, the government initiated this scheme from other sources. It was reported that to make the donors accept the increase of scholarships to 60,000 socially marginalized students was also

not an easy task. One commented that there is 'only 20 per cent share of the government in SESP whereas 70 per cent in EFA therefore to some extent donors' say can be louder in SESP'. Nevertheless the MOES/DOE personnel are more relaxed with the adjustments made in the resource management modality of SESP in the MTR.

#### *Matching fund*

Provision of matching fund is also a debated area from an equity perspective. Though it is a good idea, some observe that matching fund further produces inequality. It gives ownership to the community but it can also increase inequality in the community. Many concluded that the targeting of ECD therefore has not been successful. Experience of NFE is no different. The matching grant of NRs 10,000 for income generation schemes intended for women is likely to create further disparity. The cases of Rupandehi and Rasuwa districts revealed 'that equal treatment does not benefit everyone equally. In this situation "unequal treatment to unequals" should be applied in order to give justice to all' (Acharya and Koirala, 2003). Therefore 'unless differentiated matching fund according to HDI is applied this will not address social inclusion' (DP personnel) is a valid assertion.

#### *Teacher management*

One of the most debated issues is teacher deployment. This issue has a direct bearing on the financial liability of the government. For MOES, additional teachers are desperately needed to meet the goal of equitable quality education. But for others, including MOF, the need is internal adjustment and equity based prioritization. From every corner, MOES has been recommended to move vacant teacher positions to needy districts. MOES, however, has not been able to do this. Similarly there are schools with an excessive number of teachers which can be merged with others. It also has to be noted that schools with low pupil/teacher ratio have not necessarily excelled in quality. Bohara (2007) in relation to a high school in Kathmandu valley with 29 teachers for 263 students (PPC to Grade 10) observes that with more leisure time teachers are laid back, inactive and performance is deteriorating. In this context the general assumption is that MOES' demand for 62,000 teachers may not be justified. Therefore the pressure is for internal adjustment and evidence based proposal.

The Teacher Union also views that MOES has not done adequate homework with regard to teacher reallocation. No intensive discussion has taken place between the union and MOES on this matter. According to the union representative, only two meetings were held with DOE, and the district-wise teacher/pupil ratio is not available yet on the basis of which further work could be done. The union representative, however, views that additional teachers are required and therefore if the government provided at least some teachers ('maybe 10–12,000') then it would make it easier for the union to approach teachers to work on redeployment.

#### *Incomplete account of education budget*

Some schools have their own property from which they generate funds, some receive substantial support from non-government agencies and some others receive small individual contributions. Households also significantly contribute to the children's education. But as discussed in Chapter 3 the government has no means or measures to find out the total income and expenditure of the schools. Schools are not required to disclose their assets and total income to the education authorities. They are only liable to submit the financial audit of the grant received from the MOES channel. District level coordination among DEO and other agencies supporting education initiatives is not well functioning. In this situation equitable resource allocation and making schools accountable are both very challenging.

In addition to the above issues a concern from a social inclusion perspective is about the impact of budget cut. When explored, it was learned that when budget has to be adjusted due to shortfall, it is DOE that is responsible for the prioritization of the programmes. Therefore whether and which programmes related to gender and social inclusion will be shrunk depends on the department's decision. In times of budget cut or crisis, programmes can be curtailed across the board and it impacts all categories, said a DOE associate. He gave an example when even teacher salary could not be provided on time. However, budget crisis usually occurs in the third trimester of the fiscal year, while the scholarship money is released in the first and second trimester – therefore disbursement is not delayed unless the schools could not submit their financial report of the previous trimester or previous year on time.

## 5.6 Summary

In Nepal there is no shortage of policies, plans and legal frameworks in order to ensure the rights of excluded groups. Consequently, plans, programmes and provisions to ensure gender and social inclusion within the school education sector are also in place. In this respect the theoretical foundation of EFA 2004–09 and SESP is quite strong.

EFA 2004–09 and SESP both seem to be leading towards a SWAp, though the process is not complete. In terms of coverage, EFA 2004–09 can be considered to be a SWAp because it covers the entire primary level sub-sector including downward extension (ECD/ECE) and NFE. But in terms of ownership and partnership with external agencies including line ministries, DPs and I/NGOs, EFA 2004–09 is only partially a SWAp. Since DPs and I/NGOs are guided by their respective governments funding priority is also not completely free from their respective frames. This is more so in SESP than in EFA 2004–09.

The EFA 2004–09 design process was more liberal in the sense that consultation was organized at different levels and with different stakeholders **though there is some evidence that the very poorest and most socially excluded might have had limited participation.** But in SESP, the design process was completely facilitated by outsiders (domestic and international consultants).

Regarding capacity building, both the pool and direct funds have been mobilized. Capacity building of the grassroots level stakeholders such as teachers and SMCs is mostly undertaken through pool funding, but it is also true that sporadic capacity building initiatives at this level are also undertaken through direct funding. The cultural sensitization of TEP, and the micro-planning exercise and IE support team in selected districts, are some examples that have direct bearing on gender and social inclusion at grassroots level. Besides these, I/NGOs have also been providing training on gender and social inclusion related areas for school level stakeholders. Analysis, however, shows that the capacity building initiatives within the MOES system and/or education sector is scattered. Due to the absence of direct connection between capacity building and individuals' performance there is little evidence to compare the impact made so far of the capacity building initiatives at different levels.

An equity in access and social inclusion approach is not limited to the supply side only. It is also about the beneficiaries' ability to access and fully utilize the supplies. The initiatives so far, however, inadequately pay attention to this aspect. The common notion that the supply will automatically create demand does not work unless the consumer is able to use and is

convinced about the possible benefit. In the case of EFA 2004–09 and SESP, convincing the parents and guardians and catering to their needs seem weak. As a result, for many parents school is an extra burden which they have to take on for others.

Regarding the access and quality related strategies, SWAps primarily have scholarships, female teachers, curriculum revision, NFE and school construction as the mechanisms and/or strategies to ensure gender and social inclusion in school education. They do not have mechanisms to systematically address emergencies, whether natural or human-made. The frames have no provisions either to accommodate initiatives which would be equally relevant or that emerge along the way as relevant options to address gender and social inclusion. In this situation resources have to be sought from outside the frame. Nevertheless the flexibility given by EFA 2004–09 has to some extent allowed the utilization of the pool fund to address the immediate needs emanating from the emergency situation. The issue, however, is finding a way to ensure a sustainable positive effect of the efforts at both the central and school levels.

Monitoring and accountability from the centre to the ground level is another major concern noticed in both in EFA 2004–09 and SESP. The tension created by the pressure of devolution, schools functioning under vast diversity in terms of student population, management efficiency and capacity, accountability, and performance does not allow addressing the issues from one perspective or one approach. Some schools may be ready to completely take over the responsibility but some others are still not ready. In Nepal ‘social inclusion as a development goal requires strong mechanisms to monitor poverty-targeted programmes’ (Sharma, p.51, [www.adb.org](http://www.adb.org)) is one of the lessons learned from the Nepal experience of MfDR. EFA 2004–09 and SESP are also still focused on input rather than outcome or result. Therefore, whatever stages the schools are in, in order to improve access and quality education for all children then rigorous mentoring, technical and financial support and effective monitoring are strongly required.

## 6. SWAp Coordination and Partnership Mechanisms

### 6.1 Coordination/Collaboration in Gender and Social Inclusion Initiatives

Coordination in gender and social inclusion initiatives within EFA 2004–09 and SESP has to be viewed from five perspectives: (a) within the system coordination/collaboration; (b) inter-ministerial collaboration; (c) teacher union collaboration; (d) donor harmonization; and (e) I/NGO, civil society and interest groups collaboration.

#### 6.1.1 Coordination within the system

DOE primarily has two designated sections directly related to gender and social inclusion: Gender Equality and Development Section (GEDS) and Inclusive Education (IE) section. Though Bhatia and Turin (2004) in VCDP identified the ECD section also as relevant from a social inclusion perspective this discussion focuses only on IE and GEDS.

GEDS officially facilitates activities related to girls' education and scholarship. The major tasks of GEDS include: developing plans and programmes for the education of women and other target groups; developing and implementing indicators and processes to increase female participation in education; functioning as a contact office of the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare and the Ministry of Local Development on matters related to women; determining the quotas and distributing and evaluating girls' scholarships; developing programmes to increase community participation in education and implement it through districts, RCs, VDCs and NGOs (MOES, 2006c). According to GEDS personnel, the job description to a large extent is followed and the needs and requirements that emerge along the way are also taken care of. GEDS has also started implementing activities identified in the Girls' Education Strategy document which was developed through this section. For example, with support from Save the Children US, this section has been coordinating the development of a gender sensitization package and checklist tailored towards managers, curriculum/textbook developers, examination related personnel, and teacher trainers. GEDS (previously WES) also organized training for the system's stakeholders. Selected district and school level personnel were also provided with training at different times but this is not a systematic capacity building activity of GEDS. For example, in UNICEF's initiative in 2003/04 a local NGO was involved in engendering MOES. Orientations and sharing were organized for central level institutions of MOES. District level orientation/sharing was also conducted during the project period in some districts.

IE was originally the Special Needs Education section. The name was changed and made into Inclusive Education but it is still focused on disability only. The job description of the IE section is completely confined to the education of disabled children (MOES, 2006c). The new concept of IE was introduced and a national level workshop was organized by the section in 2004 with the intent of creating a common understanding about IE. However, the official job description has not changed. The programme implementation directive related to special education 2003/04 also focuses only on the education of disabled children. There is one small portion at the end titled 'Inclusive education pilot programme'. This portion in brief explains the what and why of the IE pilot programme. The Inclusive Education budget heading also includes activities for disabled children only (ASIP, 2006). With this background the IE section is still given the responsibility of

disability only, and the total system also thinks of it as a section to work on disability issues only, say the IE personnel. VCDP proposed a merger of the then WES and Special Education Section into a gender and social inclusion section in order to holistically address the issues of exclusion. It is reported that one concerned DP followed up on VCDP and pressurized the system so it was put in the restructuring scheme of MOES, but it was proposed as a separate IE section. The IE team feels that the system cannot initiate reform without adequately understanding the concept of IE.

One of the major activities conducted so far from the IE section is the development and implementation of an IE training manual. This initiative was supported by ESAT/DANIDA and UNESCO. However, after using it in several places it was realized that the training manual needs revision. It appeared to be supply driven and structured, in the IE team's experience. Schools are not at the same level in terms of inclusiveness; some schools/districts (e.g. Jhapa) are ahead in gender but are not at the same level in other disparity related areas therefore the reform process as expected by the manual is not possible at the school level, they said. They admit that the package was implemented without knowing the knowledge level and infrastructure of the schools in relation to IE. Nevertheless, at present an IE tool kit is being developed with UNESCO support. The team working on it, however, does not include experts from all the areas (caste, ethnicity, language, etc.).

The physical planning section is also an important unit from a gender and social inclusion perspective. The IE team emphasizes its role in considerations of physical planning. In their observation the concept and approach of IE has not been adequately incorporated across the central level units and to school level. For example, schools construct new buildings but they overlook the need of ramps for wheelchair accessibility. The issue regarding school building norms is raised by DP personnel as well, with earthquake safety being the major concern. In urban areas the trend has been to construct 4/5 storey buildings with very limited outlets to get out of the building in times of emergency. Who is responsible for making schools follow the norms and/or make them accountable, however, can open up a serious discussion.

There is a separate materials development section in DOE. This section has been there since the establishment of DOE in 1999. The materials development section is engaged in developing materials such as a teacher's guide for multigrade teaching using the DOE's regular fund. But a process for DANIDA direct funding to this section for further work on multigrade teaching materials development is on the way. It is reported that CDC may not necessarily know what this section is producing. If the section feels it necessary, individuals from CDC are invited to help. It is reported that there is a proposal that CDC, which is mandated to undertake school level curriculum development work (research, review, material preparation), should merge as a unit/section within DOE. DOE without consultation with CDC undertook a feasibility study with support from ADB and sent the proposed scheme to CDC. CDC personnel, however, think that despite CDC's objection, DOE may go ahead with the merger.

Consultation with current and former DOE personnel and observations from other informants revealed that ad hoc commitments made by some higher level authorities of DOE also makes the situation bad to worse. Such commitments made without consultation with the concerned sections or personnel have caused additional pressure on concerned staff on one hand and held back the SWAp implementation on the other.

Initiatives to address gender and social inclusion have been undertaken at project level as well. For example, TEP has its own gender and social inclusion initiative. Major strategies are: pre-service teacher training for Dalit and Janajati women; and gender and cultural sensitization at school/community level. The proposed coaching classes for the graduates of the pre-service teacher training to prepare for the Teacher Service Commission examination is also a significant initiative from a social inclusion perspective. Inclusion is the one of the principles of NCF which in fact covers teacher training as well. But how much NCED/TEP, CDC/NCF, GEDS and IE interact with each other is an issue.

VEP for example is supported by direct funding from ESAT/DANIDA. Though the approach is very participatory and inclusive, it did not serve the purpose of the sector (primary). The household level information gathered could have been very useful for targeting the incentives to the most needy. It was, however, confined within NFE only. Only after completing VEP development in (approx.) 350 VDCs out of 600 agreed was a comprehensive VEP piloted in 2007. Moreover, there is no guarantee that this will be absorbed by the system or that a VEP based funding modality will be adopted. It has to be noted that technical support to the VEP process was completely provided by a team of Nepali experts.

DOE recently signed a TCA (Technical Cooperation Assistance) with JICA for SIP monitoring and support because it has been realized that SIP is the foundation of DEP but schools lack technical capacity and DOE personnel are so overburdened that they are unable to closely follow up and monitor the SIP process. The concern here is how much the system and development partners, in this case JICA, utilize the VEP expertise and experience already available in the country and within the system. From a coordination and consultation point of view it is important to note that JICA is working with the NFEC out-of-school children's programme.

When discussing gender and social inclusion, NFE initiatives and NFEC cannot be ignored. NFEC facilitates a substantial number of activities supported by external agencies. For example JICA, UNESCO, UNFPA, and ESAT/DANIDA all have their projects/activities. Activities range from programmes for out-of-school children to curriculum development for equivalency to subject-specific literacy material development to lower secondary level curriculum development for the open school programme. Staff are busy facilitating the agency-wise projects/activities.

The above deliberation leads to a discussion about the working culture within the system. It was reported and observed that interaction hardly takes place between and among concerned sections and institutions. For example, IE may not necessarily be invited or consulted in GEDS activities and vice versa. The materials development section may not necessarily consult IE or GEDS or CDC. TEP may hardly consult the concerned sections of DOE. Likewise the physical planning section functions independently. If someone feels the need of somebody then collaboration takes place. Institutional collaboration and linkage in addressing the issues of gender and social inclusion is lacking. Regarding the NFEC a concerned personnel said that 'NFEC has many donors and the staff are just busy following them'. This may be the reason why (a) personnel from DOE and other institutions identify with the initiatives/activities by donors rather than with their own programmes, and (b) NFEC is not able to coordinate with the Distance Education Centre adequately while developing a lower secondary level curriculum for open school. Interestingly, supporting agencies or development partners also do not examine who is doing what and how to coordinate the efforts made by different units and institutions within DOE/MOES. Correlated to this situation is what the education sector business plan (2004) recognized. It has realized that with continued support from outside the school education has become supply driven as opposed to demand driven.

There is a gender focal person in MOES, though this is not a separate position. Someone – preferably a woman – from any section can be nominated as the gender focal person and no clear TOR is given to this person. Other central level institutions such as NCED, OCE, Teacher Service Commission and CDC have also appointed gender focal points as part of the Ministry's initiative to facilitate its gender mainstreaming policy. They have received gender related training and drafted TORs with support from UNESCO, though the TORs are yet to be finalized. However, these gender focal points, who are supposed to be supported and supervised by the MOES gender focal point, are also busy with their other roles. In addition, due to their positioning in the lower stratum of bureaucracy they are hardly involved in policy level discussions and decisions and are rarely listened to. In short they are not empowered enough to influence their institutions. Gender focal points of different Ministries are frequently gathered together by the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare but institutional linkage for the purpose of achieving the shared goal is not observed.

The above context points towards two major groups of issues in relation to the internal coordination and partnership: (a) narrowly defined job description, non-collaborative working culture and bureaucratic norms; and (b) DPs' fragmented and piecemeal approach, and persuasive nature. This shows that along with systemic drawbacks, the development partners' role also negatively contributes to the internal coordination and sector-wide approach in addressing issues of gender and social exclusion.

### 6.1.2 Inter-ministerial coordination

Regarding inter-ministerial linkage MOES, except with MOF, has very few functional linkages. Representatives of other ministries are nominated for various committees and commissions, for example the National NFE Council has representation by Secretaries of different ministries, but functional linkage at the programme level hardly exists. Similarly, the ministries of Agriculture and Health also have literacy programmes but joint planning and programming between them and MOES is not felt necessary. The utilization of resource persons is practised, but this happens on an individual basis. For example, the facilitator of a NFEC-sponsored literacy class invites local level experts of the Ministry of Health or Ministry of Agriculture to deliver health or agriculture related contents.

### 6.1.3 Collaboration with the Teacher Union

The Teacher Union is a close collaborator with the education system, but the relationship between the two has not matured yet. In the Union, representatives are of the opinion that 'theoretically our involvement has begun but not practically. For example we were not consulted or involved while preparing concept/framework of SSA. We were invited only at the implementation stage. Our ownership would also have been in it. Our vision is not reflected in the frame and we still differ in certain provisions. When they are in trouble then they invite us.' As mentioned earlier, it is also reported that the issue of teacher reallocation has not been discussed seriously with the Teacher Union.

Regarding gender and social inclusion the Teacher Union has been working in support of Education International and Union of Education Norway since 1995. The main purpose is to increase women teachers' participation in leadership roles and increase the number of female teachers. Training is conducted at district and regional levels in different areas such as

awareness about legal provisions, leadership, Trade Union rights, duties and responsibilities, and women's legal rights (e.g. maternity protection benefit, ILO Article 183). There is a session on girls' education and CRC as well. During awareness training participants are asked to share the knowledge that they acquired and make aware at least 10 other women from the neighbourhood. This sharing is indirectly assisting in increasing girls' enrolment, say the union representatives, but systematic evaluation or monitoring is not done of this project. The issue, however, is how the system's capacity building efforts and union's initiatives could collaborate, particularly in relation to the empowerment of female teachers and SMC members.

#### 6.1.4 Collaboration with civil society, interest groups and I/NGOs

'... civil society comprises a vast range of organizational and associational forms and sizes, identities and values such as local institutions, NGOs, and social movements constituted by groups of people' (Manandhar, 2005). In Nepal, as in other countries of the world, groups of people and organizations outside the government system constitute 'civil society'. Ideally they should bridge between the government and people. This understanding therefore indicates that NGOs, retired civil servants, youth clubs, consumers'/users' groups, community-based organizations (CBOs), interest groups, and even ex-parliamentarians along with other groups of ordinary people come under the definition of civil society. Most are registered under an authority (VDCs/municipalities, district headquarters, or Social Welfare Council) and are primarily dependent on outside funding. Some NGOs/interest groups work for specific causes such as language, Janajatis and Dalit rights. For 'national political' reasons we sometimes find the above-identified people coming together as a pressure group, but for social and/or educational causes, this kind of union is not generally practised. In many respects the civil society groups engaged in education and development rather pursue the agendas of their funding agencies, for example providing support to the schooling of disadvantaged children through various activities. They do also work with the system to pursue these agendas. In this context civil society hardly subscribes to the original concept of civil society which is assumed to independently intermediate between the people and the government. Therefore for the purpose of this report, discussion concentrates on collaboration with I/NGOs pursuing education-related agendas.

International NGOs and national or local NGOs (I/NGOs) have been contributing in the education sector for a long time. Initially they directly implemented the programmes. The Ninth Five Year Development Plan, however, proposed that INGOs should work through NGOs and CBOs/POs. The Tenth Five Year Plan reinforced this proposal. With this, a trend to implement programmes through partner NGOs or CBOs accelerated. Major INGOs such as Plan Nepal and Save the Children US also have offices and staff at the district level. These offices maintain regular contact with the local partner organizations. I/NGOs sign MOUs (Memoranda of Understanding) with MOES in order to formally support the sector. The education sector business plan also realized that partnership between the government and NGOs is a relevant approach rather than piecemeal dealing between the two to address gender and social inclusion issues in education.

Social inclusion is central to many I/NGOs working in the education sector. Some concentrate only on women and/or gender, but most working in the education sector have now moved to total inclusion. As in the government sector, inclusion was narrowly perceived in the non-government sector as well. Inclusion was defined only in relation to 'disabled people'. Now the I/NGOs' outlook has broadened, yet inclusive practice to address the issues is still in the development phase.

In the last few years many I/NGOs have expanded their scope in education and begun intervening in schools, where previously they concentrated on NFE for children and adults, particularly women. Currently they have been assisting in the learning environment through materials support, child friendly approach, micro-planning, and incentives (see Annex Table A12) to girls, Dalits and other disadvantaged children, and family support through income generation activities. Some are responding to conflict-affected children as well. For example, Save the Children US, Save the Children Norway and a national NGO CWIN have been implementing different kinds of programmes including educational programmes and socio-psychological counselling for conflict-affected children in the Tarai, western and far western districts. Save the Children Norway was brought in under the EFA 2004–09 frame to work in the Maoist controlled areas when the conflict made it difficult for the government system to work at the ground level. So the leftover Norwegian government fund was diverted at the end of BPEP II and beginning of EFA 2004–09 to Save the Children Norway and CWIN as an interim strategy. With this, DOE began to include I/NGO contributions within the EFA/SESP frame (MOES/DOE, 2006).

This kind of partnership, created by the conflict which DOE/MOES alone could not deal with, brought I/NGOs on board. Collaboration in the education of disabled children has begun also because the government could not meet the demand alone. As a result, efforts like construction of schools in 18 districts by Save the Children Norway, CARE Nepal and the government jointly have been undertaken.

Programme specific networking, partnership and resource sharing are also sought, but more actively at the central level than at the district level. Some examples of centre level networks and partnerships are: The Gender Network Committee (previously Girls' Education Action Group initiative by WES with assistance from UNICEF) with expanded membership of almost 80 organizations including the Teacher Union; collaboration in NFE; and partnership in ECD. DOE is a partner of the quality education initiative of UNICEF and World Education as well. According to a high level officer in DOE, districts which are the focus of UNICEF and World Education are also selected for SESP incentives in order to achieve better coordination of the efforts.

At the district level, partnership, collaboration or coordination between the government machinery and I/NGOs is not always very enthusiastic. In INGOs' experience their MOU with MOES reaches the district but the DEO does not share it with other staff. 'In one instance when our staff went to DEO with the EFA document to discuss the possible ways for joint planning, the DEO rebuked the staff,' said an INGO staff member. In their experience if the DEO and section officer are positive, collaboration is possible and works well. When the system is not functioning, therefore, one has to depend on individuals, they said.

Regarding the management of incentives, three approaches are found in practice say I/NGO personnel. They are: (a) where the DEO is willing and determined, duplication is avoided through joint planning and an understanding is built on how many and which schools DEO will cover and vice versa; (b) distribution is made on ad hoc basis, for example knowing that an I/NGO is assisting certain schools, DEO avoids selecting those schools; and (c) no consideration is given or no joint planning is done therefore both I/NGO and DEO just decide on their own and may possibly end up in the same schools.

Joint publication is also a platform of collaboration between DOE and INGOs. Preparation of the SMC training manual jointly by DOE and Save the Children US is just one example. Instances of

good practice are also incorporated in the government's programme, but largely in the experience of I/NGOs good practices are not replicated or adapted. For example, components of the child friendly approaches initiative by Save the Children US have been adopted by the government. Action Aid also thinks that the models that it tried and found good have been adopted by the government – for example, its modality to provide scholarship to all Dalits was later adopted by the government. A CEMIS (Community-based Education Management Information System) was piloted by Save the Children Norway with the formal consent of MOES in Surkhet and Sindhupalchok. The pilot initiative has been acknowledged by the EFA 2004–09 Core Document. But due to several reasons, including armed conflict, the system could not implement CEMIS, says a DOE associate. Nonetheless, he claimed that 'we provided additional ECD quotas on the basis of the data gathered through CEMIS.'

Save the Children Norway staff on the other hand stated, 'Let alone replicating the initiative the information generated from this approach was not even used.' Plan Nepal has similar experience in relation to DEP preparation. In one district in the Tarai information was gathered through community mobilization, but the DEO was not responsive so the result was not utilized. Therefore in another district Plan worked with the DEO and RP for the same purpose but the community could not be mobilized to the same extent and the same result was not obtained. INGOs are of the opinion that DEOs rarely accept ideas or outcomes. 'We can't cover the entire district. We don't represent the entire district. We try some modalities which could be replicated in other places of the same district' was the experience. I/NGO staff observe that reform at the sub-district or district level is to a large extent restricted because what should happen at district or sub-district level is determined by a fixed frame provided by the centre.

I/NGOs were not mobilized in the NFEC-led VEP formulation, which required an extensive social mobilization which I/NGOs think they are good at. It was reported that not much coordination took place except with ASAMAN (an NGO) and UNICEF. Both are following the same method in their respective programme villages. 'INGOs don't want to work in a frame outside of their own so they didn't show interest in it,' was the response.

I/NGOs are addressing gender and social inclusion in school education in different capacities. But MOES seems still not sure about the partnership with them in formal education. Confinement of non-government sector only within NFE in the draft (first) of the three-year interim plan (MOES, 2006b) supports this observation. Moreover, despite their support in formal education they are not involved in the SSA process either. Save the Children Norway is involved, but only because it is working in the education of conflict-affected children, said Save the Children Norway staff.

When discussing I/NGOs' collaboration it is important to table the issue of financing and sustainability. Local NGOs/CBOs depend on their specific INGO for financial and technical support. National NGOs also have their own outside sources. INGOs on the other hand depend on donations made by international agencies and individuals. Multilateral agencies like UNICEF and UNESCO also channel their resources through I/NGOs to implement educational programmes or activities according to their interests. In this context, for I/NGOs the government is only one partner. The government, however, cannot channel as many resources as can the multilateral or bilateral donors to the NGOs. Consequently programmes and activities are decided and guided by the supporting agencies to whom the I/NGOs are accountable. This situation is critical when viewed from sustainability and accountability perspectives.

The above deliberations reveal that partnership between I/NGOs and the government is hazy. I/NGOs sign MOUs with DOE/MOES but expect the district level machinery to collaborate. But so far as district level machinery is concerned, the MOU is not signed with them so they may not feel any obligation to follow it. In the experience of ASAMAN, a NGO working in the Tarai, the government prefers to consult with an INGO and in this way NGOs are always excluded. Since it is difficult for NGOs to reach their voices to the centre a district level consultation is more appropriate, according to ASAMAN personnel. CWIN personnel also think that though they work to meet the government goals they are only an invitee in the government forums because the government does not adopt their suggestions. In the midst of all this for some NGOs, because they are supported by INGOs and multilateral or bilateral agencies, there is no need for them to work in partnership with the government to accomplish the national agenda.

I/NGOs are busy carrying out activities and meeting requirements of funding agreements. Some may be interested in better collaboration and coordination, but this requires a lot more time. Like governments, they are often more focused on monitoring/evaluating output of their activities than considering the processes. The government personnel too, rather than viewing I/NGO support as a supplement to the government efforts, view it as I/NGO specific programmes which they are supposed to facilitate when required. Since the scope or coverage of I/NGOs is limited on one hand and they too are donor dependent on the other, the government does not see them as perennial and dependable partners. In this situation partnership between the two is based on an unequal relationship with very limited functional linkage.

Collaboration among the NGOs with similar interests has also been a concern. In INGO personnel's experience, Dalit NGOs seek support under separate banners and disabled persons associations try to make their programmes special rather than inclusive. For example, the blind and deaf would like to make their programmes special/separate rather than inclusive by refusing to work together, said an INGO. 'Partly donors may also be responsible for this situation because some have a thematic approach and some others have an inclusive approach' added another INGO staff member.

### 6.1.5 Donor harmonization

Over the years issues of gender and social inclusion in education have been widely discussed, partly because the evidence (national data, anecdotal evidence, studies and media highlights) tells that despite all the interventions children are either not in school or graduate with low quality skills. As discussed in Chapter 4, if broken down by caste, gender, economic status and ethnicity the picture looks even more serious. In this situation pressure has increased on the system to respond to the needs of disadvantaged children. Therefore the priority for many agencies, including MOES, has been equitable quality education. The DPs are assisting MOES in pursuing this priority. In this context it is pertinent to explore how the coordination among DPs and with MOES functions and how it has helped address gender and social equity through EFA 2004–09 and SESP.

As mentioned in previous chapters EFA 2004–09 has seven donors and SESP two. Two distinct mechanisms have been observed in relation to donor involvement. One is pool funding and the other is TA and/or direct funding. TA comes in different forms. For example the TA of ADB comprises consultants (international and domestic) and specific project-based activities. But for DANIDA TA comprises both international consultants (Technical Advisors) and financial support,

with the cost of the advisors not included in the EFA 2004–09 TA budget. As mentioned in Chapter 3, the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) is eligible to utilize a certain portion of the DANIDA SESP direct fund.

Mechanisms have been developed and agreed among DPs to implement the programmes and establish coordination among partners. The major arrangements made to facilitate the implementation of EFA 2004–09 and SESP are JFA, Code of Conduct, biannual joint reviews, monthly donor meetings and direct funding steering committees. Despite these arrangements, experiences and observations regarding DP harmonization vary. For example, more sharing happens in EFA 2004–09 but there is still not enough transparency, says a long-time outside consultant who was also involved in BPEP II. For MOES personnel as well, coordination of the regular programme has not been an issue in either EFA 2004–09 or SESP, but there are issues around TA and/or direct funding.

It is reported that areas or activities not covered by the EFA 2004–09 or SESP frames are requested by DOE/MOES through TA and/or direct funding. The TEP (ADB's TA) and Institutional Linkage for Capacity Building Programme (ILCBP)<sup>28</sup> funded directly by ESAT/DANIDA are given as examples. According to DPs, DOE/MOES submits the proposal and TA or direct funding is provided accordingly. But the MOES/DOE personnel say that the area of TA or direct investment is already specified in the agreement therefore proposals within the specified areas are acceptable for funding. In this context direct funding may not necessarily be separated for gender and social inclusion. If this is within the specified area of the DPs then it gets funded. For example, gender equality is a priority of all the donors. Therefore capacity building or other activities helpful for addressing gender issues are likely to be directly funded. For UNESCO, gender, NFE and ECD are major priorities whereas, for UNICEF ECD, gender and/or girls' education are the priorities. Likewise for DANIDA, girls' education is the priority, whereas for Finland bilingual education is the priority. In this situation it is very likely that DPs promote their interests both within the EFA 2004–09 and SESP frames and through TA or direct funding.

Up till now there have been government–donor steering committees for TAs and direct funding. These committees are chaired by the Secretary of MOES. DPs agree that separate committees have also made it difficult for coordination therefore there should be just one TA or direct funding committee. In this case DPs would be formally informed about each other's activities on one hand and allowed to jointly decide the activities on the other. But at present the TA and/or direct funding is managed by the donors themselves in line with the funding modality and legal frames of their respective countries. This kind of arrangement, however, is not compatible with the Paris Declaration. The Paris Declaration advocates for compatibility with the partner country's modality. This shows that DPs are still functioning in a conventional way.

MoF also shows concern over TA or direct funding arrangements. Direct funding is not reflected in Nepal government's Red Book so for MoF it is not transparent. Their concern is that MoF is unable to know how the money is spent. Some people have observed that neither DPs nor MOES want to bring direct funding into the pool. It is viewed that donors use this money to bring in international consultants and MOES uses it in non-priority areas. The direct funding arrangement under separate contracts with DOE to support small project-based activities, as

<sup>28</sup> ILCBP is one of the components of the Institutional Capacity Building Plan (ICBP) of NCED. ICBP has identified the Asian Institute of Technology Bangkok for collaboration. This has been supported by DANIDA/ESAT through ILCBP.

mentioned earlier in this report, has fragmented the efforts. This has also engaged the DOE staff in pursuing project-based activities rather than the programme-based regular activities. The Foreign Aid Coordination Section (FACS) of MOES is in favour of bringing TA and direct funding into the pool and under one Steering Committee.

The case of UN agencies is not very different either. For example, UNESCO and UNICEF have been directly funding several small activities under separate contracts. UNESCO under separate agreement with DOE/MOES have been supporting activities such as capacity building of gender focal points, Flash reporting system, EFA Mid Decade Assessment (MDA), condensed curriculum development of NFE, and IE tool kit development. UNICEF has also similar arrangements. With joining the EFA pool donors from 2007, how UNICEF supports other project-based activities is to be seen. Additionally, UNESCO and UNICEF mobilize I/NGOs to work in areas not covered by the EFA 2004–09 frame and also areas of their interests through direct contracts.

About the benefits of TA and/or directly funded initiatives there is a mixed feeling within and outside the system. Some view that something completely designed by the host institution is more beneficial than the ones designed by outside consultants. This group of people thinks that directly funded initiatives are necessary because they give space and freedom to those who want to work. This allows being creative and helps facilitate the regular programme. In their opinion the fixed frame and format of the regular programmes and bureaucracy do not allow them to do this. This perspective can be further elaborated with some specific examples. For instance, GEDS developed the strategy paper on 'girls' education for gender equality' support and the ECD section developed a national ECD strategy in collaboration with other partners working in the areas. The strategy papers have identified several programmes and activities. These programmes and activities are supposed to be implemented by interested partners involved in the strategy development including GED and ECD sections. But this is not always easy, said concerned persons. Since many of the programmes and activities identified by the strategy paper are not covered by the regular programme frames the sections have to look for other sources of funding.

Moreover, in the experience of DOE personnel, the I/NGO representatives who come to network or partnership meetings are usually junior staff therefore they cannot assure which programmes or activities they can pursue. The meeting ends with 'we'll have to check with the office' said experienced personnel. As a result the sections have to seek direct funding from DPs including UN agencies to carry out activities identified in the strategies. Another recent example is the direct funding provided by ESAT/DANIDA to the gender focal point of MOES to develop a code of conduct regarding gender and social inclusion. The code of conduct is expected to be included in the education regulation. This activity is important from the perspective of mainstreaming gender and social inclusion but this is something beyond the official job description of the gender focal point. Therefore no budget is available for it in the regular programme development fund.

In the experience of some DOE personnel, the examples of EU's piloting of decentralization initiatives in selected districts and the DANIDA funded SLC performance study were beneficial. The major recommendations made by the SLC performance study had already been made by a MOES formed SLC reform committee in early 2000 but those recommendations were experience based, whereas recommendations made by the study were evidence based and therefore carried

more value and prompted reform, they said. But this does not always happen. There is another group who think that directly funded initiatives rather divert the focus and priority. In their opinion, the regular programmes get less attention; units/sections are concentrated more towards the accomplishment of directly funded initiatives/projects; and dealings of such initiatives are less transparent therefore the issue of accountability is also there.

In BPEP II, it is reported that most of the TA money was spent on centrally managed research, therefore redesign of the TA was proposed by the DOE to diversify the areas, e.g. utilizing the fund for capacity building, and downward flow of the TA fund. Even if the TA was meant for research it should be implemented at school level by the teachers so that the capacity of the teacher would be enhanced, was one of the suggestions. But DOE could not convince higher level authorities and donors in this matter. As a result, for example, the HRD plan preparation was carried out through a rigorous exercise supported by ESAT/DANIDA in 2002. The plan, though said to be requested by MOES, never got approval. According to NCED personnel the plan was too ambitious and resource intensive. NCED later therefore developed ICBP and a human resource development policy.

Nevertheless, coordination with donors improved says high level DOE personnel. In his experience, when BPEP II was shifted to a programme based approach, DOE did not have the experience and capacity in function and/or activities that was required. There was no option other than agreeing to what the DPs said. But gradually the skill, competency and capacity of the DOE enhanced and DOE became able to argue and put its perspectives in reviews. Interaction with donors began to occur on equal terms, he said. DOE invited ground level stakeholders (head teachers, students, Teacher Union) and DEOs into the SESP MTR so that they would reveal the ground level reality on one hand and they would also know the dynamics between donor and the government which is always viewed as the 'government agreeing to the donor all the time' on the other, he added.

Looking at the changes made in EFA 2004–09, an outside consultant involved in BPEP II also thinks that the establishment of FACS (Foreign Aid Coordination Section) in the Ministry and the crafting of the Code of Conduct have helped in DP coordination very much. The Code of Conduct specifies the DPs' responsibilities and suggestions are made not to take over. Her observation is that more sharing happens in EFA 2004–09 than in BPEP. But she thinks that there is still not enough transparency. However, regarding the Code of Conduct, mixed feelings were expressed by a few informants: 'this has been followed', 'it is just a non-binding wish list', 'it has been lost and it doesn't have any added value'. It was also observed that DPs have a tradition of doing things to meet their requirements without informing other DPs. MOES personnel are a bit more optimistic: 'though it is grounded in good faith and is not legally binding, DPs are following the Code of Conduct to a maximum extent. DPs have not completely changed their conventional way, yet the spirit of the Code of Conduct has been respected'.

Interestingly, absence of coordination surfaced within the DP organization as well. For example, ADB under different programmes is working in the education sector. While ADB through its education programme is supporting SSA, its governance-strengthening programme is undertaking a study on decentralized service delivery with focus only on primary level education. This indicates two realities: (a) internal coordination and sharing is weak; and (b) programmes are not adjusted according to developments in the concerned sections.

Regarding TA and/or direct funding, dissatisfaction over the involvement of foreign consultants is common. A key associate of EFA 2004–09 even viewed that problems of Nepal cannot be fixed by an outsider and this is an undeniable fact. A government affiliated experienced person is of the opinion that MOES does not do timely and adequate homework which the donors would do ahead, therefore MOES has to accept their proposals. In his observation, the common psychology is that ‘TA is free money – if we don’t spend donors will take it back so if it provides something (e.g. vehicle, foreign trip, seminar, training) then why not use it.’ He also is of the opinion that a large sum of TA funding goes to cover costs of outside consultants. A small amount of money can do big work in a country like Nepal but the emphasis is on foreign consultants and other non-priority activities, he said. Use of local consultants and institutionalization of the efforts should be done from TA money, he suggests. This observation correlates with a comment made by another associate of EFA 2004–09 that ‘EFA as it is today is not a SWAp, it is donor driven. Donors are working with their pet projects. Non-priority things are funded.’ But to some in Nepal, the SWAp process is evolving even though sector partners’ fragmented approach is negatively contributing and partners agree in principle but this is not reflected in practice.

## 6.2 Summary

The discussions in this chapter indicate that gender and social inclusion are the interest and priority of most of the secondary stakeholders of education. Many units, sections and institutions within MOES/DOE have policies, principles or mandates to address the issues of gender and social exclusion. They are all attempting to adopt the inclusion strategy of EFA 2004–09. Gender and social inclusion have been the interest of DPs as well. Both sets of stakeholders (MOES/DOE and donors) pursue this interest from both the SWAp frame and other mechanisms, i.e. TA and/or direct funding. In doing so, a lot of coordinated effort is required.

In terms of the regular programme, donor coordination is satisfactory. But underneath the surface dissatisfaction and distrust can be felt due to TA management. From the perspective of gender and social inclusion one cannot ignore the initiatives made through TA or direct funding. But a common notion is that TA and/or direct funding is not transparent and is utilized in non-priority areas. If local expertise is available and the agreement allowed it could be better utilized. Provision for only international advisors, who may not be adequately knowledgeable and skilled with respect to the complexity of local aspects of social exclusion, is also a common concern. There is also concern about the sustainability of the initiatives funded through TA and/or direct funding because they are not adequately linked to the SWAp frame. They are rather implemented on a project basis. History shows that no matter how good it is, the initiative phases out along with the project. The system hardly absorbs it. There are several key examples/concerns, for example: (1) there is no guarantee that the preparation of the pre-service teacher training graduates (who belong to disadvantaged groups) for the Teacher Service Commission examination will be mainstreamed; (2) it is uncertain whether VEP will be adopted as a method for micro-planning or if the household level information collected in this process will be the basis for funding. Similarly, the social inclusion analysis undertaken before implementing TA and/or direct funding is also a good example, but since this kind of exercise was done by outsiders for the purpose of certain projects, the practice is unlikely to continue.

Internal coordination is also an important element in a SWAp in order to address the complex issue of exclusion. This, however, is almost absent within the MOES/DOE system. All are carrying their own baggage. Absence of interaction and collaboration has resulted in a danger of programme duplication and confusion at the ground level as well. The need for collaborative intervention for a common cause has been raised time and again from outside, but has still not materialized. The concern therefore is about the effectiveness and sustainability of uncoordinated and/or unconsolidated initiatives implemented via different platforms. Fragmented project-based initiatives neither demand solid evidence on which to ground strategies nor does the length of the project allow it to happen. In this context reaching the most vulnerable children still remains a challenge.

## 7. Promoting Equity and Inclusion: What was the Impact of Moving to a SWAp Modality?

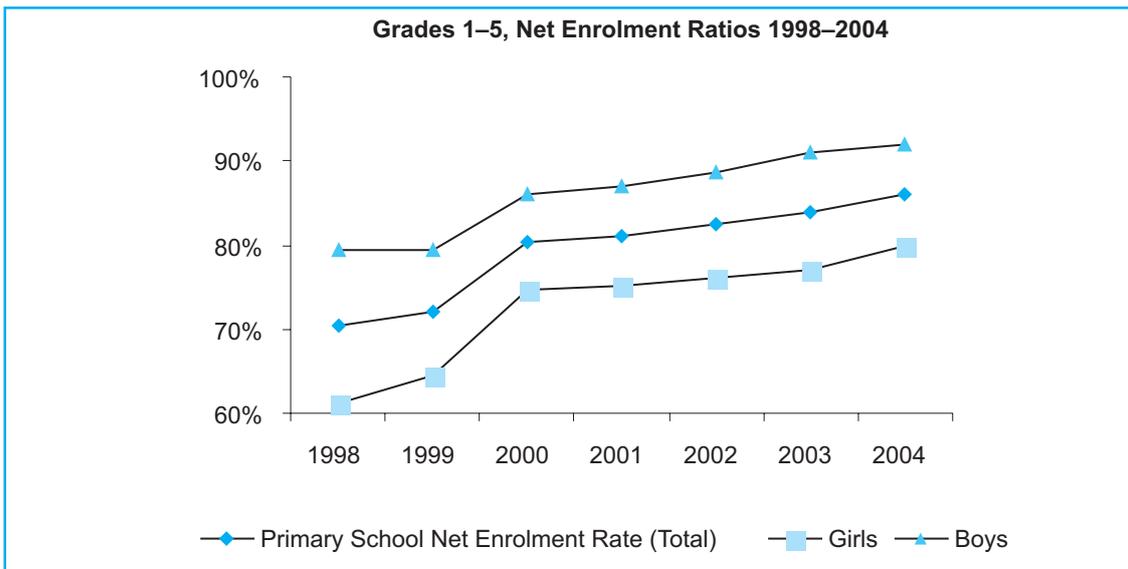
### 7.1 Direct Impact

One of the strategies mentioned in the Education Sector Business Plan (MOES, 2004a) is to ‘adopt a sector-wide approach to help improve coordination between various levels of schools, and harness synergies of initiatives undertaken at various levels for ensuring all-round development of the sector’ (p. 22). It is therefore logical to review the impact or progress of EFA 2004–09 and SESP jointly. This section therefore highlights the progress made so far and the associated challenges that need attention.

In Nepal, the move towards a programme-based approach in primary education began with BPEP II in 1999. In BPEP II ‘a sector-wide approach was adopted in the design and implementation encompassing a more comprehensive approach to educational reform and development (BPEP II Government–Donor Joint Evaluation, COWI *et al.*, 2004, p. 109). During BPEP II, ownership by the government increased and donor coordination also improved. EFA 2004–09, as discussed earlier in this report, is in a way a third phase of BPEP. In this context it is sensible to view the progress or impact made during EFA 2004–09 in relation to BPEP II. Therefore in this section attempt has been made to reflect how the impacts have been progressively achieved since BPEP II. Quantitative indicators show improvement in overall enrolment, retention and survival at both primary and secondary levels. However, the improvement at higher levels is not at par with that at primary level.

#### 7.1.1 Equity in access in formal education

Available data shows that access to primary education has improved substantially (see Annex Tables A2.1 and A2.2). Enrolment in Grade 1 decreased in 2006/07 compared with the previous year, though is still 3 per cent higher than in the 2004/05 academic year (TRSE, 2007). The decrease in Grade 1 enrolment can be attributed to the increased enrolment in ECD and the reopening of the private schools on one hand and inadequate school infrastructure and low coverage of incentives on the other (TRSE, 2007). The DOE/MOES data correlates with NLSS data in this respect. According to NLSS, between 1995/96 and 2003/04 access to primary education has increased across the nation (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2004). The same source affirms that households with access to primary schools within 30 minutes walking distance increased from 88.4 per cent to 91.4 per cent during the same period. The chart below also shows the growth pattern of net enrolment in primary level over a period of six years – beginning at the time when BPEP II was first introduced.

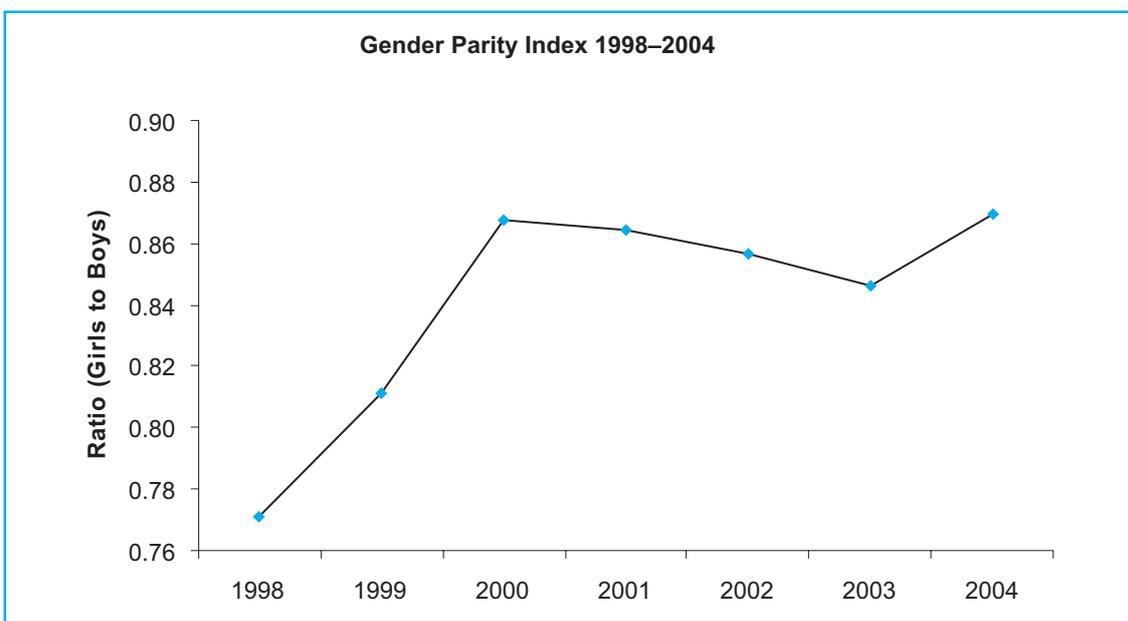


Source: Joint Government–Donor Evaluation of Basic and Primary Education Programme II, COWI et al., 2004

The above chart indicates that net enrolment of both boys and girls has increased. The starting point for boys was higher than that of girls and they were still behind the boys, but the increment ratio was higher for girls than for boys. The chart below shows that GPI also improved substantially during this period.

The net enrolment and GPI, which improved during BPEP II, further improved during the EFA 2004–09 phase. GPI which was 0.87 in 2004 reached 0.94 in 2006 (Flash Report I, 2006).

Data for lower secondary and secondary levels is not available for the same period (1998–2004), but GER and NER at these levels increased during 1995 to 2006. In lower secondary and secondary levels total GER increased from 47.9 per cent to 71.5 per cent and 31.6 per cent to 56.7 per cent respectively. Similarly, NER at the same levels increased from 26.1 per cent to 52.3 per cent and 17.3 per cent to 34.7 per cent respectively. Girls’ NER also increased substantially during this period. At lower secondary level it increased from 18.9 per cent to 47.8



Source: Joint Government–Donor Evaluation of Basic and Primary Education Programme II, COWI et al., 2004

per cent, whereas at secondary level it increased from 12 per cent to 32.4 per cent. Though the programme-based approach in lower secondary and secondary levels was initiated only in 2002 it can be argued that the tendency among households to send and keep their children in school might have been a spin-off effect of the culture of schooling created by BPEP II interventions. Interventions such as community mobilization, door to door visit programme, scholarships, and women's literacy programmes just to mention a few might have helped families to realize the need and importance of educating children. The secondary education development project (SEDP 1992–98), which was extended for one additional year, also contributed to the progress. The project provided assistance to rural schools, special training was offered to female teachers, SAP was initiated, the curriculum of core subjects reformed, and while providing science and other learning materials preference was given to schools with higher girls' enrolment and increased female teachers (ADB, 2004). During 1993 to 2003, annual average growth rate of enrolment of lower secondary and secondary jointly was 7 per cent, while promotion and cohort survival rates also improved in Grades 6 to 10 during the project period (ADB, 2004). The combination of all these factors most likely positively impacted the lower secondary and secondary enrolment.

At present, the GPI of primary level enrolment of Dalits and Janajatis is also high, at 0.93 and 0.97 respectively. But the GPI of children with disability is lower than that of all the other groups. The total enrolment of Dalits and Janajati children is, however, still very low. The NLSS has also shown no considerable increases in the primary and secondary level enrolment of the bottom quintile, which is where most of the so-called lower caste groups are located. It is pertinent to reiterate that most of those who are in the bottom quintile in the poverty index are Dalits and highly marginalized Janajatis. No significant change is observed in the enrolment pattern of these groups even today. Dalit children's share in total enrolment in primary, lower secondary and secondary levels is 17.7 per cent, 9.5 per cent and 5.3 per cent respectively. Janajati children's share in total enrolment in primary, lower secondary and secondary levels is 38.8 per cent, 38.6 per cent and 29.9 per cent (DOE, Flash Report I, 2006). The share of marginalized Janajatis in primary level enrolment is much lower with only 3 per cent (TRSE, 2006).

The above data shows that enrolment has decreased substantially at higher levels. The girls' enrolment pattern also shows a decreasing trend in the higher grades, though not to the same degree. Primary level enrolment of Dalit, Janajati, 'disabled' girls and girls from other social groups are 48.3 per cent, 49.3 per cent, 45 per cent and 48.3 per cent respectively. Similarly, in lower secondary level Dalit, Janajati and other girls occupy 41.1 per cent, 47.9 per cent, and 46.1 per cent of the total enrolment of their respective groups. At secondary level, Dalit, Janajati and other girls form 41.7 per cent, 47 per cent, and 46 per cent of the total enrolment of their respective groups.

The Tarai is the most disadvantaged among all the ecological zones because it has the highest proportion of primary school age population (50.4%) but fewer schools (28.2%) (Flash Report I, 2006). The share of enrolment is also high (44.1%). Considering the ecological zones, girls' enrolment at lower secondary level is 43 per cent, 48.4 per cent and 44.9 per cent in Mountain, Hill and Tarai respectively (Flash Report I, 2006). At secondary level it is 44.5 per cent, 48 per cent, and 43.6 in Mountain, Hill and Tarai respectively (Flash Report I, 2006). The GER at lower secondary level is lower than the national average (71.5%) in 35 districts. Thirteen districts have more than 90 per cent GER. The GER pattern at secondary level follows a similar trend. Nevertheless, in 53 districts the GER at secondary level increased from the previous year. This

can, however, be correlated with increased internal migration and overcrowding of some schools in some districts (e.g. Surkhet) due to the insurgency.

The Aide Memoire of the Annual Consultative Mission of SESP (7–8 December, 2006) also shows an increase in girls' GER at lower secondary level but a decline at secondary level. It also claims that the disparity in SLC pass rates including that of girls, of PIDs and the national rate has also been narrowing. The reason for decline in girls' GER at secondary level might be the increased abduction of secondary school students by Maoists which resulted in mass migration and fear among parents to send their adolescent daughters out of their homes. An inappropriate student/teacher ratio, which is 65.2 at lower secondary level, caused by increased enrolment, which negatively contributed to the quality might also have contributed to lower GER of girls at secondary level. This situation has led to demand for more teachers and more physical facilities in PIDs.

The Welcome to School programme has also helped in increasing the number of enrollees tremendously, though due to the lack of corresponding management environment in the schools many of them later dropped out (Educational Pages, May/June, 2006). It is also reported that inadequate school infrastructure, shortage of teachers and absence of concerted effort on the teachers' part to cater for the needs of grade one entrants also worked against the Welcome to School movement.

Scholarships have also helped in improving girls' and Dalit children's access to school. The EFA 2004–09 consultative meeting held in December 2006 claimed that scholarships have reached the most eligible Dalit students, and ninety per cent of the scholarship fund was spent. The meeting, however, recommended a review and revision of the scholarship policies, criteria, management and monitoring approaches in order to reach the 'extremely marginalized groups', and to give priority to 'more equitable and transparent resource allocation' (Aide Memoire, 4–6 December, 2006). Girls from Mountain regions are benefiting from increased feeder hostels and all girls from PIDs of Karnali Zone are benefiting from the scholarships (Aide Memoire of Annual Consultative Mission of SESP, 7–8 December, 2006).

The education sector business plan (2004) also recognized that the scholarships provided to girls and Dalit children have not been effective, mainly because the scheme is centrally managed. However, it also acknowledges the fact that schools that are managing their resources on their own are doing better in this respect: '... if the resources are provided to schools as block grants for improving access, the schools are likely to be more creative ...' (MOES, 2004a, p. 6). The investment in access to quality education which is linked to the centrally determined input rather than to the intended outcome has also negatively contributed to the improvement. This observation made by the business plan has also been raised by the research on scholarships (Acharya and Luitel, 2006). The piloting of new scholarship eligibility determination activity which will be started soon will perhaps respond to these issues.

The above discussion indicates that significant improvement has occurred over a decade in the school enrolment pattern. GPI has also improved. The improvement has accelerated since the introduction of the SWAp. The national average figure, however, cannot be correlated with gender and social group disaggregated data. Most vulnerable children or 'hard to reach' children are still out of school. Most Dalit and Janajati children do not continue from primary to higher levels. The uncoordinated or compartmentalized and blanket policy (e.g. scholarship criteria) interventions have also to a large extent slowed down the improvement speed. This situation leads to the discussion about equity in quality.

### 7.1.2 Equity in quality in formal education

Generally several quantitative and qualitative variables are considered as quality indicators. One such variable is students' learning achievement. But student achievement data is not available. Neither is there a systematic approach to collect information on qualitative variables such as institutional rules, school environment, hidden curriculum, student/teacher behaviour, social discrimination and classroom practices/interaction. Research and evaluation reports produced by different agencies and individuals are the sources of qualitative information. Therefore for the purpose of this report mainly quantitative variables such as promotion, repetition, dropout, survival, student/teacher ratio (STR), teacher composition including their training status, etc. are taken as quality indicators.

The overall promotion, repetition and dropout trend of all three levels (Grades 2–10) during 1995 to 2005 shows improvement. Girls' share of promotion has also increased in all the grades during this period. Repetition and dropout also decreased in primary level grades for both boys and girls. Comparable data of repetition and dropout is not available for other grades, but the 2005/06 data shows that more girls than boys repeat both lower secondary and secondary level grades. Overall promotion rates among boys are higher in those grades. But more boys dropped out than girls in all grades (6–9) in this year. Survival therefore is also higher among girls (see Annex Tables A3, A4.1 and A4.2).

The available data (Table 4.4) shows that the promotion rates from Grades 1 to 9 except in Grades 6 and 7 is higher for Dalit girls than for Dalit boys. But in grade repetition, the Dalit girls' rate is higher than that of their male counterparts in all grades. Repetition among Dalit boys increases from Grade 6 onward. On average, promotion is higher in upper grades but incidence of dropout is highest in Grades 1 and 5, while repetition is highest in Grade 8. The overall chances of survival among Dalit children substantially decrease as the grade increases. Survival and dropout ratios are in favour of Dalit girls in all the grades. Substantial numbers of Dalit boys drop out of school as the grade increases. This situation indicates that Dalit boys either do not return after they fail or they are required to work to support family livelihood. Regarding Janajati children, data on quality indicators is not available to draw any conclusion.

The STR has disproportionately changed over the period. In 2002 at the primary level one teacher taught on average 35.7 students, compared with 39 in 1998 (Joint Government–Donor Evaluation of BPEP II, COWI *et al.*, 2004). But at present it has reached 54.7 in primary, 65.2 in lower secondary and 53.2 in secondary (Flash Report I, 2006). Among ecological regions the Tarai has always faced overcrowded classrooms with the highest STR as compared with other ecological regions. Currently the STR in the Tarai is 72.3, 84.0 and 63.6 at primary, lower secondary and secondary levels respectively (Flash Report I, 2006). The national average therefore does not adequately capture the situation that schools are facing in this respect. Due to the armed conflict the STR has tremendously increased in urban schools, while as mentioned in earlier chapters some schools are enjoying fewer than 10 students per teacher.

From the perspective of inclusion, teacher composition as mentioned in Chapter 4 is still a concern. At all levels, so-called high caste males dominate the teaching force. The percentage of trained teachers in 2002 was only 16.23 (Joint Government–Donor Evaluation of BPEP II, COWI *et al.*, 2004), which had increased to 59.9 per cent in 2006 (Flash Report I, 2006). The percentages of trained teachers in lower secondary and secondary levels are 46.4 and 66.6 (Flash Report I, 2006).

At primary level, the percentage of trained female teachers increased from 22.5 in 1998 to 28.64 in 2002 (Joint Government–Donor Evaluation of BPEP II, COWI *et al.*, 2004). By 2006 the percentage of fully trained female teachers in all types of schools had reached 56.8 per cent. In lower secondary and secondary levels they are 51.7 per cent and 68.8 per cent respectively. However, among the untrained teachers in total (all three levels), the percentage of females is slightly higher than that of males (Flash Report I, 2006).

As mentioned in Chapter 4, female teachers are more concentrated in urban areas, leaving some remote schools without any at all. Nevertheless, in order to curb this situation almost 95 per cent of female teachers (lower and secondary levels) working in localities other than their homes have been provided with a special allowance (Aide Memoire of Annual Consultative Mission of SESP, 7–8 December, 2006). The policy of the Learning Resource Centre (LRC) to provide support to both primary and secondary schools has been approved (Aide Memoire of Annual Consultative Mission of SESP, 7–8 December, 2006) and it can be assumed that it will help improve the teaching/learning quality at lower secondary and secondary levels.

Regarding school physical facilities and environment (i.e. classroom practice, teacher behaviour, social discrimination, etc.) no systematic data is available. But sporadic studies and stories printed in media show that schools are at different stages in terms of physical facilities and environment. Many schools are still short of separate and special facilities that both younger and older girls need, and some are operating with risky infrastructure while others are running classes in open fields. Nevertheless, physical facilities including separate toilets for boys and girls of many schools of PIDs have been improved (Aide Memoire of Annual Consultative Mission of SESP, 7–8 December, 2006). The mission also agreed to reallocate the excess budget of LRC to meet the financial gap of PID schools. Construction of temporary classrooms in overcrowded schools and availability of construction fund to schools on the basis of number of Dalit and girl students can also be considered important from both access and quality perspectives.

DOE, UNICEF, World Education and ESAT/DANIDA have jointly developed a quality education resource package which has been implemented in their respective programme districts. One of the major intents of the package is to address the issues of social exclusion not only in the classroom but also at the school management level. This initiative has been linked with the government initiatives, but how much of it will be fully adopted in the SWAp has yet to be seen.

Child friendly school initiatives introduced by the non-government sector have also played an important role in ensuring gender and social inclusion in education. UNICEF, Save the Children US and Save the Children Norway are in the lead in this respect. In their respective project areas in certain districts, these agencies have been adopting a rights-based approach in making schools welcoming to all children irrespective of their caste, gender, ethnicity, ability level or economic standard. The evaluations of the initiatives have found increased participation of girls and disadvantaged children in schools, and 'improved relationship between parents, children and students' (Keane, 2006). Though these agencies involve DEO personnel, how this initiative will be brought within the EFA 2004–09 and SESP framework is still to be seen.

The above discussions show that the achievements or improvements made in school education continuously bring new challenges or issues that require serious attention. The situation at national level has improved both in access and quality, but huge gaps are still found across social groups and across districts. The strategy to increase the numbers of female teachers, a

strategy for both access and quality, has still not led to increases where they are needed most. Disproportionate STR has also disadvantaged some children more than others in attaining quality education. Initiatives of I/NGOs and bilateral agencies are important from equity perspectives, but again the issues of functional coordination and collaboration surface.

So far the discussion has concentrated on equity in access and quality in school education. However, since the EFA 2004–09 frame also includes ECD and NFE, the following sub-sections will focus on equity in ECD and NFE.

### 7.1.3 Equity in ECD

ECD is the first goal of EFA and therefore is placed within the basic and primary sub-sector. One generally finds two types of early childhood care and education in Nepal. One is ECD and the other is the pre-primary centre (PPC). ECD is usually community based and PPC is a formal school based programme. ECD/PPC, which has become an indispensable part of primary education, has flourished in the past few years. The ECD enrolment was around five hundred thousand in 2006, which is 8 per cent higher than in 2004. The increment rate is higher for Dalits at 16 per cent and lower for Janajatis at 5 per cent (Flash Reports I, 2004 and 2006).

According to MOES data, ECD/PPC enrolment increased by 47 per cent between 2000 and 2005 (TRSE, 2007). The number of centres also grew by 200 per cent within that period and the growth in enrolment showed that more ECD/PPC centres are required. The Grade 1 entrants who constituted 24 per cent ECD/PPC graduates in 2006/07 was double in the previous year (TRSE, 2007). The share of girls in ECD/PPC enrolment is 51 per cent. The GPI of the GER in ECD/PPC is satisfactory (see Annex Table A9.1). However, it is important to probe into the regional and social group variation. The Tarai has the lowest GER of girls, followed by the Mountain region. In total GER (male/female), the Mountain region is behind the Tarai. Similarly, Dalit children's presence in ECD/PPC is very low (girls 15.2% and boys 14.7%) as opposed to Janajati children (girls 41.4% and boys 40.9%). The gap between Dalits and other groups is much higher than that of Janajatis and other groups (see Annex Table A9.2).

According to TRSE (2007), enrolment in ECD/PPC has accelerated, as has the number of centres, but the community partnership in this sector as assumed by the policy is very low. The expansion of PPC is higher in urban areas than in rural areas (TRSE, 2007). Three possible reasons are identified for low community participation and large increase of centres in urban areas: there are difference in educational awareness level between urban and rural populations, family structures which demand extra help for child care in urban areas, and provision of matching fund that not all communities can manage. The discussion on matching fund (Chapter 5) has argued that it rather increases inequity, so this may not be a viable option. It can be further argued that if this is the case then those who are already likely to join primary school will have more access to ECD/PPC. Moreover, they will be the ones who benefit in primary grades from extra years of input received in ECD/PPC.

### 7.1.4 Equity in NFE

NFE, which has been placed within the basic and primary sub-sector since BPEP II, has been playing a crucial role in meeting the educational needs of out-of-school children, women and male adults resulting in satisfactory outcomes in many instances. NFEC and non-government sectors have different programmes to reach adults and 'hard to reach' children. NFEC has

initiated a VEP exercise, which is now linked with formal education. A National Policy of Non-formal Education was approved by the NFE Council in late 2006. VEP and National Policy of Non-formal Education both advocate for equity in NFE. The policy has provisions for education beyond mere literacy and primary level education. Decentralized management of NFE is also an important provision that can impact on improving equity in access and quality in non-formal education.

Currently NFEC is in the process of developing alternative learning materials for lower secondary level to be implemented through an open school programme. The distance and open learning division under NCED has also initiated open learning opportunities for those who passed Grade 8 but who left study for various reasons and would like to prepare for SLC (Educational Pages, January 15–29, 2007).

World Education's GATE, a non-formal education programme for girls, is also a significant contribution. It is a non-formal education initiative tailored to achieve gender equality in basic education, but poor girls are supported till SLC and above on a case by case basis.

Alternative school programmes (ASP) of MOES implemented within non-formal education have also played instrumental roles in addressing exclusion in education (see Annex Tables A13 and A14). Previously, there were three types of programme under ASP: OSP, FSP and SOP. OSP is a literacy programme for over-age children. The intent of the programme is to mainstream the graduates to regular school or provide them with skills for livelihood. FSP is a three-year programme for the 10 to 14 years age group in which children study a condensed primary level curriculum. FSP graduates sit in the Grade 5 final examination of the formal system and those who pass are expected to join formal schooling. In SOP, children between 6 to 8 years old from underprivileged and/or socially marginalized groups of isolated pockets are offered Grades 1 to 3 curricula within a three-year period. The impacts of all three were positive and were recommended to continue (Acharya and Singh, 2002). The UNICEF-implemented OSP also showed a positive trend towards social inclusion in education. In 2005 among the cycle completers 65 per cent were girls, 40 per cent of the graduates transited to formal school, half of those who joined formal school were girls, and reading/writing skills of children improved (Keane, 2006). However, NFEC terminated OSP.

The NFE initiatives have potential in improving equity in access and quality at both primary and secondary levels. Though NFE has received more attention in EFA 2004–09, the finding of the BPEP II Government–Donor Joint Evaluation (COWI *et al.*, 2004) that NFEC is financially, technically and bureaucratically weaker than other parts of the system is still valid. Therefore current institutional arrangements and donor driven small fragmented efforts with inadequate coordination within NFEC, and between NFEC and other institutions, is a serious concern.

## 7.2 Broader Changes

The impact and progress observed at primary and secondary levels are grounded in previous interventions. This is more true in the case of primary level than in secondary. It is difficult though to make direct linkage between the SWAp and the progress made so far. Nevertheless, since the beginning of the SWAp some specific changes have been noticed. For example, ownership by the government of the programme has increased. Capacity at central and district levels has also improved in the area of quantitative data analysis, planning, programming and

budgeting. The issues of gender and social inclusion have been nationalized in the sense that these issues are viewed in a more holistic way. Commitment from the government's side has increased. As a result, the education sector has begun adjusting its policies and programmes according to the national policies, plans and commitments. In this situation the issue of gender and social exclusion is less likely to be sidelined in the future.

The funding modality has also changed. Change was driven by the lessons learned from the funding modality of BPEP II. The current 'block or SIP based grant' modality ensures that all schools received funding according to their student population. Although SGOG 2004 is geared more towards ensuring transparency and coverage, the succeeding decisions have attempted to ensure equity. Ecological zone based allocation of SIP based grant, and elimination of performance based grant,<sup>29</sup> are examples of the changes made to minimize the disparities.

The construction of temporary classrooms to address the problems caused by conflict, and collaboration with I/NGOs in meeting the learning needs of disabled children, are some significant initiatives made in addressing the issues of exclusion. However, from an equity perspective, the flat rate of NRs 350 for a scholarship has not proven to be enough, particularly to socio-economically marginalized children like the Dalits. In this respect it can be argued that DOE does not adequately utilize the evidence gathered by studies while making decisions and planning. This tendency is also reflected in the current proposal for an additional 62,000 teachers as well, the need for which is not supported by data. The skill in equity analysis also seems to be inadequate on one hand and not much importance is given to it on the other.

Nevertheless, many key activities have been undertaken and changes have been made since the later years of BPEP II and during EFA 2004–09, both at the central and school levels, which directly or indirectly address issues of gender and social exclusion. Some examples of such activities and changes are:

- Piloting of the decentralization of textbook printing and distribution has begun from 2007. Responsibility for Grade 5 textbook printing and distribution has been given to a group of agencies of the Eastern Region.
- In 2006 MOES assigned gender focal persons in all the divisions (i.e. CDC, NCED, Teacher Service Commission, HSEB and OCE). These focal persons were provided with two-day gender training by UNESCO Kathmandu. The same year MOES developed a gender mainstreaming strategy paper for the Ministry.
- IE, which was previously understood as education for differently-abled children, has been made broader, embracing other disparity issues (caste, gender, ethnicity, language, etc.) as well. In 2003/04 the new concept of IE was piloted in four districts, namely, Banke, Udayapur, Kavre, Sindhupalchok. Under EFA 2004–09 IE has been launched with a programme-based approach expanding it to 210 schools of 21 districts. A training manual has been prepared, though this has been found to be too theoretical (CERID, 2006c). A district level IE support team has also been formed to provide technical support to the schools. Orientation to teachers, SMCs and PTAs has been provided in those districts. Selected schools have also been provided with NRs 25,000 as a school environment reform grant. However, institutional constraints mentioned in an earlier chapter have to a larger extent held back the section from effectively implementing its activities.

<sup>29</sup> Performance based grants in the sum of USD 1,700 (approx.) to schools with the highest pass percentage in SLC is still implemented.

- Provision of primary level in-service teacher training scholarships to women from Dalit and other disadvantaged groups is also an effort towards ensuring gender and social inclusion in education. Though only 12 per cent of the training graduates from the first batch were found to be teaching (MOES/NCED, 2006), this kind of initiative if further modified and linked with teacher recruitment could be an effective measure to achieve the goal of gender and social inclusion in the education sector. But since this initiative was funded by TA as a project, there is no guarantee that the system would absorb it. Regarding the appointment of female teachers as well, some changes have been made in the policy. At the primary level if there are 3 positions one should be a female and if there are 5 positions two should be females.
- Facilities for disabled children have expanded. Expansion of Assessment Centres, an extra one and a half hours of examination time in SLC for physically disabled examinees, and provision of a helper with at least Grade 8 education to write in the SLC for blind examinees are some significant facilities. Additionally, use of the Braille script has recently been approved by MOES (Kantipur Daily, February 11, 2007).
- Preliminary work on mainstreaming religious schools has begun. MOES has initiated discussions with madrassas and Gumbas on the inclusion of the national curriculum in their education. MOES has already disbursed NRs 3000 to the religious schools but the DEOs have not sent any record of this to the centre (Kantipur Daily, January 7, 2007).
- A National Curriculum Framework for school education (Pre-primary to Grade 12) was prepared in 2005 by CDC as part of SESP. It is reported that the framework is soon to be approved by MOES. For the purpose of the framework development, curriculum and teaching materials were reviewed from Dalit, Janajati and gender perspectives. The analytical review of the textbooks of six core subjects from Grades 1 to 10 from Dalit perspectives concluded that attempts have been made to balance the caste perspectives but textbooks are not sensitive enough to the need of highlighting the importance of different caste and communities, the Dalit perspective is only sporadically touched, and some presentations are rather demeaning to certain communities rather than uplifting their dignity (National Dalit Commission, 2005). Two major findings regarding the teacher's guides revealed that they lacked specific suggestions regarding inclusiveness in their behaviour and classroom management in order to address the equity issues related to Dalit children (National Dalit Commission, 2005). Similarly, an analytical review of the textbooks of six core subjects of Grades 1 to 10 from an ethnic perspective concluded that rather than being geared towards the overall development of all children irrespective of ethnic origin the curricular materials are geared more towards promoting one language, one ethnicity, one religion and one region (NFDIN, 2005). The review of the curriculum of core subjects of Grades 1–12 from a gender perspective for the same purpose also revealed that though over the years progress has been made, gender disaggregated words and gender sensitive language in curriculum, and institutionalization of the curriculum review process, was still lacking (Ghimere-Niraula, 2004).
- Considering the recommendations of the reviews, the National Curriculum Framework embraced gender and social equity perspectives right from the vision. The guiding principles of the framework include an inclusive approach, mother language teaching/learning, opportunity for local need-based learning, a child centred development approach, focus on life skills, and alternative learning. All these have direct bearing on the equity issues persisting in school education. The framework is in the process of getting approval from MOES.
- Paying attention to the disparities in SLC performance and the recommendation made by the SLC study (2005), MOES is considering to make only five core subjects (Maths, Science, English, Nepali and Social Studies) mandatory for SLC examination. (Kantipur

Daily, January 28, 2007). Till 2006, the SLC examination covered both Grades 9 and 10 curricula, the coverage of which is quite extensive and heavy. Therefore from 2007 test papers covered the Grade 10 curriculum only.

- The gender and development unit of DOE is currently developing a resource book with practical checklist in the form of sheets for all levels of practitioners (policy, management, teacher training, NFE, curriculum development, examinations) to ensure gender equity in all areas.
- During the preparation phase of EFA 2004–09 in 2003, as a response to the recommendation of the gender audit of BPEP II, an extensive exercise was undertaken in order to prepare the personnel of MOES including district and school level stakeholders for gender mainstreaming in educational establishments (Sahavagi, 2004). The main activities of this exercise were a review of curricular materials of both the formal and non-formal sectors, a review of teacher training materials, orientation to different levels of MOES staff and preparation of training manuals. This was followed by the preparation of a girls' education strategy paper by DOE.
- UNESCO (2006) supported the preparation of indicators and tools to measure gender equality in education. This has not yet come out for public use. Regarding monitoring of gender equality, quantitative indicators and tools have advanced but qualitative indicators and approach are still not adequately developed. No systematic qualitative tool is available to supplement the quantitative tools. The above mentioned indicators and tools may fill this gap.
- A lower secondary and secondary level generic teacher training manual which is based on a social inclusion perspective has been developed.
- There has been curriculum development in different languages.
- Though initiated before EFA, Food for Education, a joint venture of WFP and MOES, have been providing material support in the form of edibles to individual students and their families of primary and lower secondary levels from districts identified as food unsecured. This has also tremendously helped in bringing and retaining children particularly girls in schools.

In terms of gender, many efforts have been made both within and outside the government system. A recently undertaken exercise on gender mapping in education by UNESCO (Acharya, 2006) identified the following good practices as well as issues in relation to gender equity and equality in education. One of the objectives of this exercise was to 'generate baseline information about the initiatives made in the education sector to achieve gender parity and equality' (p. 3) in the context of EFA 2004–09. Therefore activities and initiatives undertaken by major agencies (I/NGOs, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP, ILO, MOES/DOE) in the latter years of BPEP II and during EFA phase were reviewed.

- Plans, strategies and activities are available within MOES institutions to ensure gender equity and equality. But those plans, strategies and activities are hardly coordinated among the institutions.
- Abundant capacity building plans, strategies and approaches are available in relation to gender in education. Both I/NGOs and MOES institutions have their own framework, contents and delivery modes. But due to lack of a common frame for the approach to issues of gender in education, there is a possibility of duplication. MOES staff from central to school level have been covered by the training. But due to the absence of a reliable data base both within GO and I/NGO, what kind of training or capacity building activities were undertaken, who participated in them, and when, are not known and practitioners who were left out are still frequently encountered.

- Abundant resource materials are available for the use of education policy makers and practitioners. But they are scattered, not readily found and duplication is observed in materials development.
- Review and revision of school level curricular materials and teacher training materials are undertaken time and again. The revisions are done both by the GO and non-GO sectors either in the context of materials reform or in the context of specific research. These materials have been progressively made gender responsive. However, they still inadequately cover strategic interest as opposed to practical needs; curriculum review from gender and social inclusion perspectives is not institutionalized so it is undertaken on a project basis; and guidelines to curricular materials developers are still missing.
- Quite a large number of research and publications are available in relation to gender in education. However, most of them, though named under the banner of 'gender', concentrate on women and girls. The distribution of such researches and publications is also limited on one hand and the language used is English on the other. They are thus not accessible to the field/school level practitioners.
- The Gender Audit of BPEP II (2002), a landmark work sponsored by UNICEF, European Commission and DANIDA, informed many policy changes. It dovetailed with the capacity building exercise undertaken by UNICEF and Sahavagi (2004). The replacement of the Women's Education Section by the Gender Equality Development Section in DOE is also an outcome of the Gender Audit. UNICEF also carried out a gender audit of Parsa DEO, utilizing the outcomes while planning future activities. Though the recommendations made by the Gender Audit of BPEP II have not been fully implemented, demand to institutionalize such an exercise has been raised and recommended on many occasions.
- Regarding support to ensuring gender parity and equality in school education, both MOES and I/NGOS are on board. But which student is getting what and for how long the support is continued is hard to determine. The providers have not been able to link the support with the gender related issues, progress, quality education, etc.
- The number of female teachers is also an area which both MOES and I/NGOs are supporting. Though on a small scale, some I/NGOs are supporting the recruitment of a female teacher where disadvantaged children are concentrated.
- Regarding advocacy in matters related to gender in school education, emphasis is more on girls' increased enrolment. Practical needs are raised more than strategic interest in advocacy, and there is still a need for appropriate tools and/or a method of advocacy in the context of decentralized education management.
- Gender mainstreaming has been 'limited to hiring equal number of staff and incorporation of a few issues in training or materials' (p. 22). Field/school level practitioners have still not fully internalized the gender issues, and neither are they fully equipped to address the gender based issues and problems.
- Attempts have been made to network to ensure gender and social inclusion in education. Central level networks seem to be less functioning than district level networks. UNESCO has been attempting to revitalize the GENIA Network. However, the culture of networking for a common cause has yet to mature.

The above listed activities and changes show increased commitment, understanding and human capacity building at different levels. Reviews of activities and progress indicate that gender has received more attention than other issues of social exclusion. Moreover, the concern about exclusion is reflected more in relation to schools, i.e. children's access and retention and to some extent teacher composition. It remains to be seen how much practices (classroom practices, working culture, etc.) have changed and how much inequity related issues (access,

quality, learning achievement, social discrimination, untouchability, etc.) have been addressed due to the interventions. The issue of inclusion in the overall processes, i.e. at district and central level institutions, of the sector however has not gained adequate attention.

The availability of financial resources also has a direct bearing on changes or reform. At present more than 80 per cent of the EFA 2004–09 budget goes to teachers' salary so less than 20 per cent is available for non-salary recurrent and capital cost. In this situation reform initiatives are most likely to face resource constraints.

### 7. 3 Affective Factors

It is apparent from the previous discussions that multiple stakeholders have pushed the gender and social inclusion agenda in Nepal. Particularly in relation to gender, intellectuals through studies and presentations in different forums have created awareness and helped drive the agenda at central level. This kind of evidence-based argument prominently pushed the women's agenda. I/NGOs helped create movement at the ground level while gender experts and/or feminists created movement at the central level. This put tremendous pressure on the education sector for reform.

However, the same pressure has not been created with respect to Dalits and Janajatis. The welfare approach taken by I/NGOs at ground level could not draw much attention at the central level. Advocacy and basic service delivery remained the priorities of many I/NGOs for a long period of time. This could not create the intellectual critical mass among Dalits, Janajatis or disabled persons. As a result, the argument for inclusion began to be guided more by emotions and anecdotal evidence. This kind of approach could not adequately push the change and did not help in producing the role models which the women's movement succeeded in doing. Those who reached the top in professional and/or academic levels also tended to splinter, rather than advocating for the rights of Dalits as one solid force. This situation challenged the supporting agencies as well.

Regarding I/NGOs, the equity consideration is adequately employed at the micro level. The data collection and publication of inclusion related analytical reports of the programme areas are published. A trend to assign a particular individual as an inclusion expert or officer in agencies has begun (e.g. UNDP and Save the Children US). However, progress regarding inclusion at the institutional level is not at par with that at ground level. There have certainly been positive outcomes in terms of social inclusion, 'but the more it goes up the less inclusive we happen to be,' said an I/NGO staff member. For example, even in schools where partner NGOs are working, SMCs have not been inclusive enough. No change in terms of inclusiveness is observed at staff level in INGOs, partner NGOs or Child Development Committees. This can be supported by the study findings of INSEC and Save the Children US (2004). The study found only a very limited number of Dalits working in I/NGOs and bi/multilateral organizations. Therefore there is a lack of adequate role models to show the lower levels. On the positive side, the study revealed that when an organization deliberately makes its recruitment policy inclusive, the population of Dalit employees increases.

Fragmented approaches, incoherent programmes and policies, and the practice of making ad hoc decisions have also impeded the progress in relation to gender and social inclusion. The discussion so far indicates that the issues of social inclusion require a two-pronged approach.

One is reform in the initiatives and practice at all levels of the system. Another is the reform of institutional and/or legislative framework. One complements the other in addressing the issue of gender and social inclusion. For example, the Education Regulation and Community Forestry Regulation mandated representation of women in the SMC and Forest Users' Groups (FUG). This gradually brought changes at the ground level in terms of gender equality. The change, however, is more visible in FUG than in SMC because FUG is required to have at least 30 per cent women representation. Education Regulation only mandates SMC to include one woman, while Dalit, Janajati or other social groups' representation is not required.

It has been the experience of I/NGO personnel that they still have not been able to make inclusion a cross-cutting theme. Rather, it is still treated as a separate component. For example, Plan Nepal has an inclusion project. The project is doing well, but inclusion is the responsibility of all the programme areas in the opinion of a Plan Nepal staff member. In the experience of Save the Children Norway as well, programmes on conflict, disability, protection, etc. appeared piecemeal. Therefore inclusiveness is planned to be intensively employed as a cross-cutting approach in the future.

The above discussion indicates that interventions to address gender and social exclusion have been emerging from different forums. The best interest of all the agencies involved in education is to eliminate disparities in education. However, for example, viewing a multiply disadvantaged child from only one lens and supporting her/him on the basis of partial information/understanding is still a common practice. Strategies to increase access, enhance quality, retain children in school and provide non-discriminatory environment are almost non-existent. Provision of scholarships, which is considered a strategy, is rather an immediate relief approach. SWAp partners' tendency to address the issues in an uncoordinated and project-based approach has also been a concern. In this context absence of an overarching strategy to increase educational participation of excluded children, no guaranteed long-term support, and absence of consolidated effort and functional collaboration between and within agencies have also impeded the progress on one hand, and changes are either not visible or extremely slow on the other.

## 8. Lessons Learned and Ways Forward

### 8.1 Lessons Learned

Nepal's EFA 2004–09 programme to a considerable extent is built on initiatives previously implemented. Due to this and the necessity to utilize sector programmes to address the national agenda, EFA 2004–09 and SESP are both more based on national development plans. Therefore, though the basic premise of EFA 2004–09 is the Dakar Framework and the internationally identified EFA goals, the programmes and activities are responsive to the Tenth Development Plan (PRSP) (2002–07). With this background, the following are the major lessons learned.

#### 8.1.1 Impacts

- Systematic and adequate documentation about the development of the SWAp is not available to decipher the equity impact. Nevertheless, changes in gender and social inclusion are reflected in the available data despite years of armed conflict. The change is more visible in access of girls and disadvantaged children to school during BPEP II and after the implementation of EFA 2004–09.
- Understanding about social inclusion and activities to address the issues related to exclusion has also increased. The gender issue has received more attention both at central and school levels than other social exclusion related issues, though. This indicates that the SWAp has still not been able to adequately capture the complexity of social exclusion in education. This inadequate understanding of the scope and intent of the SWAp in relation to gender and social inclusion is also reflected in the incoherent policies, decisions and institutional arrangements. This is caused by a combination of lack of understanding about the magnitude and complexity of social inclusion; a tendency to respond to the pressure put by DPs and domestic interest groups without adequate and proper groundwork; incomprehensive or lopsided reform approach, and inadequate understanding of SWAp. Most importantly, the SWAp in education has languished because of the unstable political system and almost non-functioning governance.
- MOES/DOE cannot alone address the issues of gender and social exclusion in education. It can only give compensation to meet the direct cost of schooling which may not be enough. In this situation, initiatives determined and guided by MOES/DOE centre level mechanisms cannot comprehensively cater to the specific needs of in-school and out-of-school children and schools as a whole.
- As identified by Vaux, Smith and Subba (2006) in the case of EFA 2004–09, the issues 'do not arise from any particular failing of EFA principles but rather a systemic weakness in governance'. Thus systematically and collaboratively identifying, reaching and facilitating the education of 'hard to reach' children has been difficult to achieve.

#### 8.1.2 Design and content

- The available national policies, plans and legal frameworks formulated to ensure rights of the excluded groups have progressively influenced the EFA 2004–09 plans, programmes and provisions, starting with gender with gradual inclusion of caste and ethnicity dimensions. However Nepal EFA and SESP are *predominantly* guided by a national development agenda rather than a 'rights' perspective.

- With the urge to approach EFA goals individually, the plans were devised separately with little linkage with the overarching goal of equity and universal primary education. Though equity related issues are progressively captured in EFA 2004–09, inclusion remained as a separate component and initiatives like ECD and NFE could not be adequately mobilized to achieve universal access and quality in primary education. They are rather seen as competing components. Thus ‘mainstreaming’ concepts of equity and inclusion is relatively limited
- The EFA 2004–09 Core Document has been inadequate to act as a clear and coherent plan for the primary and basic education sector, or to guide prioritization and budgeting decisions. The absence of this fundamental feature of a SWAp (a coherent and costed policy framework for the sub-sector that covers *all* the major activities of the sub-sector) has led to confusion about joint priorities, and allowed for the continuation of many projects and initiatives that are off-budget and outside the SWAp.
- In SESP a more comprehensive and consolidated outlook regarding equity would have captured the equity issue in totality. Focus on poverty alone has missed the complex dynamics of gender and social exclusion.

### 8.1.3 Implementation process

- The development partners’, including INGOs’, role in pursuing the issues of disparity influenced the reform activities in EFA 2004–09 and SESP.
- Top-down structures for implementation of EFA and SESP have not encouraged ongoing participation and two way communication and accountability. With a fixed programme framework and budget allocation being handed down from the centre, the sense of responsibility of the system towards students and community has tended to weaken. This reinforces the upward accountability. Meanwhile, communities have felt ‘burdened’ with extra responsibilities, rather than genuinely empowered through greater decision-making power or sense of entitlement.
- Still the issues of social exclusion are not approached holistically. Thus an unbalanced approach to reform is applied. Examples of an unbalanced reform approach are school management handover to the SMCs without institutional or structural reform, name change of special needs education section without changing job description, NFE and Open Learning Division developing curriculum for open learning without dialoguing with each other, and revision of women’s literacy curriculum without simultaneously preparing the trainers and upgrading the facilitators’ qualification.
- There is a tendency among DPs, I/NGOs and domestic pressure groups to advocate single issues (e.g. disability, language) or even sub-sectors (e.g. ECD, NFE). Regardless of the importance of the issue or sub-sector, this tends to undermine progress towards a coherent and efficient evidence-based programme. This also indicates and explains DPs’ multiple voices as opposed to one voice which is essential in order to efficiently address inequity in education.

### 8.1.4 Consultation and participation of stakeholders

- EFA thematic report and NPA design processes were to a larger extent participatory and appeared to be more inclusive of different levels of stakeholders. The EFA 2004–09 design process was also fairly inclusive with the involvement of different levels of MOES. But SESP design processes were not as inclusive as those of EFA 2004–09. Extensive involvement of international and domestic consultants in the SESP design process minimized the ownership of the government.

- A mechanism or structure for ongoing consultation with and participation of parents, community members and students is not well functioning. As a result, for many parents school is an extra burden that they have to take on and is seen as a benefit for others, not for themselves or their children.
- Attitudes such as ‘... any benefit received by a child should be acknowledged with gratitude’ (Vaux, Smith and Subba, 2006, p. 27) have been formed partly because of upward accountability and partly because the SWAp are guided by a national development agenda and top down implementation approach rather than a ‘rights’ perspective.
- SIPs, DEPs and ASIP are conceived as major mechanisms as well as processes to ensure gender and social inclusion at the implementation level. But since they are all guided by fixed frames transported from the centre, and partly the products are tied to the grants eligibility criteria, they have merely become grant seeking tools. For example, schools are required to produce a SIP to be eligible for the government grant from DEO. DEOs are required to produce a DEP to be eligible to receive the grant from DOE, and DOE/MOES is required to produce ASIP for grant approval from the donors. The emphasis is therefore on product rather than on process. The supply driven approach of both EFA 2004–09 and SESP thus discourage the need for consultation with the stakeholders.
- Consultation with teachers is very important because they are the main channel for delivery of all the decisions and strategies. Inclusion of Teacher Union in different forums and discussions has begun but to a very limited scope. They are not consulted thoroughly even while making decisions that directly affect them.

### 8.1.5 Coordination and collaboration

- Gender and social inclusion are the interest and priority of most of the development partners including MOES/DOE and I/NGOs. This has resulted in positive influence in the reform activities in EFA 2004–09 and SESP. But poor coordination and collaboration in approaching social exclusion issues have weakened the SWAp in holistically achieving equity.
- Ownership of the host government and coordinated involvement of local partners and development agencies are important elements of a SWAp. In terms of the regular programmes, donor coordination is functioning better. However, ongoing issues, e.g. TA management and direct funding initiatives, and selection and involvement of foreign consultants, are unresolved. Likewise, foreign interns employed by UN agencies such as UNESCO and who are assigned to directly work and communicate with government system and local experts has also been an issue because most of them come with very little professional skills and knowledge of the context of Nepal.
- Within the MOES/DOE, capacity challenges and poor internal coordination constrains government ‘ownership’ of the programme and hampers effective implementation, at central, district and school levels. This particularly has affected the addressing of gender and equity issues, which require ‘understanding from the inside’, and the raising of sensitive cultural issues which by nature are cross-cutting, and necessitate a coherent and mainstreamed approach. Bureaucratic procedures or norms and development partners’ uncoordinated/fragmented support are partially responsible for this situation.
- In contradiction to the Paris Declaration, and in contrast to how many of the same DPs operate in other contexts, in Nepal most DPs remain ‘traditional’ in approach, maintaining their own procedures, projects, approaches and insisting on earmarking of funds and visible attribution.

### 8.1.6 Monitoring and evaluation

- Improvement has been made in data collection but MOES/DOE often relies on input based information collected and produced by MOES/DOE itself and on district level aggregated data rather than looking at school level data, which is the lowest delivery point of educational resources. District and school level information available from other sources is not adequately consulted partly because of the potential complexity that it may add to the implementation process.
- Disaggregated data (e.g. for caste, ethnicity, language, etc.) is also available. But beyond gender, there is not yet an agreed, usable classification system for collecting and analysing disaggregated data. Quantitative tools are inadequate and a systematic qualitative tool is absent. In order to understand and analyse the magnitude of social exclusion, school level data is not enough. Neither is quantitative information adequate.
- Teacher deployment is directly linked to the financial liability of the government. In order to adjust teacher positions and school mergers, an accurate database of district and sub-district level teacher–pupil ratios is crucial. However, this is still lacking.
- The focus has been on upward reporting, rather than for school and district level planning purposes that respond to local needs.
- Whilst national level indicators give some sense of progress, there are not yet tools for analysing the success (or otherwise) of specific policies and actions, on which to base further policy development and reform. The Joint Reviews also inadequately focused on successes and/or outcome

### 8.1.7 Funding mechanism

- There are attempts to channel more finances to school level, together with choices over how to use funds particularly in EFA. While this has the potential to improve equity, this depends of the accuracy of targeting mechanisms, mechanisms to ensure participation of poor and disadvantaged community members (individuals and groups) and mechanisms to improve accountability and transparency. The SESP frame is, however, more rigid and centrally controlled to the extent that school construction is managed by DOE and DEOs despite the presence of SMCs.
- The prioritization and budgeting process of MOES does not adequately use a specific ‘equity lens’ and there are no clear mechanisms for prioritizing one activity over another.
- The provision of matching fund is ‘equal treatment to unequal’, therefore is more likely to exacerbate inequity. Communities that cannot afford to accumulate matching fund are less likely to have ECD/PPC facility. The ECD/PPC enrolment data and its expansion in urban areas indicate that those who are already quite likely to enrol in primary schools are rather getting benefit from the extra years of pre-primary input. The drawback of matching fund is raised also in the case of the women’s income generation programme implemented by NFEC. The poorest women who are most likely to belong to the so-called lower caste groups are very unlikely to be able to produce the matching fund which is required to be eligible to receive 10,000 Nepalese rupees from NFEC.
- Targeted scholarships would reach the neediest children. But this has not adequately happened.
- ‘... Instead of being a fully flexible SWAp under government control, the EFA programme is closely tied to specific budgets. Donors are heavily involved in influencing the EFA programmes and to some extent see it as their own. This means the government can also portray the programmes as belonging to donors and thereby escape from accountability’

(Vaux, Smith and Subba, 2006, p. 35). Small initiatives implemented sporadically through direct funding and through other multilateral and bilateral agencies have made SWAps in education a conglomeration of projects rather than a comprehensive programme-based approach.

### 8.1.8 NFE

- NFE is not just a bridge to formal education nor is it a second chance education for 'hard to reach' children. NFE is a parallel system of education which has the potential to provide equitable quality education to all. But it is seen as a 'welfare' intervention for the poorest children and is under-funded and seen as 'second class'. Moreover, there is limited synergy and lesson-learning between the two systems.

### 8.1.9 Specific strategies and efforts

- Strategies adopted by EFA 2004–09 and SESP to ensure equitable access and quality education have helped improve access to some extent. But there is no definite evidence to argue that the improvement is caused by EFA 2004–09 or SESP alone. Improved quality includes a range of elements such as child centred teaching, to a healthy and protective school environment, to adequate teaching/learning resources, to facilitation for reducing disparities, to positive outcomes in relation to knowledge, skills and attitude at both the student and teacher level. Therefore strategies such as provision of scholarships, female teacher recruitment, construction of buildings, etc. are quality imperatives but not adequate measures.
- Despite some good individual efforts the strategies adopted so far to ensure equity at school level are rather loose programs with little or no linkage with outcome monitoring.
- Tendency to reform one aspect or one level extensively and ignore the others which are eventually affected by that reform initiative is prevalent. Example of the reform of women's literacy curriculum presented earlier justifies this finding.
- Efforts to ensure equity through TA and/or direct funding have been beneficial in addressing gender and social equity at different levels. But since most such activities are implemented in isolation and on a project basis, issues of sustainability and their linkage with the wider sector approach have been a concern. Such efforts also tend to divert the energy and time of staff members from the regular programmes.
- From a gender perspective, access to secondary level is more of a concern because many secondary schools are still not in reachable distance. As a result many girls are likely to be denied secondary level education.

### 8.1.10 Capacity building

- Capacity building, particularly in the area of gender and social inclusion, is undertaken through the EFA 2004–09 and SESP pools and direct funds and support from I/NGOs.
- Capacity building relating directly to equity is limited in coverage in terms of content and scale. The available human resource development personnel at the district and centre levels remain inadequately equipped for equity analysis. However, different levels (simple and sophisticated) and methods (quantitative and qualitative) of equity analysis exercises if included in training programmes would positively impact the planning and programming exercises.

- Schools are functioning under vast diversity in terms of student population, management efficiency, physical and human capacities, accountability and performance. But the approach to social inclusion has been 'one fits all'. Therefore most schools are not ready for the intended reform partly because they lack adequate financial and technical backup.
- The available human resource development personnel at the district and centre levels are inadequately equipped for equity analysis.
- Capacity building in NFE is comparatively very weak.
- Capacity building efforts are hardly linked to job performance and/or outcome.

## 8.2 Recommendations on Ways Forward

There is commitment to providing equitable quality education to all children. But providing access to the excluded groups to all levels of the sector, and reforming the institutional frame (e.g. structural, legal) in order to achieve it, is also equally essential from an inclusion perspective. With this assertion the present study examined the EFA 2004–09 and SESP basically from three angles. First, how the (sub) sector approach has been addressing issues of gender and social exclusion at school; second, what processes have been adopted for it; and third, how inclusive the overall sector is.

It has been observed that several factors influence changes in the structure and agency. Not one process or initiative therefore can be responsible, particularly in a situation where multiple factors affect gender and social exclusion. Consequently, various actors with different strategies are trying to address the issue of gender and social inclusion in education. In this situation, to improve the gender and social inclusion through SWAps demands diverse intervention and changes. In this respect the following key actions and ideas have been proposed.

### 8.2.1 Policy and strategy related

1. Improvement in equity requires informed and coherent policies. Therefore a fundamental task is to compile and analyse regional and national policies in relation to gender and social inclusion. Policy lessons drawn from this exercise can be adapted to develop a coherent equity related education policy framework. Whilst *overarching* policy objectives will, of course, relate to progress towards the international EFA goals, the future SSA plan should be designed around more readily implementable components, with clearer mechanisms for mainstreaming gender and equity concerns across the board.
2. Fragmented programmes and incentives alone are not sufficiently holistic, comprehensive and synergistic to ensure equity in access and quality. Opportunity needs to be taken of a SWAp approach to ensure a more coherent policy framework, with long term sector strategies that fully mainstream gender and equity concerns. Even if DPs' own procedures require earmarking of funds, these should be 'on budget' and managed within the MOES/DOE.
3. The process of inclusion must operate both at school and system levels. As stated earlier, there is commitment to providing equitable quality education to all children. But providing access to the excluded groups to all levels of the sector, and reforming the institutional frame (e.g. structural, legal) in order to achieve it, is also equally essential from an inclusion perspective. Therefore any intervention devised to address inequity at school or students' level and systems level requires a thorough review of the legal and other institutional mechanisms. If contradictions surface, then reform should partly focus on making the institutional frame consistent.

4. A mechanism to adjust the structural and institutional arrangements simultaneously would help address the issues of gender and social exclusion holistically. For example, if school management handover to the community was initiated together with provision to mitigate contradictions existing between the provisions of Education Regulation and LSGA the programme would have been more congruent. The schemes to ensure equity under the school management handover programme, if linked with the revision of the provision regarding the composition of SMC, would have added value to the initiatives implemented to address equity at school level.
5. Growing interest and spirit to ensure gender and social inclusion within EFA (primary sub-sector) has not reached other levels (lower secondary and up), particularly so for the caste, ethnicity and poverty dimensions of exclusion. It is therefore essential to move the efforts and initiatives made so far in the primary sub-sector to upper levels to comprehensively ensure gender and social equity across the entire education sector.

### 8.2.2 Coordination, collaboration and participation related

1. Neither EFA 2004–09 nor SESP is yet a fully functioning SWAp, for which ownership of the host government and coordinated involvement of local partners and development agencies are important elements. While EFA 2004–09 has comprehensive coverage of the basic education sub-sector (including ECD and NFE), there are significant weaknesses in terms of government ownership and leadership, partnerships and coordination, as well as the robustness of the overall programme framework and budgeting process. Indeed in many ways it still operates as a conglomeration of projects. Therefore considerable thought will need to be given to the institutional aspects, if the two current programmes (EFA 2004–09 and SESP) are to successfully evolve into the School Sector Approach.
2. Good donor coordination is one of the essential features of a SWAp. Therefore in order to ensure donor harmonization and horizontal linkage between similar initiatives, one single TA and/or direct funding steering committee can be formed. The responsibility of the steering committee can also be to establish functional collaboration and to ensure resource sharing with other equity related existing initiatives.
3. If the mutually agreed code of conduct were to be followed adequately the differences in direct funding and TA management could be minimized. Since the TA and/or direct funding steering committee is under the leadership of the Ministry the responsibility to make such support transparent and focused on priority areas also heavily lies on the Ministry.
4. It will be vital to develop deeper understanding of what is meant by a SWAp, focusing on the potential for accelerated sector progress, drawing on positive experiences from other countries (in many of which the same DP agencies are active). The Code of Conduct can be revitalized and examples from other countries from the region can be reviewed and adapted.
5. Extensive consultation with DOE/MOES while selecting international technical advisors would also help in identifying the most suitable human resources in the context of Nepal. Therefore it is better to allow the government to identify TA needs and priorities, lead writing of the TOR and approve the appointments with full access to CVs of the consultants etc. Meanwhile in order to strengthen institutional collaboration external evaluation is necessary of the interns who are hired by UN agencies and are in direct contact with the government system and the local experts.
6. Improvement in equity requires well coordinated institutional arrangements. Therefore an institutional audit is necessary of the education system. The institutional audit will review job descriptions, identify reporting structures and examine the horizontal linkages between sub-sectors, units or institutions and make recommendations for a more conducive structure for

effective sector management and coordination, including the effective cross-cutting of gender and equity concerns. This can guide any initiative to address exclusion within a School Sector Approach.

7. Answers to all the problems related to inequity in the education sector cannot be found within MOES/DOE. In some cases the issue of inequity can be better dealt with through other machineries than MOES/DOE. In this situation, initiatives determined and guided by MOES/DOE centre-level mechanisms cannot comprehensively cater to the specific needs of in-school and out-of-school children and schools as a whole. For example, if students are not coming to school on time due to unavailability of drinking water close to their house or they are not regular due to health problem. Therefore a simple but comprehensive account of the in-school and out-of-school barriers and potential line agencies that could assist in minimizing the barriers can be prepared and updated along with the ASIP. Schools can be oriented to perform similar tasks while preparing SIPs. At the central level NPC can be asked to assist in facilitating the support. At school level SMCs through the DEC can request the DDC (at present LDO) to seek collaboration from other line agencies and I/NGOs.
8. For strengthened functional coordination at the district level for example, the MOU signed between I/NGOs and MOES can include DDCs (at present Local Development Officers, LDOs) and DEOs to ensure functional collaboration at district level. The DEO personnel can then be utilized as resource persons in the intended projects. LDOs can ensure proper utilization of the processes and outcomes of the initiatives to improve DEPs. Similarly at the central level initiatives such as preparing pre-service teacher training graduates for Teacher Service Commission examination can best be combined with the programme designed to prepare women for Public Service Commission examination by the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare.
9. Not all the issues regarding gender and social exclusion can be foreseen and so require to be taken care of as they emerge. Therefore SWAp (now EFA 2004–09 and SESP; SSA in the future) frames need to be expanded and made more flexible. For example, development of sub-sector strategies (e.g. ECD, girls' education) and difficulties created by natural disaster or conflict can be included in the SWAp frame. Any support offered by the donors through direct funding and/or TA can follow the frame.
10. Inclusion of the Teacher Union in different forums and discussions has begun. This process if included within the SWAp frame can help to improve the success of the programmes. For example, creating consensus among MOES/DOE, the union and political parties to mitigate the issue of teacher redeployment is very essential. Similarly, quality enhancement, teacher regularity and teachers' accountability towards students and community cannot be ensured without teacher support. Therefore consultation and collaboration with teachers from the design phase throughout the implementation is essential in SWApS to improve equity in education.
11. The common notion that the supply will automatically create demand does not work unless the consumer is able to use the service and is convinced about the possible benefit. In the case of EFA 2004–09 and SESP, convincing parents/guardians and catering to their needs seem weak. As a result, for many parents school is an extra burden that they have to take on and is seen as a benefit for others not for themselves or their children. In this situation, extensive consultation with primary stakeholders and directly addressing their specific issues is crucial.
12. Had the local governments been functioning it would have been easier to collaboratively locate 'hard to reach' children and thereby address the equity related issues. Both a long term and transition plan and strategy is therefore needed to utilize as well as make district

level partners (DEC, DDC, Dalit Development Committee, NGOs) responsible for this task. Human and financial resources sharing may be required in doing so. The role of DOE and DEOs in this situation will best be technical support and supervision to ensure equity.

13. Internal coordination within the MOES/DOE system would reinforce the efforts made so far to attack the issue of inequity. If functional linkage is sought when allocating TA and directed funding, synergy could be created within the similar activities simultaneously implemented through different units/sections of DOE for accelerated improvement in social inclusion. Improved interaction, collaboration and synergy at the central level would avoid the danger of programme duplication and confusion at the district and school levels.

### 8.2.3 Monitoring and evaluation

1. Schools are at different stages of development in terms of physical infrastructure, human capacity and financial resources. But the approach to social inclusion has largely been 'one fits all'. In this situation multiple perspectives in approaching the issue of inequity are necessary.
2. In a situation where schools are not ready for intended reform a school level monitoring mechanism with strong technical human resource devolved to the community management would be more effective. Moreover strong monitoring and regulatory mechanisms could make schools more accountable in terms of equity and transparency. Therefore at the school level the RPs and school supervisors can be brought under a community managed RC with enhanced technical capacity. At district level DDC (at present LDO) can perform the monitoring and evaluation of education sector inputs. The success of any input made in achieving inclusion is measured by its outcome, therefore development partners' attention to equity results/outcomes would also help ensure inclusion at school level.
3. In order to understand and analyse the magnitude of social exclusion, school level data is not enough. Neither is quantitative information adequate. Therefore VEP development processes initiated by NFEC can be mainstreamed so that blanket approaches like non-discriminatory provision of matching fund and equal amount of stipend to all irrespective of their socio-economic circumstances can be avoided. In summary, vertical equity can be ensured.
4. MOES/DOE cannot reach everywhere. Therefore it is essential to consider the information provided by other sources to identify the 'hard to reach' children and thereby provide tailored services. However other available sources of information have not been well utilized, and the evidence base for policy making and prioritization of activities remains weak. In this situation reliance on other sources can be very useful. For example the news highlighted by the media in relation to disparity and exclusion can be followed up to improve access and quality in education. The same media can be asked to highlight the actions taken to mitigate the situation. This will warn other institutions and individuals about their actions/behaviour on one hand and motivate the media to investigate disparity and exclusion in the education sector on the other.
5. Authentic evidence of teacher shortage is urgently required based on which teacher positions could be adjusted and school mergers can also be planned.

### 8.2.4 Funding modality related

1. There is a common agreement about the need for financial devolution in order to empower the schools. However, while constraints regarding financial resource management are imposed, neither the aim of the SIP nor successful transfer of school management to the

community will be achieved. There is also a need to explore mechanisms for ensuring inclusion of socially excluded individuals and groups in school- and community-level planning processes, along with mechanisms for greater weighting of funding to schools serving the most disadvantaged communities.

2. Funds can be sent directly to the schools through the district office of FCGO (Financial Controller General's Office), and for transparency and accountability a statement of the grant received by each school can be posted at the VDC. MOES can facilitate an intensive joint consultation with MOF, Ministry of Local Development and the Teacher Union on this matter.
3. The prioritization and budgeting of MOES could be more inclusive if cost and benefit of fund allocation to any particular area is calculated from an equity perspective.
4. Provisions like matching grants adopted in ECD and NFEC should be revisited and fund allocation to the poor and underprivileged should be made more equitable.
5. Adequate compliance with the Paris Declaration would ease the rigidity seen in fund allocation modality.
6. Till now there is no record of school assets or property and its uses. A standard inventory form to record both fixed and movable capital of schools needs to be developed. School supervisors will fill out the form, which will then be updated every three years. This will help in the assessment of school needs and also make schools more accountable towards students and parents/guardians.

### 8.2.5 Material delivery related

1. In order to address equity, the supply chain also has to be reviewed. Delayed delivery of the reading materials in the case of both NFE and formal schools is persistent. Therefore the decentralization of grade five textbooks publication and distribution recently initiated can be mainstreamed in both the formal and NFE sectors.

### 8.2.6 NFE related

1. Given the fact that student enrolment and survival decrease in upper grades, NFE should be developed as system that is complementary to, and integrated with, the formal primary and upper level education.
2. NFE is not just a bridge to formal education nor is it a second chance education for 'hard to reach' children. Neither is it a welfare scheme for the poor or underprivileged. It is rather a system with the potential to offer education up to a higher level to anyone irrespective of her/his socio-economic background. Therefore a strong parallel NFE system will not only help address social exclusion but also support the overall educational development of the nation. This requires NFE to be made equivalent to formal education, with increased funding and strong institutional and human resource capacities from the centre to the district level.

### 8.2.7 Capacity building

1. The content and approaches of training manuals produced by different units of DOE/MOES, if made consistent, could avoid resource duplication. For example, GEDS and IE both invested separately in producing gender related training packages. Different levels (simple and sophisticated) and methods (quantitative and qualitative) of equity analysis exercises included in training programmes positively impact the planning and programming exercises.
2. Capacity development of NFE should get extra attention as it has the potential of providing opportunity to those who are already left behind and who are likely to be left behind.

### 8.2.8 Specific strategies and efforts

1. Congruent and simultaneous intervention is more effective because poverty, social discrimination in school, inadequate academic support, language difficulty and inadequately relevant curriculum push many children out of school.
2. Regarding scholarships, those who may not need monetary support are getting it but those who need such support are not getting adequate amounts. Therefore the amount requires revisiting because as of now the scholarship amount is not adequate even to meet direct costs.
3. Provision of scholarships would be more equitable if based on the principle of vertical equity. Moreover the gap in understanding observed about the intent of scholarships could be narrowed through communication and consultation with the stakeholders.
4. Well defined strategies to bring children to school, and ensure their survival and improved learning achievement, are required to address issues of inequity in a more consolidated manner.
5. Appropriate and conducive physical facility and infrastructure in school are crucial from an inclusion perspective. But, sad to say, schools are still functioning without sanitation facilities and often overlook the need to have ramps for wheelchair accessibility. From an equity perspective the physical planning section of DOE through DEO should ensure that schools (both private and community) while constructing and rehabilitating their buildings or classrooms build ramps and construct enough facilities. Meanwhile in urban areas the trend has been to construct 4/5 storey buildings with very limited outlets to get out of the building in times of emergency. Therefore school building norms, particularly in urban areas, have to be revisited and enforced with earthquake safety being the major concern.
6. In order to achieve equity in school education, alternative learning provisions, particularly for girls where secondary school is not in accessible distance, has to be a priority of SESP and the school sector approach.
7. Monetary incentives alone may not be sufficient to bring and retain girls and boys in school. Where there is food shortage, programmes like Food for Education can play a significant role to address inequity in education particularly caused by poverty and gender discrimination.

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## Annex Tables

**TABLE A1 Sex-wise enrolment and gender parity at primary level by social groups**

SOCIAL GROUPS	% OF GIRLS	% OF BOYS	GPI
Dalit	48.3	51.7	0.93
Janajati	49.3	50.7	0.97
All types of disability	45.0	55.0	0.82
Others	47.5	52.5	0.91
Nepal	48.3	51.7	0.94

Source: DOE Flash Report I, 2006

**TABLE A2.1 GER and NER by level and grade**

LEVEL		GER		NER	
		1995	2006	1995	2006
Primary	Total	114.1	138.8	67.5	87.4
	Girls	94.2	138.4	55.6	85.5
L. Secondary	Total	47.9	71.5	26.1	52.3
	Girls	36.2	65.4	18.9	47.8
Secondary	Total	31.6	56.7	17.3	34.7
	Girls	22.4	53.1	12	32.4

Source: DOE EMIS, and Flash Report I, 2006

TABLE A2.2 Enrolment (all levels)

INDICATORS	2002			2003			2004			2005		
	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS									
NER (Primary)	82.4	88.7	76.8	83.5	89.4	77.5	84.2	90.1	78.0	86.8	90.1	83.4
NER (Lower Secondary)	40.4	44.7	35.8	42.9	46.8	38.7	43.9	47.6	40.2	NA	NA	NA
NER (Secondary)	27.5	31.0	23.9	29.5	32.7	26.3	32.0	35.2	28.8	NA	NA	NA
GER (Primary)	118.4	127.1	109.4	126.7	136.0	117.1	130.7	137.0	124.2	145.4	148.8	141.8
GER (Lower Secondary)	57.5	63.4	51.2	60.0	65.2	54.3	80.3	86.4	73.9	76.0	84.0	68.2
GER (Secondary)	44.8	50.7	38.7	46.4	51.5	41.3	50.4	55.4	45.2	49.3	53.0	45.5

Source: DOE EMIS

TABLE A2.3 Share of enrolment at primary level by social groups (2006)

SOCIAL GROUPS	GIRLS	BOYS	TOTAL	% OF ENROLMENT IN TOTAL
Dalit	368,965 (48.3%)	395,243 (51.7%)	764,208	17.7
Janajati	810,233 (49.3%)	833,242 (50.7%)	1,643,475	38.0
Others	908,887 (47.5%)	1,004,145 (52.5%)	1,913,032	44.3
Nepal	2,088,085 (48%)	2,232,630 (52%)	4320715	100.0

Source: DOE Flash Report I

TABLE A3 Promotion, repetition and dropout rates by gender and grade (primary level), 1995–2005 (%)

GRADE	PROMOTION						REPETITION						DROPOUT					
	1995			2000			2005			1995			2000			2005		
	TOTAL	GIRLS	TOTAL GIRLS	TOTAL	GIRLS	TOTAL GIRLS	TOTAL	GIRLS	TOTAL GIRLS	TOTAL	GIRLS	TOTAL GIRLS	TOTAL	GIRLS	TOTAL GIRLS	TOTAL	GIRLS	TOTAL GIRLS
1	35.2	34.8	44.6	44.7	59	58.1	41.7	41.2	38.7	38.3	28.3	28.8	20.6	22.5	13.6	14.3	12.7	13.1
2	70.8	68.8	77.8	78.1	78.6	78.1	24.6	26.4	16.8	17	16	16.5	11	9.8	5.7	5.1	5.4	5.3
3	72.1	73.6	82.5	83.5	81	80.9	19.7	21.1	12.3	12.3	12.9	13	5.7	6.3	4.8	4	6.1	6
4	70.4	71.4	82.3	83.9	79.7	79.9	20.6	21.6	12.7	12.9	13.8	13.8	9.9	7.7	4.8	6.2	6.5	6.3
5	63.6	60.9	76.5	76.8	78.1	77.6	21.3	22.3	9	9.1	10.4	10.7	15.6	16.5	12.7	12.9	11.5	11.7

Source: DOE EMIS

TABLE A4.1 Promotion by gender and grade (Grades 6–10) (%) 1995–2005

GRADE	PROMOTION					
	1995		2000		2005	
	TOTAL	GIRLS	TOTAL	GIRLS	TOTAL	GIRLS
6	79.4	81.2	81.8	81.4	83.7	83.8
7	81.1	80	90.6	85.9	86.4	86.2
8	71.2	72.3	77.5	75.2	84.8	85.6
9	76.8	80.4	81.3	82.7	82.9	82.6
10	–	–	–	–	–	–
SLC pass rate	38.4	36.2	46.6	43.6	43.7	41.7

Source: DOE, 2005

TABLE A4.2 Promotion, repetition and dropout by gender and grade (Grades 6–10) (%), 2005/06

GRADE	PROMOTION			REPETITION			DROPOUT			SURVIVAL		
	GIRLS	BOYS	TOTAL	GIRLS	BOYS	TOTAL	GIRLS	BOYS	TOTAL	GIRLS	BOYS	TOTAL
6	77.4	72.0	74.6	17.0	16.2	16.6	5.6	11.8	8.9	46.1	34.0	39.2
7	85.3	84.5	84.9	13.0	12.3	12.6	1.7	3.2	2.4	43.0	29.2	35.1
8	74.6	72.9	73.8	19.8	17.4	18.5	5.6	9.7	7.7	42.1	28.2	34.1
9	71.3	71.2	71.2	19.2	15.1	17.1	9.5	13.7	11.7	39.1	24.8	30.8
10				15.4	11.3	13.4						

Source: TRSE II, 2006

TABLE A4.3 Enrolment at lower secondary level by social group

SOCIAL GROUPS	GIRLS	BOYS	TOTAL	% FROM TOTAL ENROLMENT	% OF GIRLS
Dalit	54404	68974	123378	9.5	41.1
Janajati	240497	261543	502040	38.6	47.9
Others	311696	364020	675716	51.9	46.1
Nepal	606597	694537	1301134	100.0	46.6

Source: DOE Flash Report I, 2006

TABLE A4.4 Enrolment at secondary level by social group

SOCIAL GROUPS	GIRLS	BOYS	TOTAL	% FROM TOTAL ENROLMENT	% OF GIRLS
Dalit	15036	20989	36025	5.3	41.7
Janajati	95699	107713	203412	29.9	47.0
Others	202481	237469	439950	64.8	46.0
Nepal	313216	366171	679387	100.0	46.1

Source: DOE Flash Report I, 2006

Table A5 Literacy and educational attainments by caste and ethnicity

CASTE/ETHNICITY	LITERACY RATE OF SIX YEARS AND ABOVE			GRADUATE AND ABOVE (PERCENT OF LITERATE)		
	MALE	FEMALE	BOTH SEXES	MALE	FEMALE	BOTH SEXES
<b>Upper Castes (1+4)</b>	79.5	55.9	67.5	7.7	2.1	5.3
<b>1. Hill Upper Castes (2+3)</b>	79.2	55.4	67.1	7.4	1.9	5.1
2. Brahman – Hill	<b>86.2</b>	<b>65.5</b>	<b>75.5</b>	<b>11.3</b>	<b>2.7</b>	7.5
3. Chhetri, Thakuri, Sanyasi	31.2	48.0	60.9	4.1	1.2	2.9
3.1. Chhetri	74.1	47.9	60.8	4.1	1.2	2.9
3.2 Thakuri	75.6	49.4	62.2	4.9	1.9	3.7
3.3 Sanyasi	73.9	48.8	61.0	3.7	1.1	2.6
<b>4. Tarai Upper Castes</b> Terai-Brahman, Rajput, Kayastha, Baniya, Marwadi, Jaine, Nurang, Bengali	83.0	63.8	73.9	11.	4.9	8.8
4.1 Terai-Brahman	80.6	59.6	70.6	11.5	3.5	8.3
4.2 Rajput	82.4	62.7	73.2	14.0	5.6	10.6
4.3 Kayastha	89.5	76.6	82.7	19.4	7.7	14.0
4.4 Baniya	79.0	55.5	68.0	4.5	2.3	3.7
4.5 Marwadi	93.7	64.6	89.2	18.5	9.5	14.5
4.6 Jaine	95.8	93.5	94.6	30.4	20.8	26.1
4.7 Nurang	85.1	65.0	75.5	11.1	3.6	8.0
4.8 Bengali	85.2	65.5	77.1	6.8	5.4	6.3
<b>5. Tarai Middle Castes (Include 6 to 9)</b>	55.5	26.3	41.7	3.4	0.9	2.6
6. Yadav	53.4	22.6	39.2	4.7	1.4	3.5
7. Teli, Klwar, Sudhi Sonar, Lohar	66.8	37.6	52.7	4.2	1.1	3.17
7.1 Teli	65.7	34.1	50.7	4.7	1.4	3.7
7.2 Klwar	74.7	46.2	61.5	4.4	1.5	3.4
7.3 Sudhi	71.6	42.9	58.7	7.7	1.5	5.6
7.4 Sonar	66.8	42.8	54.7	1.7	0.7	0.8
7.5 Lohar	53.2	23.0	38.6	0.9	0.6	0.8
8. Koiri Kurmi, Kanu, Haluwai, Hajam/Thakur, Badhe, Bahae, Rajbha	56.6	26.4	42.4	2.5	0.5	1.9
8.1 Koiri	58.2	27.4	43.6	2.5	0.2	1.9
8.2 Kurmi	51.5	21.5	37.5	2.2	0.4	1.7

CASTE/ETHNICITY	LITERACY RATE OF SIX YEARS AND ABOVE			GRADUATE AND ABOVE (PERCENT OF LITERATE)		
	MALE	FEMALE	BOTH SEXES	MALE	FEMALE	BOTH SEXES
8.3 Kanu	58.3	29.7	45.1	3.2	0.4	2.3
8.4 Haluwai	68.1	42.2	55.9	3.6	1.1	2.7
8.5 Hajam/Thakur	56.8	25.0	42.1	2.6	0.6	2.1
8.6 Badhae	56.4	23.7	41.3	1.7	0	1.3
8.7 Rajbhar	54.0	25.2	40.6	1.1	0	0.9
9. Kewat, Mallah, Nuniya, Kumhar, Kahar, Lodha, Bing/Binda, Bhediyar, Mali, Kamar, Dhunia	40.4	15.1	28.4	1.3	0.7	1.1
9.1 Kewat	47.8	19.2	34.2	2	0.7	1.7
9.2 Mallah	35.2	13.0	24.5	0.5	1.8	0.8
9.3 Nuniya	31.3	10.3	21.5	0.4	0	0.3
9.4 Kumhar	49.6	19.9	35.7	2.6	0.3	2.0
9.6 Kahar	46.2	16.5	32.4	0.3	0	0.2
9.7 Lodha	32.4	8.7	21.5	0.6	1.7	0.8
9.8 Bing/Binda	20.4	8.3	14.6	0.8	0	0.6
9.10 Bhediyar	44.5	17.1	31.8	0.7	0	0.5
9.11 Mali	48.9	17.7	34.1	2.3	0	1.8
9.12 Kamar	28.5	7.3	18.5	0	0	0.0
9.13 Dhunia	18.4	0.0	9.4	0	0	0.0
<b>Janajatis (10+26)</b>	<b>64.3</b>	<b>43.1</b>	<b>53.6</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>2.0</b>
<b>10. Hill Janajatis (11+14)</b>	<b>66.4</b>	<b>46.4</b>	<b>56.2</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>2.2</b>
<b>11. Newar/Thakali</b>	<b>82.0</b>	<b>62.6</b>	<b>72.2</b>	<b>7.2</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>5.8</b>
12. Newar	82.0	62.6	72.1	7.2	4.1	5.8
13. Thakali	83.1	63.4	72.6	4.4	2.1	3.3
<b>14. Other ( 25 to 35)</b>	<b>62.3</b>	<b>42.3</b>	<b>52.1</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>1.6</b>
15. Magar	69.0	47.3	57.7	1.3	0.6	1.0
16. Tamang	52.1	31.9	42.0	0.8	0.3	0.6
17. Rai	68.1	49.9	58.7	1.9	0.6	1.4
18. Gurung	67.3	49.0	57.5	1.8	0.9	1.4
19. Limbu	69.9	50.1	59.6	1.7	0.8	1.3
20. Sherpa	57.9	33.6	45.8	1.4	1	1.2
21 Bhote, Walung, Byansi, Hyolmo	49.5	29.8	40.0	0.0	0.1	2.0

CASTE/ETHNICITY	LITERACY RATE OF SIX YEARS AND ABOVE			GRADUATE AND ABOVE (PERCENT OF LITERATE)		
	MALE	FEMALE	BOTH SEXES	MALE	FEMALE	BOTH SEXES
21.1 Bhote	45.4	25.5	35.9	2.3	0	1.5
21.2 Walung	44.3	26.5	35.5	0	0	0.0
21.3 Byansi	84.0	56.6	7066.0	8.9	0	5.4
21.4 Hyolmo	67.2	65.9	66.3	0	0	0.0
22 Bhujel, Kumal, Sunuwar, Baramu, Pahari, Adivasi Janajati	55.9	35.8	45.7	0.7	0.2	0.5
22.1 Bhujel	64.4	43.4	53.7	0.9	0.2	0.6
22.2 Kumal	56.2	33.9	44.8	0.6	0.1	0.4
22.3 Sunuwar	45.6	27.5	36.7	0.7	0.9	0.8
22.4 Baramu	52.4	40.1	45.7	0	0	0.0
22.5 Pahari	51.8	33.3	42.6	0.9	0	0.6
22.6 Adivasi Janajati	56.3	38.6	47.1	0	0	0.0
23. Yakkha, Chhantel, Jirel, Darai, Dura	69.8	49.3	58.9	1.2	0.0	0.6
23.1 Yakkha	67.9	51.0	58.9	1.9	0	1.0
23.2 Chhantel	71.2	48.8	58.9	1.2	0	0.7
23.3 Jirel	72.1	48.5	59.9	0.8	0	0.5
23.4 Darai	66.5	47.3	56.5	0.8	0	0.5
23.5 Dura	80.6	50.6	64.0	0.8	0	0.5
<b>24. Majhi, Danuwar, Thami, Lepcha</b>	<b>47.4</b>	<b>27.5</b>	<b>37.4</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.3</b>
24.1 Majhi	45.4	26.6	36.0	0.3	0	0.2
24.2 Danuwar	51.2	29.2	40.0	1	0	0.6
24.3 Thami	45.4	25.2	35.3	0	0	0.0
24.4 Lepcha	44.3	33.6	39.3	1.6	0	0.9
<b>25. Bote, Raji, Hayu, Raute, Chepang, Kusunda</b>	<b>37.3</b>	<b>29.8</b>	<b>28.7</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.2</b>
25.1 Bote	49.6	28.9	38.9	0.6	0	0.4
25.2 Raji	52.2	21.3	35.4	0	0	0.0
25.3 Hayu	54.3	21.7	38.1	2.3	0	1.6
25.4 Raute	57.7	18.6	39.6	0	0	0.0
25.5 Chepang	34.0	18.1	26.3	0.2	0	0.1
<b>26. Terai Janajatis (27 to 30)</b>	<b>57.7</b>	<b>31.5</b>	<b>44.8</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>1.0</b>

CASTE/ETHNICITY	LITERACY RATE OF SIX YEARS AND ABOVE			GRADUATE AND ABOVE (PERCENT OF LITERATE)		
	MALE	FEMALE	BOTH SEXES	MALE	FEMALE	BOTH SEXES
27. Tharu	59.5	33.3	46.6	1.4	0.2	1.0
28. Dhanuk	48.1	18.5	34.1	2.8	0.4	2.2
<b>29. Rajbansi, Tajpuriya, Gangai, Dhimal, Meche, Kisan, Munda</b>	<b>62.8</b>	<b>35.4</b>	<b>49.1</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.6</b>
29.1 Rajbansi	62.6	35.1	49.0	0.8	0.2	0.6
29.2 Tajpuriya	62.1	29.6	45.7	1.1	0	0.8
29.3 Gangai	62.3	32.1	47.5	0.9	0	0.6
29.4 Dhimal	67.5	44.1	55.6	0.8	0	0.5
29.5 Meche	65.2	48.9	56.7	0	0	0.0
29.6 Kisan	40.0	24.9	32.0	0	0	0.0
29.7 Munda	60.9	34.1	48.6	5.1	0	3.4
<b>30. Santhal, Dhangad/Jhangad, Koche, Pattharkatta/Kusbadiya</b>	<b>36.9</b>	<b>16.8</b>	<b>26.9</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>1.5</b>
30.1 Santhal	38.8	20.0	29.5	3	1.5	2.5
30. 2 Dhangad/Jhangad	34.8	13.9	24.4	0.4	0.6	0.5
30.3 Koche	43.5	10.1	26.5	0	0	0.0
30. 4 Pattharkatta/ Kusbadiya	19.4	7.7	13.8	0	0	0.0
30.5 Kusunda	51.7	0.0	27.0	0	0	0.0

Source: Based on 2001 Population Census. Extracted from Sahavagi, 2004

**TABLE A6 Regional disparity in budget allocation**

REGIONS	2002-03	2003-04
Far Western	15.7%	12%
Mid Western	15.0%	17%
Western	19.6%	21%
Central	29.4%	26%
Eastern	20.4%	24%

Original source: DOE 2003: 28-29; DOE, 2003a: 41

Source: Sigdel, 2005

TABLE A7 Distribution of caste/ethnic groups of people by development regions

CASTE/ ETHNICITY	EASTERN DEVELOPMENT REGION	CENTRAL DEVELOPMENT REGION	MID WEST DEVELOPMENT REGION	WESTERN DEVELOPMENT REGION	FAR WEST DEVELOPMENT REGION	NEPAL
<b>Hill/Terai B/C+</b>	<b>17.9</b>	<b>27.6</b>	<b>21.3</b>	<b>15.8</b>	<b>17.3</b>	<b>100</b>
Hill B/C+	17.4	26.4	21.7	16.4	18.0	100
Terai B/C+	27.0	47.0	14.3	6.0	5.7	100
<b>Terai Middle Caste</b>	<b>24.3</b>	<b>54.4</b>	<b>15.2</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Dalits</b>	21.2	26.5	24.5	14.8	13.0	100
<i>Hill Dalit</i>	15.6	16.7	30.4	20.6	16.8	100
<i>Terai Dalit</i>	29.8	41.5	15.5	5.9	7.2	100
<b>Janajatis</b>	<b>27.8</b>	<b>36.7</b>	<b>19.7</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>100</b>
Hill Janajatis	26.9	42.4	22.1	7.4	1.2	100
<i>Newar/Thakali</i>	15.1	70.4	12.3	1.8	0.6	100
<i>Other Hill Janajatis</i>	29.8	35.7	24.4	8.8	1.3	100
Terai Janajatis	30.7	17.9	11.8	21.3	18.3	100
<b>Religious Minorities</b>	<b>22.4</b>	<b>46.9</b>	<b>19.8</b>	<b>10.3</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>100</b>
Others	41.3	24.5	9.7	4.5	20.0	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>23.3</b>	<b>35.1</b>	<b>20.1</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: DEVA (Development Associates for Rural and Regional Development), 2003  
(based on Population Census Vol. 1 & 2, Central Bureau of Statistics, 2002)

TABLE A8 Status of selected EFA indicators

SN	INDICATORS	2002			2003			2004			2005		
		TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS									
1	Gross Enrolment Rate of Early Childhood / Pre School	19.8	22.0	17.6	19.9	-	-	39.4	41.4	37.3	66.6	73.1	69.9
2	Percentage of New entrants at Grade 1 with ECD	9.6	9.8	9.4	13.7	13.5	13.9	10.9	11.1	10.7			
3	Gross Intake Rate at Grade 1	101.3	107.0	95.3	117.1	125.4	108.4	125.9	131.7	119.8	258.8	262.9	260.9
4	Net Intake Rate at Grade 1	74.0	77.3	70.7	76.1	79.7	72.8	-	-	-	129.4	127.6	128.5
5	Gross Enrolment Rate (Primary)	118.4	127.1	109.4	126.7	136.0	117.1	130.7	137.0	124.2	141.8	148.8	145.4
6	Net Enrolment Rate (Primary)	82.4	88.7	76.8	83.5	89.4	77.5	84.2	90.1	78.0	84.2	88.3	86.3
7	Percentage of Gross National Product channelled to Primary education sub-sector	2.0	-	-	1.9	-	-	2.0	-	-			
8	Percentage of Total Education Budget channelled to Primary education sub-sector	60	-	-	60	-	-	60	-	-			
9	Percentage of teachers with required qualification and training	-	-	-	17.4	-	-	30.5	-	-			

SN	INDICATORS	2002			2003			2004			2005		
		TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS									
10	Pupil Teacher Ratio	35.7	-	-	35.8	-	-	39.7	-	-	-	-	-
11	Repetition Rate:												
11.1	Grade 1	36.8	36.9	36.6	34	34.2	33.7	NA	-	-	-	-	-
11.2	Grade 5	11	10.9	11.1	13.5	13.3	13.8	NA	-	-	-	-	-
12	Survival rate to Grade 5	67.6	66.1	69.4	59.7	59.3	60.2	76.2	72.4	80.6	-	-	-
13	Coefficient of Efficiency	57.2	57.0	57.4	NA	-	-	NA	-	-	-	-	-
14	Literacy Rate*												
14.1	Age Group 15-24	70	-	-	70	-	-	70	-	-	-	-	-
14.2	Age Group 6+ years	54	-	-	54	-	-	54	-	-	-	-	-
15	Adult Literacy Rate (15+ years)	48	-	-	48	-	-	48	-	-	-	-	-
16	Literacy Gender Parity Index (15+ years)	0.6	-	-	0.6	-	-	0.6	-	-	-	-	-

\*Literacy rate is based on 2001 Census

TABLE A9.1 Population, total enrolment and GER in ECD/PPC by region

ECOLOGICAL ZONE	3-4 YEARS POPULATION			NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN ECD/PPC			GER			GPI IN GER
	GIRLS	BOYS	TOTAL	GIRLS	BOYS	TOTAL	GIRLS	BOYS	TOTAL	
Mountain	47988	49881	97868	17880	18179	36059	37.3	36.4	36.8	1.0
Hills	237695	255402	493097	91147	96828	187975	38.3	37.9	38.1	1.0
Valley	30615	33459	64074	39507	42509	82017	129	127	128	1.0
Tarai	331465	351906	683371	116355	131577	247933	35.1	37.4	36.3	0.9
Nepal	647763	690647	1338410	264890	289094	553983	40.9	41.9	41.4	1.0

ECOLOGICAL ZONE	SHARE OF POPULATION			SHARE OF ENROLMENT			GPI IN ENROLMENT		
	GIRLS	BOYS	TOTAL	GIRLS	BOYS	TOTAL	GIRLS	BOYS	TOTAL
Mountain	7.4	7.2	7.3	6.7	6.3	6.5			1.0
Hills	36.7	37.0	36.8	34.4	33.5	33.9			0.9
Valley	4.7	4.8	4.8	14.9	14.7	14.8			0.9
Tarai	51.2	51.0	51.1	43.9	45.5	44.8			0.9
Nepal	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0			0.9

TABLE A9.2 Number of children in ECD/PPC by social groups

STUDENTS	NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN ECD/PPC				PERCENTAGE SHARE ON NATIONAL LEVEL		
	TOTAL	DALIT	JANAJATI	OTHERS	DALIT	JANAJATI	OTHERS
Girls	264890	40364	109711	114815	15.2	41.4	43.3
Boys	289094	42463	118199	128431	14.7	40.9	44.4
Total	553983	82827	227910	243246	15.0	41.1	43.9

Source: Flash Report I, 2006

TABLE A10 Strategies for access and quality in Primary Education

STRATEGIES FOR ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION	STRATEGIES FOR QUALITY IN PRIMARY EDUCATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Strategies:</b> Parents of deprived and disadvantaged children will be assisted, reducing direct and indirect cost of education. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Activities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Scholarship for all Dalits</li> <li>■ Scholarship for 50% girls</li> <li>■ Scholarship for Martyrs' Children</li> <li>■ Special Scholarship programme for Karnali Zone</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>■ <b>Strategies:</b> Disadvantaged communities will be targeted for assistance in addressing the opportunity cost for schooling. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Activities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Establishment of Resources classes</li> <li>■ Establishment of Assessment Classes</li> <li>■ Scholarship for Disabled children according to categories</li> <li>■ Support for street children</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>■ <b>Strategies:</b> Inclusive education will be further developed and scaled up to a national level during the programme period in order to increase access of children from marginalized groups.</li> <li>■ <b>Strategies:</b> New and improved scholarship and incentive programmes in schools, especially for girls and children from disadvantaged groups, will be tested, adopted and scaled up accordingly as per the recommendations of impact evaluation study of the currently existing scholarship schemes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Strategies:</b> In order to achieve gender parity, enough attention will be paid to make special provision for girls, children with disabilities, as well as for female teachers while constructing schools. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Activities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Provision of female teachers according to the teachers' position at school, ranging from minimum one to maximum three</li> <li>■ Priority has been given to construction in those schools where the enrolment of girls and Dalits is high</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>■ <b>Strategies:</b> Gender sensitive curriculum and text materials will be produced, and teacher-training packages will be gender sensitized.</li> </ul>

STRATEGIES FOR ACCESS TO PRIMARY EDUCATION	STRATEGIES FOR QUALITY IN PRIMARY EDUCATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Strategies:</b> literacy and non-formal classes for adults and children.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Activities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ expansion of community learning centres</li> <li>■ income generation</li> <li>■ need based literacy programmes</li> <li>■ alternative school programmes</li> <li>■ devise HRD plan</li> <li>■ VEP</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

TABLE A11 Strategies for access and quality in Secondary Education

STRATEGIES FOR ACCESS TO SECONDARY EDUCATION	STRATEGIES FOR QUALITY IN SECONDARY EDUCATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Develop equitable access through targeted interventions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Activities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Construction of hostels for female trainers</li> <li>■ Construction of remote mountain hostels</li> <li>■ Scholarship to 60,000 secondary level students (66% will be girls)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Improving learning environment:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Activities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Construction of 150 schools in 10 PID districts</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>■ <b>Improving curriculum and assessment:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Activities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Developing curriculum framework</li> <li>■ Capacity building in curriculum and assessment</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

TABLE A12 Scholarships/incentives schemes provided by different agencies

NAME SCHEME	TYPE	RECIPIENTS	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	AMOUNT	PROVIDER
Scholarships for children with disabilities	Monetary support	Individual students	Different level of disabilities, ethnic minorities and girls	Rs.10,000, 5000, 3000 and 500 as per the grade of disabilities	HMGN
Booster Scholarship	Monetary support	Individual students	First son or daughter of those parents who were excluded from primary education	Rs.500 per student for the first year of his/her schooling	HMGN
Primary School Scholarship	Monetary	Individual students	All Dalit students and 50% of poor students	Rs.350 per student per year	HMGN
Girl Student Scholarship	Monetary	Individual students	50% of girls students of 6–10 years' age group studying at primary level	Rs.350 per student per year	HMGN
Lower Secondary/ Secondary Full Scholarship	Monetary	Individual students & school	Girls, ethnic minorities, backward castes, students without having any other scholarships, prioritized school	Rs.1700 per student per year. However, only Rs.1000 is given to the student whereas Rs.700 is separately granted to the school to make necessary arrangement of learning to the same student	HMGN
Lower Secondary/ Secondary Freeship Scholarship	Monetary support	Individual students	The same criteria as of the previous one except for those who are studying at grade 6 and 7	Rs.700 per head per year	HMGN

NAME SCHEME	TYPE	RECIPIENTS	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	AMOUNT	PROVIDER
Feeder Hostel Scholarship	Monetary support	Individual students	Girls, remote districts, without having schools near home, backward community	Rs.12,000 per head per year living in the hostels of remote districts; Rs.1000 per head per year living in the hostels of other than remote districts	HMGN
Scholarship for oppressed and Dalits	Monetary support	Individual students	Boys and girls of Dalits community studying from grade 6–10.	Rs.500 per head per annum	HMGN
Scholarship for martyrs' children	Monetary support	Individual students	Daughters and sons up to the second generation, studying in recognized teaching institutions, no multiple scholarships		HMGN
GIP	Material support	Mothers	Girls with 80% of attendance	2 litres of vegetable oil per month	WFP
Mid-day meal	Material support	Schools	Grades 1–5/1–8 students	4 litres of vegetable oil and fortified blended food	WFP
Scholarship for girls	Monetary support	Individual students	Six PARHI project districts	Rs.350 per student per year	UNFPA
Incentive for disadvantaged children	Material support	Individual students	15 DACAW districts, OSP graduates and regular school going children	Yearly, need based	DACAW/ UNICEF
Scholarship for girls	Monetary support	Parents	Regular girl students of public schools in Surkhet and Doti districts; and girl students who pass end of the grade tests	Rs.3000 per year (Grades 1–8), Rs.5000 (Grades 9–10)	DDC*

\* This scholarship scheme is funded by DANIDA. This was initially initiated under Decentralization Action Support Unit of DANIDA  
Source: Acharya, S. and Luitel, B. C. (2006)

TABLE A13 A comparative picture of the status of FSP programmes in various places

THEMES	KATHMANDU	MORANG	KASKI
<b>Need</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Children of landless migrants</li> <li>-Engaging labor works, including household chores</li> <li>-Unable to manage the cost for learning materials/stationeries and fees in formal schools.</li> <li>-Unschoolled, dropout and irregular students of formal school</li> <li>-Janajati</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Children of landless migrants and working class children</li> <li>-Engaging labour works, including household chores</li> <li>-Dalit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Children from poor socio-economic status</li> <li>-Dalit</li> <li>-Irregular students of formal school</li> <li>-Children of landless migrants.</li> <li>-Distance of formal school is not easily accessible</li> </ul>
<b>Composition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Socially disadvantaged (Dalit, Janajati, ...)</li> <li>-Labour workers</li> <li>-Students from mother school</li> <li>-8–14 years of age</li> <li>-Boys and girls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Socially disadvantaged (Kamat, Sahani, Paswan, Mandal, ...)</li> <li>-Students from mother school</li> <li>-8–14 years of age</li> <li>-Boys and girls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Children from mother school children</li> <li>-Grade 5 completers</li> <li>-Married girls</li> <li>-Boys and girls</li> <li>-8–14 years of age</li> <li>-Socially disadvantaged (Gandharva)</li> </ul>
<b>Participants selection criteria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Poor economic condition</li> <li>-Not able to afford formal schooling</li> <li>-Compelled to labour</li> <li>-Priority to girls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Out of school children</li> <li>-Poor economic condition</li> <li>-Not able to afford formal schooling</li> <li>-Compelled to labor</li> <li>-Priority to girls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Poor economic condition</li> <li>-Not able to afford formal schooling</li> <li>-Compelled to labour</li> </ul>
<b>Venue selection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-DEO determines the area</li> <li>-NGO decides the Tole</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-DEO determines the area</li> <li>-NGO decides the Tole</li> <li>-No public place for classroom</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-DEO determines the area on the request of mother group</li> </ul>

THEMES	KATHMANDU	MORANG	KASKI
<b>Facilitator identification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Advertisement by NGO/sometimes selection by NGO</li> <li>-Selection through interviews</li> <li>-Recommendation to DEO</li> <li>-DEO appoints</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Appointment by DEO</li> <li>-Recommendation by NGO</li> <li>-Sometimes volunteer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Appointment by DEO</li> <li>-Recommendation by mother group</li> </ul>
<b>Qualification of facilitator</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-SLC to B.ED</li> <li>-15 days' induction training</li> <li>-5 days training by DE Office</li> <li>-2 days training by JICA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-SLC</li> <li>-15 days' induction training</li> <li>-5 days training by DE Office</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-SLC</li> <li>-15 days' induction training</li> <li>-5 days training by DE Office</li> <li>-Newly replaced not trained</li> </ul>
<b>Adequacy of implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Inadequate training to deal with highly heterogeneous students</li> <li>-Not enough to teach all subjects of grades 1–5 integrated.</li> <li>-Very difficult for teachers to conduct classes</li> <li>-Lack of supportive environment</li> <li>-Training not sufficient</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-No monitoring and feedback</li> <li>-Lack of conceptual clarity among management committee and facilitators</li> <li>-Irregularity of students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Inadequate training to deal with highly heterogeneous students</li> <li>-Not enough to teach all subjects of grades 1–5</li> <li>-Irregularity of students</li> <li>-Lack of supportive environment</li> </ul>
<b>Operating time</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-4 hours a day</li> <li>-Morning shift</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-2–3 hours a day</li> <li>-Morning and evening shift</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-2–4 hours a day</li> <li>-Morning and evening shift</li> </ul>
<b>Availability of materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-NFEC textbooks used for regular classroom available</li> <li>-DEO provides textbooks and stationeries</li> <li>-Not available in time</li> <li>-Textbooks not according to difficulty level of the age groups, too difficult</li> <li>-Gap in vertical alignment of the textbook</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Textbooks available in time</li> <li>-Materials were available but not sufficient</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Textbooks were available but stationeries were not available sufficiently</li> </ul>

THEMES	KATHMANDU	MORANG	KASKI
<b>Teaching–learning process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Lack of planning and preparation</li> <li>-Classroom environment is not supportive</li> <li>-No activities, only lecture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Just as coaching/tuition class in the perception of parents and children</li> <li>-It is difficult to say they are learning from school or FSP classes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-No child friendly method</li> </ul>
<b>Attendance pattern</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-60 percent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Most of the students were regularly attending in the attendance record but the class has not been conducting regularly in the season of harvesting</li> <li>-Children were self motivated to come in tuition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Most of the students were regularly attending in the attendance record but the class has not been conducting regularly</li> </ul>
<b>Student assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Continuous assessment but no records</li> <li>-Final exam by DE Office</li> <li>-Questions from DE office</li> <li>-Conducted by NGO</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-At the end of the year</li> <li>-Questions prepared by mother school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-At the end of the year</li> <li>-Questions prepared by mother school</li> </ul>

Source: Lamichhane, S. P. and Wagley, M. P. (2007).

TABLE A.14 A comparative picture of the status of SOP programmes in various places

THEMES	KATHMANDU	MORANG	KASKI
<b>Need</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Children of landless migrants</li> <li>-Unable to manage the cost for learning materials/stationeries and fees in formal schools.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Children of landless migrants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Poor socio-economic status (Dalit)</li> <li>-Irregularity of students to formal school</li> </ul>
<b>Composition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Socially disadvantaged</li> <li>-Age from 4–10</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Socially disadvantaged</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-7–9 years of age</li> <li>-Boys and girls</li> <li>-Socially disadvantaged (Dalit)</li> </ul>
<b>Participants selection criteria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Compelled to labour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Poor economic condition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Poor economic condition</li> </ul>
<b>Venue selection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Determined by the DEO through RP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Determined by the DEO through RP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Determined by the DEO through RP</li> </ul>
<b>Facilitator identification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Advertisement by NGO/sometimes selection by NGO</li> <li>-Selection through interviews</li> <li>-Appointment by DEO</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Appointment of facilitator by DEO</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Appointment of facilitator by DEO on recommendation of VDC and Mother School</li> <li>-Somewhere the facilitator was the head teacher of SOP class conducted school</li> </ul>
<b>Qualification of facilitator</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-SLC pass</li> <li>-Training induction 17 days</li> <li>-5 days' English teaching for SOP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-SLC pass</li> <li>-Training induction 17 days'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-SLC and IA</li> <li>-20 days training</li> </ul>
<b>Adequacy of implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Inadequate training to deal with highly heterogeneous students</li> <li>-Not enough to teach all subjects of grades 1–5 integrated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Inadequate training to deal with highly heterogeneous students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training not sufficient about teaching methods and assessment process</li> <li>-Difficult to understand term and terminology of training package</li> </ul>

THEMES	KATHMANDU	MORANG	KASKI
<b>Operating time</b>	-4 hours/day -Afternoon	-4 hours/day -Operation time and shift (day) determined by the rule of formal school/mother school	Duration of the programme determined by the DEO/NFEC -Operation time and shift (day) determined by the rule of formal school/mother school
<b>Availability of materials</b>	-TG not available -Books available -Textbooks not according to difficulty level of the age groups, too difficult	Textbooks available but stationeries not sufficient	Textbooks available but stationeries not sufficient
<b>Teaching learning process</b>	-Lack of planning and preparation -Classroom environment is not supportive -No activities, only lecture	-Lack of planning and preparation -No child friendly method	-No child friendly method
<b>Attendance pattern</b>	-About 50 percent	-About 50 percent -Irregular	-Almost regular
<b>Student assessment</b>	-Written final exam as per the rule of mother school	-Written final exam as per the rule of mother school	-Final by RC made tests -Homework

Source: Lamichhane, S. P. and Wagley, M. P. (2007)

TABLE A15 Consultation guide

AREAS/QUESTIONS TO BE EXPLORED
<b>Understanding the Consultation Mechanisms and their Effectiveness</b>
Who was involved in EFA thematic report preparation?
Who was involved in EFA NPA?
How extensive was the participation?
What was the process of participation at different levels (school/community, district, region, interest groups, etc)?
How inclusive (gender, caste, ethnicity, disability, etc.) was the EFA preparation processes? How did the preparation processes ensure equity issues?
Who was involved in SESP thematic report preparation?
Who was involved in SESP document preparation?
How extensive was the participation?
What was the process of participation at different levels (school/community, district, region, interest groups, etc)?
How inclusive (caste, ender, disability, ethnicity, etc.) was the SESP preparation process? How did the preparation process ensured equity issues?
<b>Reviewing the EFA/SESP Design Process</b>
Who was involved in EFA Core Document preparation?
How was the design done? who set the objectives, priorities, strategies?
What was the basis on which EFA/SESP was designed (information/evidence, etc.) How current was the information?
Who was included in the design process? How did the parents, guardians and community members contribute to this design?
Was it EFA/SESP specific or was the structure of previous programmes/projects (BPEP or SESP) was utilized?
How was the decision about EFA/SESP structure made?
Who were involved in the decision making (e.g. utilizing existing structure)?
What were the influencing factors in the decision?
How did the parents, guardians and community members contribute to this decision?
<b>The Equity Analysis</b>
Has some form of an equity analysis been done? e.g. gender and social parity analysis, gender/disparity analysis for action plans?
How often is such analysis done? Was it only when EFA/SESP was prepared? If yes, how does the regular analysis feed into EFA/SESP (policy, programme, strategy, funding mechanism, implementation process)?
How is this done and by whom?
What disparities have been identified?
Is there any clear evidence that information from the equity analysis has influenced the EFA/SESP design or implementation?
<b>Implementation Process</b>
Do key stakeholders have a means to express their views?
How are consultations carried out (i.e. truly participatory or is it a rubber-stamping exercise)?
What disparity issues are included in the consultation? (e.g. access, barriers, gender, vulnerability)
Is there evidence that information from consultations feeds into education policy, plans, and strategies?
How is action on policy, plans, and strategies ensured/enforced?

## AREAS/QUESTIONS TO BE EXPLORED

**Assessing Costing and Budgeting Mechanisms**

How was the EFA/SESP financial frame designed and by whom? Is the mechanism structured to address requirements of donors? If so, how?

Are funds targeted to equity issues? If so, what was the process used to identify/decide about allocation? How are they accessed? How are they protected in event of budget cuts?

Are there provisions in the budget for unexpected/unplanned costs e.g. arising from emergencies, for groups/situations not identified/included, to pilot new initiatives?

Does the budget include/reflect the full costs of free education? e.g. requirements of matching funds, parent/community contributions, etc.?

Does EFA/SESP financial design/frame reflect both direct and indirect costs?

What has been TA funding mechanism or criteria? What is it? How is it utilized?

Are there any conditionality attached? Is any of this conditionality equity-focused? Do any have negative or potentially negative impacts on addressing equity issues?

What is the budgetary provision for capacity building in gender and social inclusion aspects for EFA/SESP? (pool/basket funding? non-pool?)

Does national budget on education sub-sectors reflect contributions made by VDC/DDC?

**Capacity-building and organizational development components**

Is HRD plan in place?

What has been the mechanism to capacitate the practitioners (policy makers, managers, and teachers, etc.) in the area of analyzing and addressing gender and social inclusion?

Are capacity-building and organizational development goals and objectives clearly stated? How are they identified and agreed? By whom? (in EFA/SESP).

Has any capacity-building supported by the EFA/SESP addressed equity?

What individuals/institutions are targeted?

Give examples of relevant training or institutional reform.

Are institutional structures sufficiently reformed (or created) at different levels to address equity issues, e.g. special units/assignments, gender focal points

Are these institutional structures and their personnel sufficiently empowered (human and material resources, capacity, authority)?

Is there clarity about roles and responsibilities?

Is there strategic selection and use of technical assistance (TA)? Who/what influences decisions on TA?

What is the funding provision within EFA/SESP for capacity building?

**Impact**

What impacts have you observed at school level?

At district/DEO?

At central level?

What interventions decentralized worked well and what interventions decentralized didn't work well in relation to addressing gender and social inclusion?

AREAS/QUESTIONS TO BE EXPLORED
What was the role of your organization in EFA and SESP preparation? How were you involved? (Note: sense of being included or excluded)
How does your organization assist in achieving the gender and social inclusion aim of EFA and/or SESP?
How are you or your partner organizations involved in SIP, DEP and ASIP preparation? How are the issues of gender and social inclusion addressed in SIP, DEP and ASIP?
How does your programme synchronize with EFA and SESP? Also with scholarships and other incentives?
Are funds targeted to equity issues? If so, what was the process used to identify/decide about allocation? How are they accessed? How are they protected in event of budget cuts?
How do you ensure that the issues of gender and social inclusion have been addressed in your programmes? (Monitoring related question). How (with what evidence) have they been identified (by an equity analysis/study)?
How do you cover the gender and social inclusion aspects in monitoring and evaluation? (quantitative, qualitative) How are the findings utilized (policy, strategy, capacity building, programme priority, etc.)?
How has gender and social inclusion been addressed in your country programme? What is the overall aim of your agency in relation to gender and social inclusion in school education of Nepal?
What was your role in designing EFA/SESP?
How do they correspond with EFA/SESP equity related goals?
How do you ensure that your aid is assisting in addressing issues of gender and social inclusion in school education? Monitoring mechanism?
What disparity issues are included in the consultation meetings, MTR (e.g. access, barriers, gender, vulnerability)? How do you persuade MOES/DOE to have these issues addressed?
Is there evidence that information from consultations feeds into education policy, plans, and strategies?
Do you have direct funding provisions to address issues of gender and social inclusion? Why? What kind and what is the priority? E.g TA or other projects outside.
How do you evaluate the progress made through direct funding or supplement as a project as opposed to pooled or basket funding? e.g. ADB, TEP, WB, CSSP. What has been the impact?
What impacts have you observed at school level in terms of gender and social inclusion (re. EFA/SESP)? What impact do cost sharing/matching funds have on schools/communities?
From national perspective – school education in terms of addressing equity (as opposed to other sectors)?
What is the criterion to review the documents/programmes?
How much attention to gender and equity is paid by NPC when reviewing programmes (EFA/SESP) for approval?
When reviewing funding modalities of education (re.EFA/SESP) how much attention is paid to equity perspective?





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