

EDUCATION FOR ALL Mid-Decade Assessment

National Report

Government of Nepal
Ministry of Education and Sports

Kathmandu, Nepal

2007



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Acknowledgements

Nepal is committed to providing quality basic and primary education for all by 2015 as per the spirit of the Dakar Framework for Action (2000). Accordingly, it has adopted six major EFA goals along with the adoption of the seventh goal to address its need of ensuring basic and primary education through mother tongues to numerous language groups. Program strategies are being developed and implemented at national as well as local level with the participation of major stakeholders to achieve these goals. This national report on Mid-decade Assessment of Education for All is an opportunity for us to assess the trends and outcomes of our efforts towards the accomplishment of the EFA commitment. The report stands as a testimony to the development of basic and primary education in Nepal which has taken long strides as is evident from reduced dropout and repetition rates, increasing enrolment and improved retention and cycle completion rates at the primary level expanding infrastructures, programs and improving indicators in the areas of literacy and life-skills education. We now feel that we are aware of our issues and challenges, and we are endeavoring our best to understand the aspirations and potentials of the country. The EFA has provided an impetus to the unprecedented social and political transformation of the country. We are undergoing through such transformation despite the limitations including resource and technical capacity. However we are confident that with the cooperation and support of the international community including UN, friendly countries and international development partners, we can accomplish the EFA goals within the stipulated time.

The report is a culmination of efforts made by the EFA Core Committee, all thematic groups, key individuals, national and international organizations, development partners, UNESCO Kathmandu Office and many more participants who contributed to the making of the report. To assess the progress and achievements of EFA as objectively and analytically as possible, seven thematic groups were created under the direct leadership of the EFA Core Committee. Several rounds of discussions and interactions were held and the issues were analyzed by the participants before finalizing the thematic group reports which formed the main basis of the national report. I should not fail in my duty to recognize and appreciate the contribution made by all in this connection.

To be specific, I congratulate the efforts made by all seven thematic groups whose group assessment reports are collectively organized and integrated in this national report. The Core Committee members who discussed and analyzed the themes at a greater length deserve special mention for their contribution in shaping the national report. Similarly, all the participants of the discussion forums and concerned stakeholders are acknowledged for their active participation and contribution to the issues and challenges outlined in the thematic presentations.

Similarly, the contributions made by Mr. Janardan Nepal, DG, DOE, Mr. Mahashram Sharma, Coordinator of national EFA MDA committee and Mr. Lok Bilas Pant, Deputy Director, DOE should not go unnoticed. Their coordinating roles are highly appreciated.

All the development partners, donors, bilateral and multilateral agencies and above all, UNESCO Kathmandu Office, are sincerely acknowledged for their generous assistance in this regard. Mr. Tap Raj Pant, and Mr. Ram Balak Singh of UNESCO Kathmandu Office deserve special appreciation for their support and facilitation. Further, I would like to heartily record my gratitude to UNESCO Bangkok regional office, particularly Dr. Ko-Chih Tung, for their guiding support to the preparation of the national report.

The contribution of national writers in preparing this report is no less valuable. I would like to thank the hard work of Prof. Dr. Hridaya Ratna Bajracharya and Prof. Dr. Basu Dev Kafle for their painstaking effort in preparing the national EFA-MDA report in the present shape.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Balananda Paudel".

Balananda Paudel
Secretary
Ministry of Education and Sports
Kesharmahal, Kathmandu, Nepal

Abbreviations

AAHW	: Assistant Ayurvedic Health Worker
AAM	: Assistant Ayurvedic Medicine
ADB	: Asian Development Bank
AL and PL	: (Agriculture) Assistant Level and Proficiency Level
ANM	: Assistant Nurse Midwife
ASIP	: Annual Strategic Implementation Plan
AWPB	: Annual Work Plan and Budget
BPE	: Basic and Primary Education Master Plan
BPEP	: Basic Primary Education Project
BPEP-II	: Basic Primary Education Program-II
CAS	: Continuous Assessment System
CBECD	: Community Based Early Childhood Development
CBOs	: Community Based Organizations
CDC	: Curriculum Development Centre
CERID	: Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development
CLAs	: Central Level Agencies
CLC	: Community Learning Centre
CMA	: Community Medical Assistant
COPE	: Community Owned Primary Education
CRC	: Camera Ready Copy
CSNN	: Community Schools National Network
CSSP	: Community School Support Program
CTEVT	: Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training
DACAW	: Decentralized Action for Children and Women
Danida	: Danish Assistance for International Development
DCDB	: District Child Development Board
DDC	: District Development Committee
DEC	: District Education Committee
DECDC	: District Early Childhood Development Committee

DEO	: District Education Office(r)
DEP	: District Education Plan
DEWC	: District Child Welfare Committee
DFA	: Dakar Framework for Action
DFID	: Department for International Development
DOE	: Department of Education
DPOs	: Disabled People's Organizations
DRC	: District Resource Centre
E and C	: Eastern and Central
EC	: European Commission
ECCE	: Early Childhood Care and Education
ECD/ECE	: Early Childhood Development/Early Childhood Education
EDPs	: External Development Partners
EFA	: Education for All
EFA/MDA	: Education for All/Mid-Decade Assessment
EFA/NPA	: Education for All National Plan of Action
EIPG	: Educational Incentive Program for Girls
EMIS	: Educational Management Information System
ESDP	: Education Sector Development Program
ETC	: Educate the Children
ETC	: Education Training Centre
Finnida	: Finnish International Development Assistance
FNCCI	: Federation of Nepalese Chamber of Commerce and Industries
FRESH	: Focusing Resources on Effective School Health
FRP	: Formative Research Project
GATM	: Global Fund for AIDS, TB and Malaria
GDP	: Gross Domestic Product
GER	: Gross Enrolment Rate
GIR	: Gross Intake Rate
GNP	: Gross National Product
GON	: Government of Nepal
GOs	: Government Organizations
GPI	: Gender Parity Index

HA	: Health Assistant
HDI	Human Development Index
HIV/AIDS	: Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus/Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
HMG/N	: His Majesty's Government/Nepal
HRD	: Human Resource Development
HROs	: Human Rights Organizations
HSEB	: Higher Secondary Education Board
HTs	: Head teachers
I/NGO	: International/National Non-Governmental Organization
ICT	: Information Communication Technology
IDA	: International Development Association
IDPs	: Internally Displaced Persons
IE	: Inclusive Education
ILO	: International Labor Organization
IMCs	: Incentive Management Committees
JFA	: Joint Financial Agreement
JICA	: Japanese Assistance for International Cooperation
KSA	: Knowledge, Skill and Attitude
LAB	: Lab Assistant
LS	: Lower Secondary
LSGA	: Local-Self Governance Act
MDA	: Mid-Decade Assessment
MDGs	: Millennium Development Goals
MOES	: Ministry of Education and Sports
MOH	: Ministry of Health
MOLD	: Ministry of Local Development
MOLT	: Ministry of Labor and Transportation
MOWCSW	: Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare
MR	: Mentally Retarded
MTEF	: Medium-Term Expenditure Framework
NPABSAN	: National Private and Boarding Schools' Organization Nepal
NCDC	: National Child Development Council
NCED	: National Centre for Educational Development

NDHS	: Nepal Demographic Health Survey
NE	: New Enrolment
NER	: Net Enrolment Rate
NFE	: Nonformal Education
NFEC	: Non-Formal Education Centre/Council
NFEMIS	: Nonformal Education Management Information System
NIR	: Net Intake Rate
NLSS	: Nepal Living Standards Survey
NORAD	: Norwegian Assistance for Development
NPA	: National Plan of Action
NPC	: National Planning Commission
NRs	: Nepali Rupees
(N)POA	: (National) Program of Action (for children)
OCE	: Office of the Controller of Examinations
OSP	: Out of School Program
PABSON	: Private and Boarding Schools' Organization Nepal
PCL	: Proficiency Certificate Level
PPC	: Pre-Primary Class
PTA	: Parent Teacher Association
RCs	: Resource Centres
RED	: Regional Education Directorate
RP	: Resource Persons
SBECD	: School Based Early Childhood Development
SC/Norway	: Save the Children/Norway
SC/US	: Save the Children/USA
SCA	: Save the Children Alliance
SEDEC	: Secondary Education Development Center
SESP	: Secondary Education Support Program
SIP	: School Improvement Plan
SMCs	: School Management Committees
SOs	: Social Organizations
SRH	: Sexual Reproductive Health
SSR	: School Sector Reform

STDs	: Sexually Transmitted Diseases
STR	: Student Teacher Ratio
TB	: Tuberculosis
TEVT	: Technical Education and Vocational Training
TG	: Teacher Guide
TTTI	: Training Institute for Technical Instruction
TRSE	: Technical Review of School Education
TSLC	: Technical School Leaving Certificate
TU	: Tribhuvan University
TV	: Television
UBE	: Universal Basic Education
UGC	: University Grants Commission
UK	: United Kingdom
UN	: United Nations
UNDP	: United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	: United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNGEI	: United Nations Girls Education Initiatives
UNICEF	: United Nations Children's Funds
UPE	: Universal Primary Education
VDC	: Village Development Committee
VEC	: Village Education Committee
VEP	: Village Education Plan
VJT	: Veterinary Junior Technician
VTCD	: Vocational Training for Community Development
W	: Western
WE	: World Education
WES	: Women Education Section
WFP	: World Food Program (Food for Education)
WSA	: Whole School Approach

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Historical, social/cultural, economic, and political background

Geographically, Nepal is a landlocked country, which is bordered by China on the North and India on the East, South and West. Approximately, it has an area of 147,181 sq. km. The country is located between 26°22' to 30°27' latitude north and between 80° 4' and 88°12' longitude East. Nepal is a mosaic of geographical and social diversities. Geographically, it consists of three layers of distinct ecological zones: 1) the Himalayas, the high mountain range with snow-covered peaks 2) the hill areas with lush high hills and valleys, and 3) the Terai, a strip of fertile plains. All these geographic belts of Nepal run from east to west. According to the census of 2001 Nepal has a population of 23151423.

Socially, Nepal is a country of diversity – it is inhabited by people of diverse social, cultural and ethnic backgrounds. The national census 2001 noted 102 social groups and recorded 92 languages out of which more than a dozen are in active use among a significant size of the population sections (each having more than one hundred thousand people). Nepal is also home to a large number of varieties of birds, animals and plants, some of which are rare species in the world and unique to Nepal.

Figure I-1: Nepal in map



The country is an agro-based economy with per capita income of about \$370 (HDR, 2004). It is mostly rural and poor, with 31% people living below the poverty line. The current life expectancy rate is about 63 years -- male 62.9 and female 63.7(CBS 2003, projection for 2006).

Since the mid-1950s, Nepal has started planned approach to development in various areas including the education sector. Nepal has just completed the Tenth National Development Plan (2002-2007). The focus of the plan was on the need for poverty alleviation. Nepal is still one of the least developed countries in terms of human development index.

Nepal is an ancient nation, it has long historical roots extending to over 2000 years of unrecorded and recorded history of settlements, conflicts, rules and developments. Different sets of systems, clans and rulers are recorded - such as Gopal, Mahishpal, Kirant, Lichhabi, Malla and Shah. Nepal has always been a sovereign country, never a colony. Till the late 18th century, Nepal consisted of fragmented and warring states. In 1781 the Shah King, Prithvi Narayan Shah of Gorkha, succeeded in annexing the fragmented small nations into a unified

kingdom consisting of people belonging to several different languages, cultures, castes and ethnic groups. Nepal had remained virtually isolated from the outside world until 1950. The various social groups in the country were also isolated from each other to a significant extent due to the country's rugged topography. And the feudal rulers of the time largely preferred to keep the isolation and social fragmentations.

Nepal is rather a complex mixture of many aspects and their conditions. In it one can find a very fine collection of the living history of cultural riches -- more than a dozen sites are now listed as the world cultural heritage. And it continues to sustain the culture of celebration that combines spiritual values, mythology and the wonders of nature through numerous festivals.

Politically, Nepal is a democratic country with a multiparty system of government and the sovereignty vested in people. For administrative purpose, the country is divided into 5 developmental regions, 14 zones and 75 districts with 3900 Village Development Committees (VDCs) and 58 municipalities.

Nepal under-went a major change in 1951 with the successful uprising of the people that threw the 104 year regime of oligarchic rulers, and a multi-party democratic system was introduced. However in 1961 the country became an absolute monarchical state. In the years that followed, several political unrests took place and the multi-party democracy was restored after the people's movement in 1990. In 2003 there was yet another major political change caused by abolition of the parliament and the elected government bodies up to the Village Development Committee level. The King enforced direct rule. Meanwhile the country was divided on the ways and means of facilitating socio-political transitions. One of the political groups took to the armed rebellion. The conflict situation caused immense stress and strain on the development process; nevertheless, it resulted into a radical outcome in terms of development towards democracy in 2006. All the major political parties have come together in forging ways ahead towards establishing democracy. The coalition among all major political forces including the Maoists who took to the arms for rebellion for 12 years ended with the signing of comprehensive peace accord and agreement of an action plan with stipulated time frame towards accomplishing election for constitutional assembly. Many progressive changes are expected as outcomes of the election to constitutional assembly.

The whole process of political dynamics has of course opened the road to take initiatives for the development and implementation of the concept of community empowerment for local self-governance. Moreover, efforts are on the way to adopt decentralised planning approach at the grassroots level and to adopt democratic approach to address the issues of social inequities including resource mobilization. Achieving the desired changes has however been a difficult task because of several constraints, the human and financial capacities being the main constraints.

B. General overview of level of development

- i. Poverty, human development index, Millennium Development Goals**
- ii. Health, economic, and social indicators**

Nepal has published regular censuses every 10 years since 1971. The population in 1971 was 11.6 million. The population has been expanding at a rate of little over 2%. It has doubled between 1971 and 2001. The census 2001 recorded 13.9% urban population which is on gradual increase since 1971 census that recorded 4% urban population. The average household size is about 5.

Family planning has been considered important aspect of national development plans since 1965-70 plan. The Nepal Demographic Health Survey (NDHS) 2006 shows that among the sampled households the overall sex ratio (number of males per 100 females) is 89. The ratio

is higher in urban areas, 101 than in the rural 87, indicating tendencies of male migration to the urban areas. There is significant migration of people, particularly among adult male, about two third have been away from home, half of them to urban areas in Nepal, the rest go to the other countries including India. The migration is mainly for employment.

The NDHS survey 2006 listed the population distribution percentage in terms of economic quintiles and ecological regions as follows:

Table I-1: Population distribution (%) by economic quintiles and ecological regions

Residence/region	Lowest	second	middle	fourth	highest
Urban	2.3	5.5	5.1	15.6	71.5
Rural	23.2	22.6	22.7	20.8	10.8
Mountain	46.6	22.3	16.4	13.4	1.2
Hill	28.0	15.6	13.9	17.6	24.9
Terai	9.2	23.4	25.8	23.0	18.6

Source: NDHS 2007

The lowest quintile roughly corresponds to the extreme poverty – below poverty line.

According to NDHS 2006, the life expectancy is 60.1% for male and 60.7% for female, which is lower than the CBS projection. Nevertheless, the current life expectancy has been an outcome of gradual improvements over the past as the following table shows:

Table I-2: Life expectancy by sex and year

	1992	1996?	2002	2006
Male	42.0	50.9	55.0	60.1
Female	40.0	48.1	53.5	60.7

(Source: CBS 2003, Ministry of Population and Environment and CBS 2003 in NDHS, 2006)

NDHS 2006 reports that 82% of the households have access to water from improved sources – 90% in urban areas and 80% in rural areas. Adult women are mostly responsible both in rural and urban areas for fetching water. In many cases, particularly in rural areas water sources are not so near (for about 10% of the households it takes 30 minutes or more to access water). About 50% of the households still do not have any toilet facilities.

Large proportion of people still do not have access to public or private communication – only 61% households have radio, 28% have TV, 5.5% have mobile telephone and 6.3% have non-mobile telephone. Large section 39% of the people rely on bicycle for transportation, followed by animal drawn cart 8.4%, motorbike/scooter 4.6% and motor vehicle 1.9%.

According to the HDR 2005, UNDP, the economic status in terms of the gross domestic product was US \$6 billion in 2003. As of 2003, the per capita income was US \$ 240. In terms of PPP US \$ it was 1420. Between 1970 and 2003 the mean economic growth rate was about 2.1%.

C. The role of education in the context of national development

The issue of poverty could be addressed only through human development. Education is the basis for enhancing the capacity of the people in terms of appropriate life skills, knowledge and experiential wisdom in order to acquire economic and social prosperity. For the past five decades educational development has been one of the most important priorities. Many Commissions have been formed to study the aspirations and needs of people and to review the development courses. Projects have been launched to change the courses and to accelerate educational development. However, Nepal still faces several limitations. According to the census 2001, 46.3% people above 6 years of age and 52% above 15 years of age are still illiterate. Similarly, according to the annual school based data of MOES 2006, of the total

primary school age children, 13% are never enrolled in school; 45.4% of the children enrolled in primary schools drop out without completing grade five. Drop-out occurs mostly at grade one, which stands at 14.5%.

The magnitude of the problems of illiteracy, non-enrolment and school dropout varies by region, by gender and by different social groups. There are variegated gaps between the rural and the urban, males and females and between ethnic groups and social groups. Remote rural areas, females, ethnic minorities, *dalits* (untouchable caste according to the old tradition) and the poor are disadvantaged in terms of educational attainments.

Although the current situation is a vast improvement upon the situation that existed five decades ago when the schooling of children was a rare phenomenon and was limited to children of elite class, and literacy was confined to certain sections of the society, the condition still poses challenges. The development trends show a rapid growth of school enrolment of school age children in the past few decades and then the growth has become slow despite intensive efforts. It is presumed now that this relates to the challenge of taking school education to the unreached section of the people who are poor and disadvantaged.

The geographic and social realities contribute to the challenges of educational development in the country. Rugged mountainous topography, lack of economic means and resources, diverse social contexts including ethnic, linguistic, and cultural diversities are rather difficult to address. Added to these challenges is the continued inertia of feudal social dynamics that used the system of caste hierarchy, ethnicity and language as a means of political and social domination by the elite over the poor and the disadvantaged. There has been a skewed environment of social opportunities in favour of the elite.

The other aspect of modern day challenges of Nepal relates to the values and norms that look down upon work and the working class people, mainly consisting of the minority ethnic communities, the *dalits* and the poor. It is often critically pointed out that the educational development so far has been addressing the needs of the people who have stakes in the existing social circumstances. A question is raised whether this is contributing to the perpetuation of the obscurantist social and economic situation.

D. Data Collection, Sources, Quality Assurance

This report is a synthesis of the thematic reports prepared by the seven thematic groups constituted to undertake thematic assessments corresponding to six EFA goals outlined by Dakar Framework and an additional seventh goal adopted by the country to address its unique issue of language diversity. The seventh goal is to ensure basic and primary education in mother tongue to numerous language groups.

The data and information used in this report are based on 1) census – national census 2001, the censuses are undertaken every 10 years; school census is reported every year in the form of annual educational statistics and flash reports 2) national surveys such as NLSS and Demographic and Health Survey undertaken periodically by the Central Bureau of Statistics between the national censuses 3) various research reports including the Formative Research undertaken by CERID for BPEP II and EFA (2004-09). These sources are used for preparing the thematic reports as well as this synthesis report. The data quality relates to the level of quality of these various publications by the official agencies. The sources are considered authentic by all concerned in the country. Besides several interaction sessions were also conducted to generate as well as verify the information used in this document.

II. Introduction to the National Education System

A. Trends in Educational Development

i. Historical origin of the present structure of education

Since mid-1950s, Nepal has started planned approach to development in various areas including the education sector. School education was opened for general public only after 1951. The schools developed since then followed the structure and pattern of schooling prevailing in the region, mainly in the Indian subcontinent. In 1952 Ministry of Education was established for development of education in the country, mainly school education. Although some special schools existed before 1950 the present structure is directly linked to the post 1950 developments.

ii. Expansion of government financed education to various categories of learners

In 1954, a National Education Commission was formed to review the education situation of the country and suggested strategies and policies for overall development of education in the country. It was realized at that time that the country lagged far behind in educational development. The literacy percentage at that time was estimated about 2% only. The commission report recommended for the first time to take the responsibility of financing of education in order to make primary education available for all children; it also suggested development of adult literacy program, technical and vocational education, with emphasis on civic education. This is the first ever commission to recommend the strong role of the government for meeting the educational expenses.

The commitments expected from the government opened realization of the diversities in the country in terms of social and educational status. Female education, education of the rural people, education of people with different vocational needs was realised. Some girl schools were opened; special schools for people with disabilities, mainly blind and deaf, were started; and vocational training programs were initiated. In the subsequent development period vocational education became the central theme of educational reforms. National Education System Plan (NESP) was initiated in 1971 to change school curriculum with vocational education as the focus. Education system with extensive structural provision was developed with district education offices and supervision system in all the districts. Gender focused educational programs were started in late 1970s and early 1980s. Educational development needs of disadvantaged communities have come under the purview of policies and programs since late 1980s and early 1990s.

iii. Development of education since Jomtien and Dakar

The campaign of *Education For All* started by the World Conference held in Jomtien in 1990 has put immense impetus on the development of education in the country. The current achievement in the educational development in Nepal at the basic and primary level is largely attributable to this decade-long campaign. However, the country assessment of EFA has indicated that the challenges still remain far from attaining the EFA goals.

The World Education Forum on Education for All (EFA), held in Dakar, Senegal in April 2000 to review the achievements of EFA campaigns in 1990, realised the difficulties of countries like Nepal. Accordingly, the forum adopted the Dakar Framework for Action (DFA), *Education for All: Meeting Our Collective Commitments*. The Dakar Framework for Action lists six major EFA goals to be achieved by 2015. It also lists strategies for achieving the goals. The focus of the framework is on collective commitments, nationally as well as

internationally, to ensure that no country is left behind because of a lack of technical capacity or resources. This international commitment comes both as an inspiration as well as a support for the development of basic and primary education in Nepal. And the country has adopted continued EFA campaign as the core strategy of educational development. It has adopted the goals of EFA as the goals of education in the country. The time line and the strategies outlined by the world forum have also been adopted. The National Plan of Action for achieving the goals of EFA was prepared, approved and used by the government of Nepal for implementation.

iv. Use of ICT in education

Use of ICT in education is still at a preliminary stage in Nepal. Some private schools have introduced the provision in small scale. However understanding the scope and potential of ICT in education and investing for its development remains a challenge in view of the economic and overall development conditions of the country. Recently, the government of Nepal has declared a policy of providing one laptop per student under the Danish assistance as a pilot project in the remote district of Mustang. Also there is a government provision for providing two computers to each of the selected number of secondary schools. There is also a program under CTEVT to provide training on computer education in selected schools under its school annex program. There is still a need for formulation of a comprehensive ICT policy to address the technological needs of the schools.

v. Unreached groups

Currently about 13% of the primary school children are still out of school. About 40% do not complete the primary education cycle. A large portion drops out at grade 1 which is also the cases at the upper grades. The grade repetition rate is very high, over 30% at grade 1. These situations relate to the unreached and disadvantaged groups in the country. There are various forms of disadvantages in the country, mainly relating to

- a) Religious, linguistic, racial, and ethnic minorities
- b) Castes, socio-economic classes, and other social stratifications
- c) Women and girls
- d) Persons discriminated against on the basis of sexual orientation
- e) Persons with disabilities or special needs
- f) Residents of remote, rural, or border areas
- g) Undocumented people, non-citizens, non-registered residents
- h) Migrants, refugees, displaced persons (conflict or natural disaster)
- i) Children affected and infected by HIV/AIDS
- j) Children affected by conflict
- k) Street Children
- l) Working children
- m) Orphans
- n) The very poor
- o) Victims of domestic abuse

Most of the disadvantaged children are from the very poor group. The NLSS 2003/4 report shows that the poorest economic quintiles are at disadvantage from many aspects as the following table shows:

Table II-1: Educational indicators by poorest and richest quintiles

Education Indicators	Poorest quintile	Richest quintile
Nearest school more than 30 minutes away	13.4%	4%
NER at primary level	51% (girls 42%)	87% (girls 85%)
Having ever attended a school	22.7% (Female 11.7%)	67.9% (Female 56.0%)
Years of schooling	5.1	9.2
Adult Literacy rate (15+ years)	23.1 (Female 11.6)	72.3 (Female 59.1)

Further the data shows that the transition of poorest quintile from primary to secondary and higher levels of education is very low. The NER at primary, lower secondary, secondary, higher secondary and tertiary levels for the poorest and richest quintile are as follows:

Table II-2: NER of education level by poorest and richest quintiles

NER	Primary	Lower secondary	Secondary	Higher Secondary	Tertiary
Poorest	51%(Girls 42)	7% (Girls 6)	2% (Girls 1)	1%, (Girls 0)	0%, (Girls 0)
Richest	87%(Girls 85)	56%(Girls 56)	35%(Girls 36)	13%(Girls 10)	10% (Girls 8)

The NLSS survey data clearly shows that poverty is the major determinant factor of disadvantage regarding education. Also there is a remarkable difference between male and female from the poorest quintile by different indicators listed above.

B. Educational policies, laws and legislation

There is no provision of compulsory education. There is still no right based educational provision in place yet. However this has been considered for school sector reform program to be implemented in 2009. The right based approach to education will apply for the basic education up to grade 8.

Basic and primary education is free. The free basic and primary education connotes free tuition fee and free textbooks. However schools are free to raise donation from the community and the parents to meet development and maintenance cost of the schools. In many instances, the donation contributions are enforced by the schools. The issue of such donation vis a vis free school education up to basic and primary level persists.

The emphasis of the government is to decentralize school management to community by inviting the community to take the responsibility of school management. There is provision of delegating authority of school management to communities through SMCs. The community managed schools receive block grant for meeting the basic operational expenses along with some incentive grants for better enrolment and performance. The incentive grant is provided based on number of children enrolled, specifically children from disadvantaged communities and girls. This policy has been widely circulated to the DEO, RCs, and the teacher training centres as well as schools. In that sense there are awareness programs at the district level. Besides community people, NGOs and CBOs are encouraged to support in the process. There is however no inbuilt mechanism in the regular system to bring public awareness to this effect.

i. International treaties

Nepal is signatory to the Jomtien World Declaration on EFA. It has also signed and adopted the Dakar framework of action. Besides it has signed many other related international commitments and conventions as:

- a) Child Rights Convention
- b) Child Labor regulations
- c) Convention on Elimination of Discrimination against Women
- d) Salamanca Declaration on Special Needs Education
- e) UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Nepal has revised its laws and regulations accordingly in many cases. However, many such provisions are yet to be developed to address issues related to equity, social justice and social inclusion exclusively. For example, there is still no regulation or act to ensure rights based education or compulsory education. There is no act or regulation regarding the minimum learning conditions or quality standards of school set up. There is commitment to barrier free (ensuring equality and inclusiveness in school) education; however, there is no legislative measure to translate this commitment into actual practices in the school.

The new constitution 2006, for the first time in the country, has decreed that basic and primary education will be right based, free and universal. There is provision of primary education in mother tongue and free education up to secondary level is explicitly mentioned in the new constitution 2006. The supporting legal provisions and rules are not yet in place for activating the constitutional commitment.

ii. Vision and Approach for EFA

EFA vision of Nepal is to ensure that all children in Nepal have quality basic and primary education in caring and joyful environment. Primary education should be available in mother tongue for children without having them to feel cultural, ethnic or caste discrimination. Besides, the school and educational places must have gender balance in terms of teacher post and student enrolment. It is also envisaged that almost all adults get not only literate but also continuous learning through Community Learning Centres. And that a variety of appropriate learning and life skill education materials that are contextual and directly beneficial for youths and adults are made available through different modes.

The EFA goals are to be achieved gradually phase by phase by the year 2015. By then community- based as well as school-based ECD centres will be providing services to most of the pre-primary age children. There will also be other early childhood care and education service providers, such as private schools and NGOs. There will be provision of training made for the mothers and caretakers to provide home-based ECD services. With these service facilities in place, all pre-primary children will be provided at least one year of special care service that addresses both pre-school preparation needs as well as the overall needs of the children of that age group.

The provisions under BPEP II (2001-04) to bring school age girls and the children of disadvantaged and deprived communities into the main stream schooling system have been further improved and reinforced in the current EFA core plan (2004-09). This included continuation, and reinforcing of various programs, such as girl's scholarship program, scholarship programs for disadvantaged children, and provision of female teachers in primary schools to achieve gender balance. Planning and program development are seriously taking into consideration the need of residential schools for children in rural remote areas and primary school education in mother tongue. Furthermore, the implementation of free and compulsory primary education will gradually be extended to cover all parts of the country. Reform measures will be undertaken to improve school environment, curriculum contents and practices, teacher's professional capacities and evaluation system including examination system to enhance the quality of basic and primary education. Currently, Nepal is in the process of a major curriculum reform through the implementation of National Curriculum

Framework which considers a comprehensive school structure for integrating the grades 1-12. Also, efforts are underway to develop sustainable mechanism to ensure that all children are enrolled in school at appropriate age level and that they complete the primary education cycle with good learning achievement.

Appropriate policy measures and programs are already underway to make school education relevant to the world of work. Soon there will be piloting of the ideas to transform current school practices to achieve this. Similarly, vocational education provisions will be expanded by dovetailing them with the current school infrastructure. The lessons learnt from the previous efforts of expansion of vocational education will be extensively used to make current programs more effective and efficient. For each citizen, there is a continuous need to learn and to be able to address the changed social, economic and political contexts. A system of lifelong and continuous education will thus be developed with the introduction of Community Learning Centers. By 2015, a viable system as well as a network of CLCs will be developed to address this need.

Towards achieving the vision with the approach mentioned above, a full fledged National Plan of Action (NPA) was prepared in 2001 and endorsed by the government in 2002. The NPA covered the whole EFA period of 15 years (2001-15). The plan analyses government policies, provisions, and the situation, and has set periodic targets. It has listed strategies for achieving the targets and also developed action plan along with the estimated budget. It also includes suggested list of institutional arrangements for undertaking the action plan.

iii. Education Policies

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

In Nepal, medium and long-term goals and targets of development, including the goals and targets of educational development, are reflected in the National Development Plans, which cover mostly a period of five years. In the tenth plan (2002-07) the important areas focussed include:

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

In the changed political context, a three year interim plan (2007-9) has been developed. The interim plan reflects the spirit of the political change – inclusive democracy-- which is to ensure social justice, social inclusion, and meeting the educational needs of vulnerable communities. The major relevant strategies and focuses of the tenth plan are also considered in the interim plan.

The national policies and the plans are implemented through a system of schools, higher education institutions, the universities and non-formal education provisions.

C. Education structure and institutional arrangements

The structure of educational provisions in Nepal basically consists of the following arrangements:

Table II-3: Level of education by age

Normal Age in Years	Below 5	5+	6	7	8	9	10+	11	12	13+	14	15+	16	17+	18	19	20	21
Education Level	<i>Pre-primary/ECD</i>	<i>Primary</i>					<i>Lower Secondary</i>		<i>Secondary</i>	<i>Higher Sec.</i>	<i>Higher Education (University)</i>							

Source: Ministry of Education (2000).

Pre-primary: The concepts and practices regarding Early Childhood Development and Pre-primary education are emerging as important developments, but they are still not part of the formal national education structure.

Primary education: Primary education or the first level of education in Nepal comprises of five years of schooling. The minimum entry age for this level is 5 years (5 years completion).

Secondary education: The second official level of education is secondary level which comprises of grades six to ten (five years). Grades six, seven and eight are called lower secondary level and grades 9-10 are secondary level. A national level centralised examination is conducted at the end of grade ten. This examination is popularly known as School Leaving Certificate (SLC) Examination.

Higher secondary education (HSE) or Proficiency Certificate Level (PCL) education: Those who pass School Leaving Certificate (SLC) examination at the end of grade 10 can apply to Proficiency Certificate Level (PCL) of university campuses or to higher secondary schools, grade 11 operating under the Higher Secondary Education Council and Board (HSEB). Higher secondary education is recent development in Nepal, initiated in 1994 only.

There is also provision of higher secondary level technical education under the Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT). Currently, the technical schools affiliated to the CTEVT offer skill training courses either to tenth grade¹ pass students or to those having Technical School Leaving Certificate.² The technical and vocational education is offered through the nine CTEVT constituent technical schools and 118 private technical training institutes. The courses offered are mostly of 2-year duration. The technical schools also offer courses of as low as one year and as high as two and half year's duration.

¹ Tenth grade pass students are academically lower level than those who have passed the School Leaving Certificate examination. Students take sent-up examination at the end of grade ten and those who pass the examination become eligible to take the SLC examination.

² Students having Technical School Leaving Certificate are the ones who have taken vocational stream after eight grades and completed two years of vocational training. The practice of admitting such students in vocational schools has been abolished after the enforcement of new policy related to technical and vocational education.

Higher Education

There are currently five universities in Nepal. Tribhuvan University (TU) is unique among the five in the sense that it was the first university in the country started about 45 years ago as a teaching and affiliating university. It has constituent institutions and campuses all over the country. Almost 95% of the higher education students as well as the faculties are with this university. University Grants Commission (UGC) co-ordinates the Universities with the national plans and programs. Tribhuvan University has been providing PCL as the first level of university education. After university based PCL or grade 12 under HSEB, students are eligible to apply for 3 year Bachelor's Degree courses. The Bachelor Degree courses in technical institutes like Engineering and Medicine are of four-year's duration. The Master's Degree follows the Bachelor's Degree and is of two-year duration. TU also offers Doctor of Philosophy in the field of humanities, management, law, science and education.

Nonformal-education

Besides the formal education, there are provisions of non-formal education at basic and primary level education. Out of school youths who could not attend primary school and are of overage can enter into the third grade provided they complete a 9-month course of a non-formal primary education program--popularly known as OSP (Out-of-school program). There are also provisions for flexible school programs for those who could not join regular hour schools and School Out-Reach Program for those who do not have access to regular schools. Various forms of adult education programs, mainly adult literacy and functional education, are run by various agencies.

Curriculum Reform and the Current Provisions

After the 1990s, two National Education Commissions (1992, 1998) and one high level task force have been constituted to review the current status of education in Nepal and draw new directions to meet the needs and aspirations of the people in the changed context. Most of the recommendations of these commissions and the task force emphasised on the needs to make school education meaningful and responsive to:

- the needs of the children for their physical, social, moral, cognitive and aesthetic development
- the multi-linguistic and multi-culture environment of Nepal
- the needs of developing democratic and humane approach in curricular contents and practices
- the need of preparing children to be realistic, rational, critical, reflective and responsive to the lived realities and to the world developments
- the need of developing the culture of work, creativity and co-operation

Based on the commission reports as well as several research reports, comprehensive approaches were taken to bring changes in school education. This includes, Master Plan for Basic and Primary Education and Perspective Vision Plan for Secondary Level Education. These plans have emphasised on the need for improving quality of school education and to make it relevant to life. National programs and projects such as Basic and Primary Education Program and Secondary Education Development Projects were launched to achieve the objectives of these plans. The main focuses of these programs and projects have been to improve teaching and learning activities in the school, to expand access to good education and enhance the institutional as well as teacher capacity.

The following are the stated objectives of school education:

- To make students literate with the ability to read and write and do basic computation and develop the habit of healthy living (Primary Education)
- To prepare self-reliant citizens with respect to dignity of labour, loyal to the nation, and democracy, awareness of environmental protection, strong moral character and respect for culture and social values and norms, and to prepare students with necessary knowledge and skills for higher secondary education (Secondary Education)
- To produce skilled human resources with capability of making solid contribution to all round development of the country and to impart them basic knowledge required for receiving graduate level education (Higher Secondary Education)
- To promote the intellectual development of students and prepare capable human resource and competent citizens needed for the development of the country. (Higher Education)

(Source: CDC/MOES, HMG, Nepal 2000)

Recently, the national curriculum framework (NCF 2006) for grades 1-12 has been approved by the Curriculum Council for nation wide application. This has an immediate implication for the proposed restructuring of school education with 1-8 as primary and 9-12 as secondary level.

D. Education Financing

The structure of education financing in Nepal is mainly that of central government in the form of the Ministry of Finance which allocates budget to the Ministry of Education to reach the schools. The government funding, public resource mobilization and private sector investments form the crux of the structure of financing of education. Private sector investment is in the form of development, management and operation of private schools. Parents pay full fees in private schools and the fees vary according to the services provided as well as the performance status achieved by the schools. Financial regulations and government or public record keeping system to keep track of the private sector finance of education is almost invisible. Private and Boarding School Organizations of Nepal such as PABSON is the regulating body for the member schools. There are no other bodies or organizations to closely monitor and keep track of financing of education in private sector.

Public resource mobilization in education has ever been one of the major policy emphases of the government of Nepal. In the past, most of the educational institutions including schools were developed with the initiatives and initial investment by communities and individuals. Currently, the government has promulgated school education regulations for community management of schools whereby communities will have both authority as well as responsibility to develop and operate schools to address their needs for quality education. The government provides earmarked fund for teacher salaries as well as incentives and performance grants to support development activities. Since public sector contribution comes in an informal budgetary environment, tracking and record keeping system of such contribution at the national level is almost invisible. The magnitude of public contribution is presumably large but no figure or estimation is available to substantiate it.

The government funding comes based on national annual budget, which is presented in the budget session of the parliament and formally approved. The national annual budget is guided by medium term national development plan of about 5 years duration. Nepal has just completed the tenth national development plan 2002-2007. Currently there is interim

development plan expected for 3 years that is guiding the budget. The following is the budget provision in the annual budget plan (2007-8):

The percentage of spending on education as a percentage of GDP/GNP: 3.7% of GDP (estimated to be N. Rs. 628 billion for the fiscal year 2006-07)

The percentage of spending on education as a percentage of the national budget: 16.8% of this year's allocation (2007/8)

The following is a brief breakdown of the actual expenditure in various sectors of education in the fiscal year 2005-2006 as recorded in the Red Book (MOF, 2007).

<u>Sub sector</u>	<u>%</u>
ECCE	1
Primary education	57
Non-formal education	1
Secondary education	24
Tertiary education	10
TEVT	1
Educational development	1
Monitoring & Administration	5

Donor fund has become a very important part of education financing in Nepal for the last several decades. Currently several friendly countries, development partners and donor agencies are providing fund support to the government of Nepal in education sector. The major donors include DANIDA, NORAD, Finland, DFID, EC, JAICA, The World Bank and ADB. In the current fiscal year 2007-2008, the share of education budget is as follows: Government 73% and foreign assistance 27%. The significant share of the donor support comes under major national programs undertaken in line with the major international movement such as EFA, MDG and SSA. The donor funding mainly covers the development aspects that address issues such as equity in access, betterment of quality, ensuring inclusive environment, betterment of management and institutional capacity building.

The government fund flow mechanism in education ensures the flow from the ministry to regional and district level educational agencies through annual strategic implementation plan (ASIP) of the MOES/DOE. The spending is incurred under the budget headings of the plan. Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) provides rational for the distribution of the budget as per the stated policy and program priorities.

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

- text books for all primary school children
- scholarships for all primary *dalit* children and 50% of primary school girls, all children and students with disabilities,
- special scholarship for the children and students of Karnali zone, and children of martyrs
- day meal to primary school children in selected poor districts and,

- grants to lower secondary and secondary schools to provide free education to *dalit* students

It is estimated that out of total education expenditure in 2005-2006, nearly 9% was spent on the education of the disadvantaged groups. Despite the budgetary allocation, the provision remains usually inadequate. Financing education for disadvantaged groups (including incentive based policies such as scholarships and grants, as well as specific programs) has always fallen short of the target. For instance, the budget allocated for scholarship assistance to *Dalits* and other disadvantaged groups students is always inadequate to meet the targeted number of beneficiaries. The government is very much aware of the issue but to address the issue at a full-fledged scale has remained a challenge. The question is: what should be the contributions of the central government, provincial government, communities, private donors or international donors in meeting the needs of the disadvantaged population? And in what way?

Despite the efforts of the government with affirmative action to ensure access to, and primary education completion of the disadvantaged children particularly in the rural areas, the disparities still exist. This is partly due to the low spending capacity (cash poor) of the rural areas due to agro-based economy combined with the low literacy level. Therefore school reform should be combined with comprehensive economic reform targeted to disadvantaged communities in rural areas.

E. Assessment of EFA Coordination

i. Existence of a functioning National EFA Forum

As the government has adopted the policy of integrating all EFA activities in its regular programs in primary education, it has set up and maintained the forums, committees and groups to perform various functions during the process of the implementation of the EFA programs:

- The EFA Forum which has the representation from the other line ministries along with reputed educationists continues to function as the highest body which would steer the process of implementation on the basis of the progress report presented at regular intervals.
- The core group on EFA which has the representation of all allied agencies along with education experts functions as a body which has the assigned tasks of preparing the progress report on all the seven goals. The members of this group are involved in field visits and in providing professional support, whenever and wherever required.
- The seven Thematic Groups conduct formative evaluation of the concerned task areas and continuously provide professional support to the concerned agencies of the MOES/DOE. Each of the thematic groups has specified the tasks to be performed by the various agencies.

ii. Presence of an EFA National Coordinator

The Department of Education acts as a responsible national coordinator for EFA in Nepal. The Director General (DG) of the Department of Education is the National Coordinator. The Department and the DG have both the mandate and the authority to develop necessary program for EFA.

iii. Publication of an EFA National Action Plan

The government of Nepal has prepared EFA national plan of action for the period 2001-2015 with the involvement of the EFA core group and thematic groups. The plan was presented in the EFA forum. The document was then endorsed by the council of ministers (cabinet)

formally. The national plan of action was published and circulated among the stakeholders as well as the public in general. A medium term plan called EFA core document for the period 2004-09 was prepared and adopted for implementation. The core plan document is supported by the forum, core group, thematic groups as well as the donors.

iv. Integration of the EFA National Action Plan in National Education Development Strategy and national development planning framework and process

The EFA national action plan is integrated in the national development plan as the main strategy for achieving the development goals. Besides it has been adopted as the part of the total education development strategy. The following scheme explains the various education sector program vis a vis EFA.

Table II-4: Education Plan by year

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

v. Budget allocation for implementation of EFA National Action Plan

a) Estimated total costs for EFA and resource provisions

According to the EFA national plan of action, the total cost estimates of the proposed EFA program for 2003-2015 in 2002 constant price index is Rs 295.3 billion (US\$3786 million). This cost estimate includes both regular and development budgets and the expenditure to be borne by the community. ECD and free and compulsory primary education activities account for more than 70% of the development cost estimated for the EFA program. The following is the component-wise description of the cost estimation.

Table II-5: Total estimated cost by themes and regular budget

Total estimated cost by themes and regular budget (Rs. in Million)					
SN	Expenditure Heading	Tenth Plan	Eleventh Plan	Twelfth Plan	Grand Total
1	ECD	15011.1	25511.5	20457.2	60979.8
2	Free and Compulsory Education	24919.3	25128.8	15846.2	65894.3
3	Life Skills	286.5	348.3	305.2	940.0
4	Gender Development	24.0	18.1	14.4	56.5
5	Mother Tongue	482.1	1166.9	880.8	2529.8
6	Literacy	3075.0	3395.0	1759.0	8229.0
7	Quality	2031.0	5465.0	3812.0	11308.0
8	Regular Budget	42487.3	51327.0	51556.0	145370.3
	Total	88316.4	112360.5	94630.8	295307.7
	US \$ Million	1132.3	1440.5	1213.2	3786.0

b) Expected sources

The cost estimate is done on the basis of the total activities visualized in the National Plan of Action. This includes the cost to be expended through system mechanism as well as through the communities, households and individuals. The expenditures to be made through different sources are anticipated as following:

Table II-6: Total estimated expenditure by different sectors

Total estimated expenditure by different sectors (Rs in Millions)

Sectors	Tenth Plan	Eleventh Plan	Twelfth Plan	Grand Total
GON	46719.3	56281.5	54577.0	157577.8
Donor	29025.8	32817.3	20973.0	82816.2
Local Community/Parents	12571.3	23261.8	19080.8	54913.8
Total	88316.4	112360.5	94630.8	295307.7
Donor + GON	75745.1	89098.8	75550.0	240394.0

The financing plan assumes that all regular and recurrent types of expenditure will be borne by the internal sources of the government and the local community and local bodies will share some portion of specific activities. External Development Partners (EDPs) meet all the development costs. Based on these assumptions, the amount to be borne by the donors is estimated at Rs 82.8 billion or (US\$ 1061.7 million). The government would require allocating Rs 157.5 billion (US\$ 2020.2 million) during the 2001-15 period.

Of the total expenditure by the government, a significant amount will be in the form of regular budget. This will consist of the salary component.

Resource mobilization at the community and family level is anticipated to be significantly high in the implementation of the plan. The expenditure cost is expected to take place in the form of direct cost bearing in both subsidized and nonsubsidized environment.

c) GDP and education budget

Based on the assumption of a medium GDP growth scenario and assumption that the government would allocate 3.5% of GDP for the education sector and 1.5% of GDP for the EFA program, the following trend is expected.

Table II-7: Expenditure by Plans

Resource Envelope Constant Price (NRs Million)					
SN	Expenditure Heading	Tenth Plan	Eleventh Plan	Twelfth Plan	Grand Total
1	GDP Current Price	3068102.0	5132776.7	4615642.4	12816521.0
2	Education Budget	104638.5	205049.6	205765.9	515454.1
3	GDP	3.41	3.99	4.45	4.02

d) Resource Gap

As is seen from the above table and the current education expenditure in terms of GDP the gap between estimated cost and the actual fund available could be anticipated to some extent. An estimation of the education budget vis a vis the GDP current price and the extrapolation of the budget provisioned in education program indicate a resource gap of about Rs 76. 1 billion (US\$976 million). This gap represents the amount to be met from additional sources including additional support from the development partners.

vi. External and internal funding support for the EFA Program

Education for All in Nepal is supported by the fund donations from the friendly countries and development partners. The fund is made available under the joint fund scheme where the donations are pooled together to support the EFA activities. The major donors include DANIDA, NORAD, DFID, The World Bank, ADB, FINIDA, EC, JICA and UN organizations including UNICEF and UNESCO.

vii. Strategy in place for the monitoring and evaluation of the EFA program

Regular school based census is one of the important strategies for the monitoring and evaluation of the EFA program. This strategy has been strengthened in the form of annual flash reports. The flash reports provide EFA indicators based statistics to report the status and also to help to analyze the trend. Appraisal of the situation undertaken by different stakeholders in the form of studies is another important strategy of monitoring and evaluation. Formative research project was launched by MOES with the technical assistance

of the government of Norway and professional support of CERID, a national educational research organization since 2001 to monitor progress and also to provide critical information and understanding regarding implementation issues for strategic policy changes. The formative research has been providing important indicator based information and case studies for MOES and stakeholders on annual basis.

Most importantly, there is provision of annual reviews and mid-term reviews involving the donors regarding the progress of the implementation of the EFA program. The reviews produce reports that critically analyze the implementation and also provide suggestions. ASIP is prepared based on the review report, the research report and the indicators produced by the flash report as well as the formative research.

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

Institution	Roles and Functions
MOES	Formulation of educational policy, plans and programs and giving directions for their implementation Education sector annual planning, programming and budgeting Policy analysis and development Institutional coordination Research and Design Foreign aid co-ordination and mobilization of national and international resources Education sector management information system Monitoring and evaluation at macro level Public relations and parliamentary affairs
DOE	Annual programming and budgeting for primary and secondary education Design of educational development programs and dissemination Research and development Technical assistance to districts for program implementation Policy management and enforcement Feedback to the Ministry on educational policies and programs Supervision and monitoring of program implementation in the districts
CDC	Curriculum policy framing and planning Design, review and revise curricula and textbooks Authorize and publish textbooks and supplementary reading materials Promote sound assessment practice in schools through assessment guidelines and training workshops Develop teacher support materials for effective use of curricula and textbooks Curriculum dissemination and monitoring Curriculum evaluation and research Development of school library
NCED	Planning and organizing in-service training of teachers, educational managers, head teachers and other educational personnel Training of trainers Accreditation of training courses Development of training packages and materials Identification of professional needs of teachers and other educational personnel Coordination of public and private teacher training institutions Support and supervision to ETCs Research on teacher development and teaching Development of teacher management information system
NFEC	Annual planning and programming for adult education program Post-literacy and continuing education program Implementation of NFE programs in partnership with local bodies and NGOs Supervision and monitoring of NFE programs Organization of literacy campaigns Design and implement out-of-school education
RED	Coordination of the implementation of educational plans and programs within the region

Institution	Roles and Functions
	Professional upgrading of educational personnel through training, workshops, and seminars Monitoring and evaluation of DEOs Coordination of DEO activities within the region Supervision
DEO	School administration Decentralized planning School improvement planning Teacher personnel management Preparation and costing of educational plans, programs and projects. Teacher evaluation Implementation management School evaluation and monitoring Working with NGOs, community-based organizations, teacher associations and local governments Administration and management of examinations General and financial administration
RC	Identification of recurrent training needs of teachers Planning of recurrent/refresher training courses Training follow-up, supervision and evaluation Classroom observation and analysis of classroom data Teacher professional support Conducting professional meetings, workshops, and seminars Conducting community surveys and community mobilization Coordination of cluster-wide instructional activities
VEC	Coordination of SMCs, schools and educational programs within the VDC Preparation of educational plans and programs within the VDC Advise the VDC on educational matters Monitoring and follow-up of implementation of educational plans and programs within the VDC (e.g., early childhood education, literacy) Mobilize resources
SMC	Preparation of school improvement plans and programs Recruitment of temporary teachers Monitor school and teacher performance Mobilize resources for school development Oversee general functioning of the school Mobilize communities in the preparation and execution of school improvement plans Reward and punishment of teachers Management of school funds and property Control of school finance
Local bodies (DDC, VDC, Municipality)	Prepare plan and programs to ensure basic and primary education within their area Generate resources to support education programs Monitor education activities to ensure accountability towards the beneficiary Support for program implementation-- coordination, resource mobilization and monitoring Prepare literacy/education maps Prepare formal and nonformal education plans Launch programs/campaigns for eliminating illiteracy Building relationship with the agencies working in the respective areas Be aware of the different cost-effective and innovative measures for increasing the number of literate.
UN Agencies, INGOs, Development Partners (EDPs)	Linkage and support, program facilitation, financial support, evaluation Develop partnership program for education activities
NGOs	Advocacy for basic and primary education Awareness programs Monitoring of educational development
CLCs	To implement NFE Program, To provide life skills to the out-of-school youths and adults using NFE materials as well as new materials and activities To facilitate community-based forum for EFA activities

Institution	Roles and Functions
	To provide material and institutional support to community education
Schools	Education program implementation To deliver basic and primary education including life skills to the children through school curriculum Organize extension activities for EFA
Teacher organizations	Advocacy for basic and primary education Awareness programs Monitoring of educational development Monitoring of professional development for quality improvement
PTA and local intellectuals	Safeguard beneficiaries interest Support classroom practices for joyful learning

III. Analysis of the EFA Goals

The World Education Forum on Education for All (EFA), held in Dakar, has adopted the Dakar Framework for Action (DFA), Education for All: Meeting our collective commitments. The Dakar Framework for Action lists six major EFA goals to be achieved by 2015. It also lists strategies for achieving the goals. The focus of the framework is on collective commitments nationally as well as internationally to ensure that no country is left behind because of a lack of technical capacity or resources. This international commitment comes both as an inspiration as well as a support for the development of basic and primary education in Nepal. And the country has adopted continued EFA campaign as the core strategy of educational development. It has adopted the goals of EFA as the goals of educational development in the country. The time line and the strategies outlined by the world forum have also been adopted. The National Plan of Action for achieving the goals of EFA has thus been a national priority.

The National Plan of Action of Nepal has outlined its framework according to the following six major goals set by the Dakar Forum for the year 2015.

1. Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, 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 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 programs.
4. Achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.
5. Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girl's 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 recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

These goals and strategies have been adopted in the NPA to suit the national contexts in keeping with the spirit and the ultimate goals of EFA. In view of the ethnic, social and linguistic diversities that the country is endowed with, one more goal has been considered while preparing the NPA. The goal is to ensure the rights of indigenous people and linguistic minorities to quality basic and primary education through their mother tongue.

i. Description of EFA goals and specific national targets

The EFA goals are targeted to be achieved gradually phase by phase by 2015. The following table lists the targets in different time mark, particularly by the end of the national development plan periods.

Table III-1: Targets by core EFA indicators

Indicators	2000	2005	End of 10 th Plan, 2007	By 2012 (including interim plan period)	2015
1. Gross enrolment rate, GER for ECD	13	20	32	60	80
2. % of New entrants at Grade 1 with ECD	10.5	30	40	65	80
3. Gross Intake Rate, GIR at Grade 1	141	125	123	111	102
4. Net Intake Rate, NIR at Grade 1	53.7 ^a	67	73	89	98

Indicators	2000	2005	End of 10 th Plan, 2007	By 2012 (including interim plan period)	2015
5. GER at Primary Grades 1-5	119.8	110	110	110	105
6. Net Enrolment Rate, NER (Primary Grades 1-5)	80.4	88	90	95	100
7. Primary Exp. /GNP	1.8 ^b	1.9	2.0	2.3	2.5
8. Primary Exp./Total Ed. Exp.	56.7 ^b	60	62	65	65
9. % of teachers with req. qualification and training	15.4	50	100	100	100
10. % of teachers with required Certification	-	60	100	100	100
11. Pupil Teacher Ratio	37	34	34	31	30
12. Repetition Rate					
Grade 1	42	30	24	14	10
Grade 5	11	9	8	8	8
13. Survival rate up to G5	63	71	75	86	90
14. Efficiency	55	63	67	76	80
15. % of Learning Achievement at Grade 5	40	52	57	70	80
16. % of Literacy Age Group 15-24	70 ^c	76	79	86	95
17. % of Literacy					
Age Group 6+ years	54 ^c	65	75	85	90
Age Group 15+ years	48 ^c	58	63	70	75
18. Literacy GPI (15+ years)	0.6 ^c	0.7	0.8	0.9	1.0

a/ 1997, b/2001/02, c/ 2001

ii. Strategies to achieve the goal

The EFA goals are part of the comprehensive national vision regarding implementation of basic and primary education in Nepal. Nepal envisages that by 2015 there should be universal access to quality basic education which is relevant to the current time. EFA campaign is the key strategy to be followed for giving a concrete form to the vision.

In order to fully achieve the EFA goals by 2015, the overall strategies is to co-ordinate and streamline all the ongoing programs including those undertaken by the government, local bodies, communities, NGOs and others concerned. The ongoing programs will be reinforced, the system capacity enhanced, and new programs launched, where necessary. There will be networking of educational institutions such as schools, Community Learning Centres, Community Based Organizations, and other Non Governmental Organizations that will be continually generating knowledge and disseminating information. There will be a social web to ensure that all the children, youths and adults have at least basic knowledge, skills and information for sustainable living with dignity. The overall development strategy as suggested by the NPA consists of three stage strategies: immediate, medium term and long term strategies.

a) Immediate Strategy (2001-2005)

BPEP was the main immediate strategy to meet the targets set for 2005. BPEP is a major national program that has been developed according to the BPEP Master Plan. It was started in 1992 as a project. The program was extended to Phase II (1999-2004) as the major government program for basic and primary education sub-sector.

The Tenth Plan (2002-2007) also constituted the immediate strategy for achieving EFA. For this, EFA targets were adopted in the 10th Plan.

Following BPEP, an evaluation was undertaken and EFA core plan document was prepared for the period (2004-09). The EFA core plan is currently being implemented by consolidating EFA program to make it more effective and encompassing.

BPEP and EFA core plan programs have been guided by regular reviews and preparation of Annual Strategic Implementation Plan (ASIP) with detailed program and budget breakdowns. Regular review meetings are held to monitor and facilitate the progression of the program. Besides the government budget, this program is supported by the donors' group under the basket funding scheme.

b) Medium Term Strategies (2005-12)

The major actions during the medium term plan strategy focus on quality and a satisfactory level of learning with life relevant skills, specifically emphasising on:

- integrated approach to ECD -- community-based ECD and school-based ECD
- free and compulsory primary education of reasonable quality
- open learning opportunities to enhance life-long learning
- income generation program for the parents
- completion of infrastructure for the initiation of basic and primary education up to grade 8
- increasing the minimum qualification of teachers (12+ years of education with 10 month training)

EFA core plan 2004-9 has been provisioned to address the medium term strategies; programs are already being prepared such as School Sector Reform Program to continue the thrust of EFA after 2009.

c) Long-term Strategies (2012-15)

The long-term strategies of NPA constitute the last 3 years of the EFA national plan. In this stage the school sector reform program will address EFA activities comprehensively including quality and sustainability aspects.

By 2015, all the children of current primary school age group (6-10) will participate in and complete primary education achieving a satisfactory and acceptable level of learning. The exercises for extending basic and primary education will be continued. The major actions during the long-term plan will include:

- extension of basic and primary education up to grade 8 (grades 1-8)
- decentralised curriculum and textbooks with adequate life skill-related content
- improvement in the school curriculum practices as per the national curriculum framework
- ensuring promotion of teacher qualification and training
- introduction of information technology-based education at the basic and primary level
- comprehensive approach to development of school education including pre-primary, primary and secondary education, drawing the support of the stakeholders focused on the contextual needs of children's learning

With the rapid development of primary school education and the increasing demand for higher levels of school education it was felt necessary to take a comprehensive approach to school sector reform. In this regard the government of Nepal has initiated development of a comprehensive school sector reform plan (SSR) since 2006. The plan will be finalized, adopted, and implemented by the government in 2009. The major focuses of the SSR initiatives include:

- Rights based approach to quality education

- Ensuring inclusive classrooms and school environment
- Developing provisions for primary education in mother tongue
- Developing national framework of norms and standards for quality education
- Enhancing teacher capacity and qualification
- Re-structuring school education to consider 1-8 grades as basic and primary and 9-12 as secondary education
- Decentralising school management with the focus on school based management to empower local bodies and ensure participation of the local community in school improvement
- Improving school management with emphasis on development of capacity of head teachers and the SMCs
- Promoting public-private partnership and linkages with NGOs/INGOs for expanding resource base and ensuring equitable access of disadvantaged to quality school education.

Theme 1: Early Childhood Care and Education

A. National Action Plan/Education Reform Program

i. Statement of EFA Goal

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

ii. Description of EFA Goal and specific national targets

The EFA goal regarding the Early Childhood Development is based on the Dakar Framework for EFA. The EFA National Plan of Action and the EFA Core Document 2004-2009 programs in Nepal have made commitments to expand and improve ECD provisions throughout the country in order to achieve the goal. Various forms of early care and education programs that include school-based, community-based and privately run pre-primary and kindergarten schools were brought under one umbrella terminology—ECD.

The country has set a target to provide services to 80 percent of ECD-age children by the year 2015. Similarly, it has targeted to have 80 percent of new entrants at Grade 1 with ECD exposure by 2015.

The following table presents the current status of ECD provisions together with the targets set for the year 2015 by both EFA/NPA and the EFA core document 2004-2009

Table III-2: EFA indicator-wise Targets:

Indicators related to ECD	2000	2005	2007	2012	2015
1. Gross enrolment rate, GER for ECD	13	20	32	60	80
2. % of New entrants at Grade 1 with ECD	10.5	30	40	65	80

(Source: EFA National Plan of Action, MOES)

iii. Strategies to achieve the goal

Based on the existing legal provisions and policy measures, the Ministry of Education and Sports and Department of Education have adopted a number of strategies to achieve the EFA ECD goal in Nepal. The major strategies adopted are summarised below.

Coordination, networking and partnership

Both the National Plan of Action and the Core Document for EFA 2004-2009 emphasized the need for coordination, networking and partnership with communities for implementing ECD programs. This strategy was adopted to minimise the duplication of services and making optimal use of the resources available. Coordination in ECD programs is aimed at adopting an integrated approach to child development in terms of program contents, delivery and harmony in the program. ECD training packages, curricula and learning materials were developed to cater to local needs and address children's diversity.

Networking of the relevant institutions was created to facilitate sharing of program materials, knowledge and experience for optimum benefit to each other. At the central level, the Department of Education has developed a forum for networking of institutions and individuals dedicated to ECD in Nepal. All the organizations working at the national level are encouraged to become members of the ECD National Network. Similarly, at the district and VDC/municipality levels, a network of ECD service providers has been provisioned at the District Education Office. All organizations working at the district and VDC/Municipality levels are encouraged to join the ECD Network. ECD programs undertaken or supported by local bodies, UN agencies, INGOs, NGOs and CBOs are harmonized through local as well as national level networks.

Partnerships with various stakeholders and relevant organizations have been sought in the implementation of the program. Partnership policy and guidelines for the partner organizations to implement and monitor the program and use of funds have been developed to this effect. UN agencies and INGOs are involved technically and financially in the program where the government resources are insufficient.

At the central level, a National Early Childhood Development Council has been formed under the chairpersonship of the Secretary, MOES. The members of the Council included representatives from MOH, MOLD, MOWCSW and the representatives of UN agencies, INGOs and NGOs. The Director of the Department of Education is the Member Secretary of the Council.

At the district level, the District Child Development Board (DCDB) has been constituted in 35 districts chaired by the District Development Committee Chairperson. The Board consists of members from the concerned line agencies. DCDB is responsible to ensure community participation and coordinate with local GOs, I/NGOs and local authorities.

DCDB will also contribute to raising funds and providing support to construct ECD centres.

Decentralized Management

Decentralization of authority to local bodies has been taken as a key strategy to enhance efficiency in ECD implementation and ensure sustainability of the ECD programs. Through the enactment of Local Self Governance Act the local elected bodies—VDCs and Municipalities, have been delegated the authority to run ECD centres through partnerships with NGOs, CBOs and local groups and authorize the interested bodies to run ECD centers. Guidelines have been developed to facilitate the process of decentralization and empower local bodies to run ECD programs. VDCs and Municipalities can open and/or give approval to ECD centres as per the local need. VDCs and municipalities have taken responsibility to approve the ECD centers in their localities.

Different activities have been identified and assigned to ECD actors based on their expertise. And all relevant stakeholders and partners are involved in planning jointly for the consolidation and expansion of ECD services.

District Education Office keeps the ECD records of education facilitators, trainers, development partners and local agencies involved in ECD. The Department of Education

also has a resource centre that keeps records of ECD activities and materials. These resource centres are open for all those interested in ECD activities.

ECD centres are run under the management committee which is chaired by a parent. The other members include VDC/ Municipalities ward chairperson and the representatives of local CBOs, the head teacher of nearby school and the parents. The ECD Management Committee is responsible for the designing, implementation and monitoring of the centre. It is the responsibility of the concerned management committees to generate the resources and properly utilize the available resources. The ECD management committee is also responsible for recruitment, training, supporting and monitoring the performance of the ECD workers (facilitator and helper). One of the major functions of the committee is to ensure community participation in the operation of ECD centre and take ownership of the centre from management and financial perspectives.

Since a network of community-managed schools is in place in the country, this network will be encouraged and mobilized to run pre-primary classes or child development centres wherever feasible. The management responsibility of pre-primary classes in community schools is borne by a separate sub-committee of parents working under the overall supervision of the School Management Committee.

Government has provided the grant to the existing ECD/PPCs under the specific headings.

The new approaches and activities regarding ECD will be piloted and improvement activities will be carried out based on the lessons learned.

Community Involvement

Since all ECD centres and PPCs are established at community as community based units communities play a key role in the implementation and monitoring of ECD programs. Accordingly community participation has been provisioned as basis for program initiation and evaluation.

The responsibility to manage and operate ECD centres rests on the local bodies, whereas pre-primary classes are the responsibility of the schools with extensive community support and participation. Both programs are being implemented on cost sharing basis. Schools will have to identify ways of sharing the cost in the case of pre-school classes. Partnership between schools and CBOs/NGOs has been encouraged.

In order to increase the parents' awareness and involve the local community people in the management of ECD programs various forms of parental orientation and education programs are being launched by various organizations. The DOE has been conducting parental orientation programs to make the parents aware about the importance of ECD services and need for ECD centres.

Parental education programs are being undertaken for the parents in order to deliver early childhood services to their children. INGOs such as SC/US, Plan Nepal, UNICEF, SC/Norway and World Vision have implemented this program in their respective project areas. The DOE has, in the recent years, developed Introductory Parental Education Package. Development of a national framework for parental education is in the offing.

Parental education is conducted by ECD centers for the parents of the children enrolled in ECD centers. Similarly some of the CLCs have also recently started to organize parental education program for the parents.

Human Resources Development

The following strategies were adopted in order to fulfil the Human Resource required for implementing ECD programs. A cascade system of training ECD personnel is being

implemented. Under this system Master Trainers and Trainers are prepared at the central level who, in turn train the facilitators.

In order to develop required human resources for launching ECD programs, a provision has been made to offer ECD as an optional subject in secondary schools.

Use of Communication and Mass Media

In order to raise the awareness on the importance of ECD services and the rights of the child as well as proper way of dealing with the young children among various stakeholders the use of communication and mass media has been taken as a major strategy. Parental education and training of the facilitators has been operated through mass media by various organizations at different points of time such as Equal Access, Seto Gurans National Child Development Services and Bikalpa Gyan Tatha Bikash Kendra. Earlier in early 1990s, UNICEF Nepal had launched a radio program known as Bhanjyang Chautari to support the facilitators during BPEP I.

Two separate audio-visual cassettes have been developed by DOE for advocating the ECD program and supporting the ECD workers. The first cassette is targeted to the general public--basically ECD program implementers. The second cassette is targeted to the trainers and facilitators, which is focused on ECD classroom activities.

iv. Budget and financing plan

The Government has been providing remuneration to all the facilitators of ECD centers running under DOE quota. The ECD Management Committees have full authority to mobilize the fund required for the ECD centres.

Besides this, government is providing matching fund, material cost, establishment cost and training cost.

The matching fund provided by the Government and the fund generated locally are used for the ECD centers.

The following table presents an estimated cost of the Program activities for the entire EFA period (2004-15).

Table III-3: Estimated Cost of the Program Activities

(Rs in Million)						
SN	Expenditure Heading	Unit Cost	Tenth Plan	Eleventh Plan	Twelfth Plan	Grand Total
1	ECD Establishment		4014.0	3909.0	2362.0	10285.0
2	ECD Operation		10966.0	21554.0	18058.0	50578.0
3	District RC Establishment		13.5	15.0	9.0	37.5
4	DRC Operation		7.6	22.5	20.7	50.8
5	Advocacy		5.0	5.0	3.0	13.0
6	Capacity Building		2.5	2.5	1.5	6.5
7	Curricular Management		1.0	1.0	0.5	2.5
8	Parental Education		0.5	0.5	0.5	1.5
9	Health and Nutrition		1.0	2.0	2.0	5.0
	Total		15011.1	25511.5	20457.2	60979.8
	GON		2007.0	1954.5	1181.0	5142.5
	Donor		4045.1	3957.5	2399.2	10401.8
	Local Community/Parents		8959.0	1959.5	1687.0	45435.5

Source: EFA Core Document, 2004-09.

Below is the description of the cost estimate for ECD.

Table III-4: Estimated cost by themes and regular budget

(Rs in Million)					
SN	Expenditure Heading	Tenth Plan	Eleventh Plan	Twelfth Plan	Grand Total
	ECD	15011.1	25511.5	20457.2	60979.8

Theme-wise expenditure of the Government is anticipated as follows:

Table III-5: Theme-wise expenditure of GON

Theme-wise expenditure of GON (Rs in Million)					
SN	Expenditure Heading	Tenth Plan	Eleventh Plan	Twelfth Plan	Grand Total
1	ECD	2007.0	1954.5	1181.0	5142.5

Below is an estimation of the budget expenditure by the community and the parents.

Table III-6: Total Expenditure by Community and Parents

Total Expenditure by Community and Parents (Rs in Million)					
SN	Expenditure Heading	Tenth Plan	Eleventh Plan	Twelfth Plan	Grand Total
1	ECD	8959.0	19599.5	16877.0	45435.5

Source: ECD Strategy Paper, 2004

Public Expenditure on ECCE Programs as a Percentage of Total Public Expenditure on Education

Table III-7: Budget allocated for ECD (as per Red Book) in Rupees (In Millions)

	2000	2002	2003	2004/05	2005/06	2006	2007	2012	2015
Total EFA Budget				2956.215	3258.589				
Total ECD Budget				129.915	177.462				
%									

The estimated cost required for achieving ECD target as set by National plan of action is 60979.8 million Nepalese rupees (MOES, 2003).

B. Implementation of EFA Goal

i. General policies and program

In response to the commitments made by the Government of Nepal in the international forums—World Summit for Children, World Conference on Education for All, and UN Convention on the Rights of the Child—national plans and policies for early childhood development have been developed.

The Government plans and policies are reflected in the Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-07), Ten Year National Program of Action (POA) for Children and Development (1992), Education for All National Plan of Action (EFA/NPA-2001-2015), Basic and Primary Education Program (BPEPII Implementation Plan 1999-2004) and Core Document for EFA 2004 – 2009 and ECD Strategic Plan (2004). A review of these plans has revealed the current policies on ECD as follows:

Strategic Paper for Early Childhood Development in Nepal (2004)

Strategic Paper for Early Childhood Development in Nepal (2004) has made following provisions:

By 2007, in each ward of a VDC there will be at least one ECD center and in the case of a ward in a Municipality there will be four ECD centers.

VDCs and Municipalities will take full responsibility to establish and operate these centers with government support as well as with the resource mobilization at the local level.

VDCs and Municipalities will collaborate with NGOs/INGOs, CBOs and other community level organizations as required.

Private enterprises will be encouraged to run and support ECD centers.

Community based ECD centers will receive support from all concerned ministries and other agencies. MOES with the support of ECD council will work as a coordinating body.

The major thrusts listed in the strategic paper on ECD include:

- Development of policies and programs
- Integrated approach to ECD
- Adoption of community-based approach
- Delegation of authority to local bodies
- Implementation of low cost programs
- Implementation of parental education program
- Capacity building

Based on the strategic paper an Early Childhood Development Program Implementation Guideline was prepared by the Department of Education, Ministry of Education and Sports in 2005 (2061 BS). The guideline is being used in the implementation of ECD programs.

ECD in the Tenth Plan (2002 - 2007)

The tenth five year plan has mentioned ECD as the main basis for holistic development of children and prepare them for enrolment in primary level. Expansion of community based ECD, orientation to headteachers and teachers of primary school as well as parents are main main emphasis of the 10th plan for ECD program.

ECD in the Ninth Plan (1998-2002)

The Ninth Plan in its child development column reviewed the child development activities of the Eighth Plan period. The review reported following achievements of this period: preparation of policy on child development, which included physical and psychosocial development of children from conception to school entry age; development of a ten-year National Program of Action for Children and Development; and Nepal Multiple Indicator Surveillance that included health, nutrition and education level of children.

The Ninth Plan recognized children as the future backbone of the country and stated its child development objectives as: (1) to promote physical and mental development of the children and (2) to safeguard the rights of the children. The Plan has devised the following policies for the development of children at early childhood:

- The Plan emphasized implementing appropriate early childhood development programs for the children below five years of age. Such programs will be implemented by adopting a community-based approach and will be extended to the children living in remote and rural areas.
- The education for children below pre-school age group will be enhanced in both quantitative as well as qualitative terms.
- Communication media such as the radio and the television will be mobilized to run child-related programs for the psychological development of children as well as their overall personality.
- Co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation of the child development programs run by the government, national and international non-governmental organizations and other organizations will be institutionalized.

- In order to enhance awareness about 'Child Rights' the non-governmental and social organizations will be mobilized to launch parental education programs.
- The Plan has targeted to establish 10,000 pre-primary schools under the Basic and Primary Education Project during the Ninth Plan period.
- Similar to the previous Plans, the Ninth Plan also placed emphasis on mobilizing local communities to make available the resources required for running the ECD centers. The government's role was to provide technical assistance, such as ECD teachers' training, educational materials, etc.

ECD in Ten Year National Program of Action for Children and Development

In response to the Declaration of the World Summit for Children (1990), a Ten-Year National Program of Action for Children and Development for the 1990s was formulated in Nepal in 1992. This National Program of Action (POA) has emphasized putting early childhood development on a national priority level.

The POA pointed out the importance of a united strategy for child development. It recognized that 'fragmented and isolated efforts by different sectors and agencies are costly and, therefore, a coordinated and integrated approach with cross-sectoral linkages is essential' (p. 7). The POA therefore aimed to get effective inter-sectoral implementation and co-ordination as well as committed community participation.

The POA has stressed securing more resources from donor agencies for the cause of child development and mobilizing international and national NGOs and other voluntary organizations.

One of the significant features of this POA is that it has included pre-primary education as a part of basic education. The Program of Action is aimed at providing universal access to basic education, which also includes pre-primary education.

The POA also emphasized systematizing pre-primary education initiated by private entrepreneurs and schools; providing pre-primary education to all under-aged children enrolled in Grade 1 in government-aided schools; and encouraging and facilitating the growth of community-based pre-primary education programs.

ECD in Education for All: Plan of Action (1992-2000)

In 1992, the Ministry of Education and Culture had prepared an action plan for Education for All. This Plan of Action had specified the national goal of pre-primary education as: to enhance the physical, intellectual, socio-emotional, moral and creative development of the young children. To achieve the goals the Plan had devised the following policies:

- ◊ Run community-based and low-cost pre-primary education centers on community demands and initiatives.
- ◊ Systematize all types of existing pre-primary education programs by specifying the curriculum, methods and materials to be used.
- ◊ Supervise and evaluate the program activities.
- ◊ Establish a link between pre-school and primary education.
- ◊ Give preference to women facilitators in the recruitment process.

The Plan has also devised the following strategies for the development of pre-primary education:

- ◊ Disseminate information about the importance of pre-primary education through mass media.
- ◊ Encourage local community to start pre-primary education program.
- ◊ Authorize Village Development Committees to raise tax on local productions to fund the expenses of pre-primary education programs.
- ◊ Encourage use of locally available low-cost educational materials.
- ◊ Encourage play-way activities in pre-primary education centers.
- ◊ Recruit teachers/facilitators from local community.

The Plan also emphasized using the mother tongue of the children as the medium of instruction at the pre-primary education centers. It has also pointed out the need for a special provision to make pre-school education available to socially and economically disadvantaged communities and ethnic groups. The Plan has also suggested the establishment of a Pre-primary Education Section under the Basic and Primary Education Division in the Ministry of Education for the purpose of facilitating and regulating pre-primary education undertakings.

In addition, the Plan has created a strategy to assist (technically and financially) the training institutions that prepare human resources required for the pre-primary education programs. This is one of the important points the plan had for the first time in Nepal incorporated in its strategies.

ECD in Basic and Primary Education Master Plan (1997-2002)

The Basic and Primary Education Master Plan developed by the Ministry of Education (MOE) has specified three goals of early childhood development: (1) To initiate an institutionalized provision of guided development of children of 4-5 age group in mental, physical and intellectual spheres; (2) To create awareness among parents and community leaders of the need for providing facilities to help children develop their innate capacities before entering primary schools; and (3) To reduce the enrollment of underage children in grade I of primary schools.

In order to institutionalize the ECD activities the Master Plan has recommended formation of various committees and units. The plan has emphasized forming a national committee on Early Childhood Care and Education composed of members from National Planning Commission, Ministries of Education, Local Development, Women's Development and Social Welfare, Health, and Communication. The committee is to be made responsible for formulating policies and programs for ECD. It has also recommended forming a Program Implementation and Co-ordination Committee, which will be responsible for preparing annual plans of operation and for ensuring the implementation of the plans by all the responsible agencies. Another recommendation made by it was to establish a Pre-primary Education Unit in the Ministry of Education.

The Plan also tried to delink the term 'Early Childhood Education and Development' from 'Early Childhood Care and Education' clearly mentioning that it will "concentrate only on the educational part of early childhood development of 4-5 age children" (p. 81). The Plan further states, "The MOE should be responsible for the ECD/ECE for children of 4+ and 5+ age group . . . [and] The Ministry of Local Development should be responsible for the programs relating to Early Childhood Care and Education" (p. 569). However, the Plan also emphasized the need for seeking assistance from different ministries wherever their assistance would be required in either case.

The Plan emphasized the need for adopting the policy of establishing ECD centers by providing partial financial support to interested Village Development Committees.

It also stressed the need for expanding the programs to raise awareness of ECD. Use of mass media is emphasized to convey the messages of ECD to the parents of rural and remote areas. Raising awareness has also been important in preparing VDCs to initiate ECD programs.

Importance of developing human resources at various levels has also been indicated in the Plan.

Significance has also been attached to the need for linking the ECD with the non-formal and literacy programs.

In sum, an analysis of the above-given description of the policies on ECD indicates that the government's policy on ECD is restricted to:

- ◇ mobilizing NGOs, INGOs, and communities to launch ECD programs,
- ◇ emphasizing the need for integrating child-related services following an inter-sectoral approach,
- ◇ emphasizing the need for community participation in the implementation of ECD programs,
- ◇ stressing the need for mobilizing resources from the local communities and/or external agencies,
- ◇ delegating the rights and responsibilities to establish ECD centers and issuing permissions to establish ECD centers in the VDCs and Municipalities,
- ◇ adopting the mother tongue of the children as the medium of instruction,
- ◇ recruiting teachers/facilitators from among the local community

Realization of the need for ECD especially for disadvantaged children living in remote and rural areas, the plans and policies developed so far have indicated the need for expanding ECD for child development. Government of Nepal started taking interest in ECD programs with the implementation of the country's Seventh Plan (1987-1992). In the seventh plan, the Government recognized the need for appropriate services for children from the time of conception. However, the Government was not able to develop specific plans and policies other than encouraging families and communities to take initiatives in delivering childcare services. In the Eighth Plan (1992-1997), the Government reiterated the commitments made in the Seventh Plan. In the Ninth Plan (1997-2002), the Government developed some specific plans and policies for the expansion of ECD in the country. It placed emphasis on implementing appropriate ECD programs for children below five years of age including the children from disadvantaged communities living in remote and rural areas. The Tenth Plan (2002-2007) targeted to establish 13000 ECD centres by 2007 and provide facilitators with training on ECD pedagogy, concept and philosophy. Tenth plan envisaged orienting all primary school teachers and head teachers and providing parental education to 2,66,000 parents.

Beginning from the Seventh Plan to the Tenth Plan emphasis was placed on mobilizing local communities to make available the resources required for running the ECD Program. The Government is providing only the technical assistance, such as facilitator's training and minimum educational materials to the ECD centres. The Plan of Action (POA) for Children and Development has stressed securing more resources from donor agencies for the cause of child development and mobilizing international and national NGOs and voluntary

organizations. The BPE Master Plan emphasized the need to adopt the policy of establishing ECD centres by providing partial financial support to interested Village Development Committees. The National Plan of Action emphasized the need to authorize the Village Development Committee to collect taxes on local production to support the expenses of pre-primary education programs. In addition, the Plan has created a strategy to assist (technically and financially) the training institutions that prepare human resources required for the pre-primary education program.

The importance of coordination among different organizations and ECD stakeholders was highlighted in the Seventh Plan. The Eighth Plan recommended to set up the National Child Development Council (NCDC) to coordinate child development activities in the country. As a result, NCDC was formed during the Eighth Plan period. The Ninth Plan pointed out the importance of coordination, monitoring and evaluation of child development activities carried out by the Government as well as I/NGOs and other aid agencies. Moreover, the Ninth Plan emphasized the need for institutionalising coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the ECD programs supported by various stakeholders. In order to institutionalise coordination in ECD activities, Basic and Primary Education (BPE) Master Plan recommended forming committees and establishing functional units at various levels. The plan stressed the need for coordination at different levels of ECD implementation.

Since 1991, MOES has adopted a policy of promoting the right based approach for the survival, development and protection of children. MOES recognizes the role of parents as primary caregivers and teachers. The 7th Amendment of the Education Act has emphasized the need for ECD centres for children below four years of age. ECD embraces the service delivery for children from birth to five. To ensure this, there is a need for encouraging and educating parents, families, communities and caregivers for their active involvement in care as well as development activities for the improvement of quality in children's life.

ii. Policies and programs mentioning specific target groups (disadvantaged groups)

The Government has made commitments to providing support for the establishment and development of the ECD Program. ECD programs are crucial, particularly in the context of Nepal's geo-physical conditions and socio-economic as well as diverse ethno-linguistic contexts. Different areas of Nepal are different in terms of accessibility and availability of resources. More importantly, there are sharp shortages of resources in poverty-ridden areas in the country. This calls for providing subsidies and support in remote areas and disadvantaged communities. The government is committed to providing basic support in all areas and additional support to disadvantaged communities.

Two different modalities of support will be adopted for urban and rural areas: demand driven approach with partial Government support for urban and accessible areas; and special support for establishment and operation of ECD centres in the areas of deprived and disadvantaged communities. Approximately twenty five percent of ECD centres will be established in the disadvantaged and poverty-ridden pockets of the country and the Government will provide the major portion of the cost to these centres. The committees will establish about fifty percent of the centre by encouraging them to be involved in these activities through incentive schemes. Such scheme will include construction materials, matching funds and training of local youths to be recruited as facilitators. These centres will receive only the partial amount for facilitators' salary and all the remaining cost will be borne by the communities. While providing financial support from the Government, special attention will be made to the children from high risk groups such as street children, orphans, children with disabilities, child labourers and children from *Dalit*, disadvantaged and *Kamaiya* families.

The development index developed by the National Planning Commission, which categorizes the district into four categories, has been followed in the development of special policies required for disadvantaged communities. The government has developed a policy of establishing ECD centers in poor and vulnerable communities of category D and C (least developed) districts. The proxy of adult illiteracy and pupil enrolment from census data is being used as a guide for allocation of ECD centers at the district level.

iii. Legislation and legal framework

The commitment by the Government of Nepal to expand and improve the provision of Early Childhood Development programs throughout the country is supported by a number of legal provisions and policy measures.

The Constitution of Nepal promulgated after the restoration of democracy in 1990 stresses the proper care and development of children. Article 26 (8) of the Constitution states that “The state shall make necessary arrangements to safeguard the rights and interest of children and shall ensure that they are not exploited, and shall make gradual arrangements for free education.”

The Local Self-governance Act 1999 has given the authority to the local bodies - Village Development Committees and Municipalities - to establish pre-primary schools/centres with their own resources, and grant permissions to establish, and run such schools/ centres.

iv. Responsible agencies and coordination of implementation

The ECD programs are being conducted by MOH, MOES and MOWCSW. The program conducted by MOH is mainly focused on health service such as immunization, growth monitoring for 0 to 3 years children. The MOES delivers the program for 3-5 years children focused on all-round development and preparation for schooling. The MOWCSW serve the program for the children specially focusing on welfare. All of these organizations have their own strategies and have district level offices such as DEO of the MOES and District Health Office of the MOH. The programs are being implemented by the district level offices. Various international organizations and UN agencies are supporting to implement the program both at the central and district levels.

A National ECD Council has been formed under the chairmanship of the Secretary of the MOES. The members of the Council included representatives from MOH, MOLD, MOWCSW, Federation of VDCs/municipalities, INGOs, UN agencies and private sector.

At the District level, DECD Committee is formed, which is chaired by DDC chairperson. The ECD Focal Person of DEO is the member secretary of the committee. The other members include representatives of DCWC, DEO, DDC, NGOs DHO, and the representative from the political parties, parents and local NGOs. The committee is responsible for resource mapping, coordination, monitoring and policy formulating at the district level.

At the local level the respective VDC or Municipality plays a crucial role in the implementation and monitoring of the ECD centers. The ECD Management Committees in the case of Community Based ECD programs and ECD Sub-Committee under the respective SMC, in the case of School Based ECD program, are formed. The management committees play a major role in the daily operation of the centers, monitor, and evaluate the progress of the centers. The committees are also responsible to mobilize the local community and secure their support in the implementation.

v. Budgeting and financing: resource mobilization and allocation

Funds for ECD programs have been mobilized through various measures. A large portion of the budget comes from the regular EFA pooling budget. Besides, UNICEF Nepal and UNESCO Kathmandu have been supporting in the implementation of ECD programs. Moreover, funds are also generated and spent by the respective ECD Program implementing agencies/organizations. The organizations such as Plan Nepal, SC/US, SC/Norway, World Vision, ETC and UN agencies generate funds for ECD programs and utilize in implementing ECD programs in their project districts. Similarly, the private sector mobilizes funds by charging a monthly fee to the parents.

vi. Quality assurance monitoring and evaluation

The facilitators of the respective ECD centres monitor the progress of the children on a regular basis by using portfolios and other appropriate record keeping mechanisms.

The Government has collaborated with INGOs and NGOs to provide technical support and ensure the quality of service through continuous monitoring and supervision. A monitoring form and reporting guidelines are developed for this purpose. At the district level, ECD Focal Person and relevant resource persons make visit to ECD centres, and monitor and evaluate their activities. At the central level, the activities of different GOs, NGOs and INGOs are reviewed by the DOE through review meetings of the concerned stakeholders.

The information generated by the formative research is employed as inputs to monitor the progress of the ECD Program. Formative research has been undertaking case studies and system indicator based progress evaluation of ECD Program.

The effectiveness and impact of ECD and parental education programs are also evaluated by the respective program implementing organizations in a periodic basis

C. Progress in achieving EFA goal

i. Performance indicators

ECD/PPC is a vital program to reduce the educational wastage especially in the early grades of primary education. The government has adopted a policy of introducing 1 year of pre-primary education in community schools. Out of 24,002 community (public) schools in the country, pre-primary classes are available in only 6,379 schools. This shows that the coverage of ECD/PPC is still very low. Contrary to this, almost all institutional (private) schools, which are generally located in urban areas, provide pre-primary education. There are 13,026 ECD/PPCs functioning throughout the country of which 4,633 are community-based ECD centers, 6,379 pre-primary classes in community schools (which are running as a school based ECD) and 2,014 ECD/PPCs did not report to this school census.

In the institutional schools, all 2,998 reported schools run PPCs. On average, each ECD/PPC had 22 children enrolled. Based on additional 44,308 (adjusted figure) children from the non-reporting ECD/PPCs, the GER of ECD/PPC is 41.4%.

The Government is committed to achieving the goals of Education for All (EFA) as laid down in the Dakar Framework for Action. To achieve the first goal of EFA as stipulated in the Dakar Framework, the government has prepared two important documents—namely, EFA National Plan of Action (EFA/NPA) 2001-2015 and EFA Core Document 2004 – 2009. Both EFA/NPA and EFA Core Document have set the target to increase the gross enrolment rate (GER) for ECD to 80 percent of children aged 3 to 5. Similarly, the percentage of new Grade 1 entrants with ECD exposure is targeted to rise to 80 percent.

The following table presents a picture of the target as envisioned in the plan and actual achievement made at different periods:

Table III-8: GER for ECD

Indicator	2000	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2012	2015
Targeted by EFA National Plan of Action (EFA/NPA) 2001 - 2015*	13				20		32	60	80
Achievement	11.7	17.6* *	19.9* *	39.4* *	69.9 ***	41.4* *			

Source: * EFA National Plan of Action (EFA/NPA) 2001 -2015.**DOE, MOES

Percentage of New Entrants (NE) to Primary Grade 1 who have attended Some Form of Organized ECCE Program

Table III-9: Percentage of new Grade 1 entrants with ECD

Indicator	2000	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2012	2015
% of new Grade 1 entrants with ECD as targeted by EFA National Plan of Action (EFA/NPA) 2001 -2015*	10.5				30		40	65	80
Achievement		9.6	13.7	10.9	24.0***	18.3			

Source: * EFA National Plan of Action (EFA/NPA) 2001 -2015.

**DOE, MOES

***TRSE

Children in grade 1 with ECD/PPC experience

The following table shows the number and percentage of children enrolled in Grade 1 with ECD/PPC experience by social categories. It reveals, as listed in the table below, that 18.3% of children enrolled in grade 1 in the school year 2006-07 have ECD/PPC experience. The percentages of *Dalit* and *Janajati* students have also increased in this year compared to the school year 2004-05 when only 9% of *Dalit* and 12% of *Janajati* children were enrolled in grade 1 with ECD/PPC experience.

Table III-10: Children in Grade 1 with ECD/PPC experiences by social groups (2006-07)

Social groups	Number of children in Grade 1			Children in grade 1 with ECD/PPC experiences			% of children in Grade 1 with ECD/PPC experiences		
	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total
Dalit	147453	152993	300446	25410	26496	51907	17.2	17.3	17.3
Janajati	250329	257883	508212	51885	54886	106771	20.7	21.3	21.0
Others	303289	329513	632802	49855	54815	104670	16.4	16.6	16.5
Nepal	701071	740389	1441460	127150	136198	263348	18.1	18.4	18.3

Health and Nutrition related performance indicators

Attempts were made to identify the status of health and nutrition among children under five years of age. The following tables present a picture of the health and nutritional status.

Table III-11: Percentage of Under-Fives Suffering from Stunting

Indicator	Total	Sex		Residence		Geographical		
		Girls	Boys	Urban	Rural	Mount	Hill	Terai
Percent of Under-Fives suffering from stunting	50.5	51.8	49.2	36.7	51.5	61.2	52.7	47.1

Source: Nepal Demographic and Health Survey 2001

Table III-12: Percent of Household Consuming Iodized Salt

Indicator	Total	Residence	Geographical
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		Urban	Rural	E & C Terai	E & C Hills	E & C Mts	All W Terai	All W Hills	All W Mts
Percent of Household consuming iodized salt - ≥ 15 ppm	57.7	82.9	53.0	51.7	63.4	71.2	53.8	59.0	65.3

Source: Nepal Iodine Deficiency Disorders Status Survey 2005

Percentage of Trained Teachers in ECCE Programs

In Nepal, most of the programs run by GOs, NGOs and INGOs provide 10 to 12 days training to the teachers, also known as facilitators and caregivers. A study conducted by CERID in 2000 revealed that the percentage of trained teachers/facilitators/caregivers was 56.3 %, which was based on the data collected from three districts (CERID, 2000).

In the case of privately run pre-school programs, most of the teachers lacked training. This was primarily due to the lack of access to training facilities to the teachers from the private schools.

ii. Time and cross sectional analysis

The following table depicts a time series expansion of ECD/PPC centers and number of children benefited by the programs.

Table III-13: Expansion of ECD/PPC centers and number of children

S.N	Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
1	No of ECD	1900	460	554	1400	1408	6000	4000
2	Total Benefited children	38000	47800	58300	86200	1144600	?	1441450

As is evident from the table the number of ECD centers and the number of children benefited have been increasing. There is however lack of cross sectional information regarding the development of ECD/PPC centers as well as the categories of children benefited from the centers.

iii. Quality and equity outcomes

Some of the important quality and equity outcomes relate to the following measures:

- Development of strategic paper on ECD
- Development of ECD implementation guidelines
- Development of National ECD curriculum
- Development of ECD indicators
- Implementation of capacity building program for the stakeholders (Master/Core trainers training, trainers' training, facilitators' training, orientation programs for ECD management committee members and parental orientation and education programs)
- Development of assessment tools for ECD centers.

D. Implementation gaps and disparities or Variations

The Education for All 2004-09 (EFA) program has set a target of 51% gross enrolment in pre-primary education by the year 2009. The table and figure below show that the country has achieved a 41.4% Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) with 40.9% for girls and 41.9% for boys. The Mountain zone has achieved a 36.8% GER, whereas it is 38.1 % and 36.3% for Hills and Terai zones respectively. The highest GER is observed in the Kathmandu Valley with 128%. The Kathmandu Valley, being economically and socially advanced, has the most concentrated pre-primary education in the country. An overwhelming number of the Institutional schools (private schools) with pre-primary classes are concentrated in the urban areas.

Table III-14: 3-4 years' population, total enrolment and GER in ECD/PPC by Eco-Zone

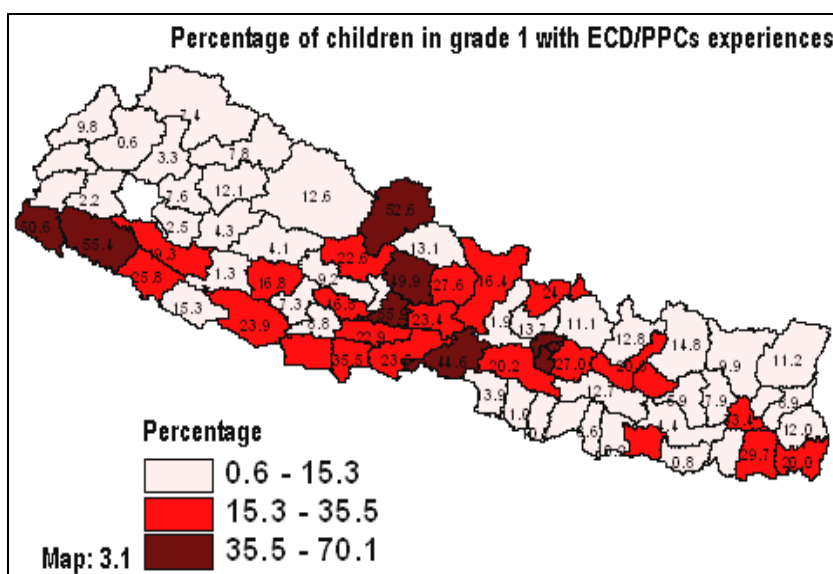
Eco-zones	3-4 Years Population			Number of children in ECD/PPC			GER		
	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total	Girls	Boys	Total
Mountain	47988	49881	97868	17880	18179	36059	37.3	36.4	36.8
Hills	237695	255402	493097	91147	96828	187975	38.3	37.9	38.1
Valley	30615	33459	64074	39507	42509	82017	129.0	127.0	128.0
Tarai	331465	351906	683371	116355	131577	247933	35.1	37.4	36.3
Nepal	647763	690647	1338410	264890	289094	553983	40.9	41.9	41.4

Source: Flash 1, 2006-07

It is generally perceived that private and boarding schools serve the children of well to do families. The government supported ECD and PPCs as well as those supported by INGOs, NGOs and others mainly serve the children in the rural villages and/or children from disadvantaged groups in the urban areas.

The following map also shows the disparities in terms of the percentage of children enrolled in grade 1 with the experience of ECD/PPCs in different districts.

Figure III-1: Percentage of children in grade 1 with ECD/PPCs experiences



There are 9 districts (Chitawan, Kaski, Kanchanpur, Mustang, Kailali, Syangja, Lalitpur, Kathmandu and Bhaktapur), where the percentage of children in grade 1 with ECD/PPCs experience is more than 35.5%, whereas there are 44 districts mostly Mountain, Hill and some Terai districts with below 16% of children in grade 1 with ECD/PPCs experience.

Moreover, there are 48 districts where the percentage of children with ECD/PPCs experience is below the national average (18.3%). Out of these 48 districts, there are 12 districts (Bajhang, Baitadi, Saptari, Salyan, Parbat, Doti, Dailekh, Bajura, Rukum, Jajarkot, Udayapur, Khotang) with below 5% of children in grade 1³ with ECD/PPC experience.

The following table shows the number of children in ECD/PPCs by social groups and sex. The total number of children enrolled in ECD/PPCs is 553,983 with 264,890 girls and 289,094 boys. Out of the total enrolment in ECD/PPCs there are 15.0% Dalit, 41.1% Janajati and 43.9% others. The GPI for ECD/PPC children is 0.95 for Dalit, 0.93 for Janajati and

³ Among the 75 districts Achham district did not report to this indicator.

0.89 for the others. For Dalits there is no significant difference in the enrolment of girls and boys in to ECD/PPCs.

Table III-15: 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

The total GPI for the GER was found 0.98 in 2006.

E. Success and remaining challenges in Implementation of EFA Goal

a. Success stories and good practices to be reinforced

- Partnership with INGOs and NGOs was proved successful in effective implementation of ECD programs. The DOE has developed a partnership with SC/US, SC/Norway, Plan Nepal and UNICEF Nepal in some of the districts. This has helped to minimize the duplication of work, ensuring effective monitoring of the programs and developed a strong feed back system, which were important for the effective and efficient implementation of the programs.
- Making ECD services accessible to children living in rural isolated pockets.
- Quality of the services provided is directly reflected in the qualification and motivation of the facilitators. Make provisions to attract human resources that are more qualified by making provisions for attractive remuneration based on qualifications and experiences.
- Effective monitoring system was found playing a key role in the success of the programs being run by INGOs and NGOs. Such a system need to be applied in the government supported programs as well.
- The partners are involved in planning and development of all the major activities undertaken at the central level. The partners' involvement was found effective in the development of ECD curriculum, Strategic paper, ECD implementation guidelines, assessment and ECD indicators. This has also helped to develop an ownership feeling among the partner organizations.

F. Recommendations for adjustments in terms of

i. Target settings with specific references to priority groups

- There is a need to develop criteria at the district level to implement ECD program at the needy areas and communities.
- In order to implement “demand based” ECD center implementation scheme there is a need to launch advocacy and awareness raising programs in the backward communities.
- There is a need to prepare the community people to take ownership of the centers.
- There is also a need to undertake ECD center mapping.

ii. Strategies for attaining the untrained and reaching the un-reached

- There is a need to develop a norm and a framework for facilitators training in order to ensure the quality of the training programs.
- There is a need to strictly enforce the mandatory requirement of training before joining the job as ECD workers.
- There is also a need to develop national training curricula for ECD workers at various levels.

Theme 2: Ensuring Free and Compulsory Primary Education

A. National Action Plan/Education Reform Program

i. Statement of EFA goal:

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

ii. Description of EFA goal and specific national targets

Ensuring that all children have access to a complete free primary/basic education entails a national definition of the term 'All Children'. As to the spirit of the existing Education Act and Regulation, the term 'all children' signifies children within 5 to 13 years of age living in the country, irrespective of their gender, caste, ethnicity or any other discrimination and is well tuned with the UN declaration of Human Rights as well as the consideration of Child Right Convention.

The NPA 2001-2015 targeted achieving net enrolment ratio of 88%, 90%, 95% and 100% respectively by the end of 2005, 2007, 2012 and finally, by 2015. The 10th national development plan (2002-2007) adopted the target of securing 90% NER at primary level by mid 2007. The following table lists the targets relating major access indicators.

Table III-16: Targets by core EFA indicators

Indicators	2000	2005	End of 10 th Plan, 2007	End of 11 th Plan, 2012	2015
1. Gross enrolment rate, GER for ECD	13	20	32	60	80
2. % of New entrants at Grade 1 with ECD	10.5	30	40	65	80
3. Gross Intake Rate, GIR at Grade 1	141	125	123	111	102
4. Net Intake Rate, NIR at Grade 1	53.7 ^a	67	73	89	98
5. GER at Primary Grade 1-5	119.8	110	110	110	105
6. Net Enrolment Rate, NER Grade 1-5	80.4	88	90	95	100

Strategies to achieve the goal

Nepal has taken several strategies for universal basic and primary education. The first important strategy is to bring school closer to the habitat – ensuring that a school is within easy walking distance for a child, not more than 20 minutes. The second strategy is to remove economic barriers – schools are made free of fees, there is no regular fee charged for registration, tuition or school operation. Text books are provided free of cost. The third strategy is to provide incentives to the needy students – school dress and scholarships. The fourth strategy is to ensure basic needs in the schools – drinking water, toilet, safe environment, and in some disadvantaged places, day time meal. And the fifth strategy is to ensure inclusive environment, socially, culturally, linguistically, and physically.

NGOs and local agencies are encouraged to launch parental awareness campaigns. Recently, the Constitution of Nepal, Interim Constitution (2007), guarantees basic and primary education as a fundamental right for all.

The government of Nepal has adopted three phase approach to free and compulsory primary education: i) the first phase is expanding access and making basic and primary education free of cost; ii) the second phase is ensuring basic and primary education as fundamental rights for all iii) developing system and mechanism to ensure supporting the needy/ disadvantaged section; and gradually making primary education compulsory is the third phase approach. Complete free and primary education is expected to be achieved by 2015.

iv. Budget and financing plan

The EFA NPA has made an extensive mapping of the activities needed for this goal and accordingly, estimated the budget needed. The following table presents the budget estimation made in the EFA NPA.

Table III-17: Expenditure by five years national plan

Free and Compulsory Education					(Rs in Million)	
SN	Expenditure Heading	Unit Cost	Tenth Plan	Eleventh Plan	Twelfth Plan	Grand Total
1	School Mapping	40.0	200.0	200.0	100.0	500.0
2	Social Mobilization	7.7	20.0	60.0	20.0	100.0
3	Teacher Policy for Gender and Social Equity	3.8	10.0	30.0	10.0	50.0
4	VEP	100.0	500.0	500.0	300.0	1300.0
5	SIP	105.0	525.0	525.0	315.0	1365.0
6	DEP	7.5	37.5	37.5	22.7	97.7
7	Financial support for mainstreaming disadvantaged children	1000.0	5000.0	5000.0	3000.0	13000.0
8	Alternative Schooling	5.6	12.5	37.5	22.5	72.5
9	Rehabilitation	75.0	375.0	375.0	225.0	975.0
10	School Physical Construction, Library, Computer, Laboratory	2854.8	14274.0	14274.0	8565.0	37113.0
11	Communication, Information and Dissemination	75.0	375.0	375.0	225.0	975.0
12	Additional Teacher (Females and Disadvantaged Groups)	130.0	650.0	650.0	390.0	1690.0
13	Staff Development	10.0	50.0	50.0	30.0	130.0
14	Free distribution of books		2890.3	3014.8	2621.0	8526.1
	Total		24919.3	25128.8	15846.2	65894.3

The EFA NPA also expected contributions from the various sources, mainly the Government, Donors and the Local community. The following table lists the contributions expected.

Table III-18: Sources of contributions

Rs. in million					
SN	Sources				
1	GON	650.0	650.0	390.0	1690.0
2	Donor	20700.8	20910.3	13314.9	54926.1
3	Local Community/Parents	3568.5	3568.5	2141.3	9278.3

Since BPEP II and the EFA core plan program (2004-09) focus on universal primary education, the actual fund is made available through the program. The fund is made available through the education budget heading of the annual national budget as well as through the pooled and non-pooled contributions of the donors. The contribution of the parents and the community remains not accounted as they take place at the local level and there is no systemic provision to list it.

v. Analysis of the primary education sub-sector expenditure

The following table gives the actual expenditure of primary education sub-sector from 1998/99-2002/03, the estimated expenditure for 2003/04 and proposed expenditure for 2004/05. It reveals that the overall expenses on education sector increased rapidly between 1998/99 and 2003/04, the actual expenses in the primary education sub-sector also recorded progress as reflected by 48.7% in 1998/99 to 59.0% in 2002/03. The annual share of the

education budget has also increased substantially, the allocation for education was 16.2% for the fiscal year 2004/05, and currently it is almost 17%.

Table III-19: Comparative expenses in primary education, 1998/99-2004/05

S N.	Expenses	Actual					Rs. In Million	
		1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	Estimated 2003/04	Proposed 2004/05
1	Total GON expenses	59579	66272	79835	82401	84006	92107	111690
2	Education expenses	8543	9607	11134	12879	13286	13336	18059
3	Primary education expenses	4157	5294	6505	7167	7841	8463	11169
4	% in education expenses	14.3	14.5	13.9	15.6	15.8	14.5	16.2
5	% in Primary education expenses	48.7	55.1	58.4	55.6	59.0	63.5	61.8

Source: Red Book

The tables below present the indicative budget of MOES/DOE for EFA, pooled as well as non-pooled financing, and the total for 2005/06

Table III-20: Indicative budget of EFA pooled financing, 2005/06

SN	Budget Head	Program	Actual Budget for 2004/05		Source of Funding		Indicative Budget for 2005/06			
			Rs.	US\$	GON	Donors	Total Budget	Source of Funding		US\$
								GON	Donors	
1	65-3-40	Education for All (Primary Education)	5775	78			5948			80.4
2	65-3-170	Special Education Council	32	0.4	-		33			0.4
3	65-3-417	Education for All (Center)	91	1.2			131			1.8
4	65-3-804	Education for All (District)	2337	31.6			3101			41.9
5	65-3-169	School Teachers Documentation	209	2.8			215			2.9
6	65-3-176	Teachers Pension Facility	510	6.9			525			7.1
7	65-3-167	Non Formal Education Center	4	0.1			4			0.1
		Recurrent Expenditure	8959	121			9957	7367	2590	134.6
1	65-4-417	Education for All (Center)	99	1.3			66			0.9
2	65-4-804	Education for All (District)	314	4.2			604			8.2
	65-4-167	Non Formal Education Center								
		Capital Expenditure	413	6			669.52	74.58	595	9
		Pooled financing	9372	126.7	94.4	32.3	10627	7441	3186	144
		% in pooled financing	-	-	74.5	25.5	-	70.0	30.0	-

Table III-21: Indicative budget of EFA non-pooled financing, 2005/06

Table III-21. Indicative Budget of EFA non-pooled financing, 2005/06								
SN	Budget Head	Program	Actual Budget for 2004/05		Indicative Budget for 2005/06			
			Rs.	US\$	Total Budget	Source of Funding		US\$
						GON	Donors	
Non-Pooled Financing								
1	65-3-412	School Transfer and Incentive Program	159	2.1	159	5	0	2.1
2	65-3-415 65-4-415	Construction of Schools in Support of EFA	468	6.3	870	70	800	11.8
3	65-3-416	Education for All -ECD	15	0.2	15	15	0	0.2
4	65-3-421 65-4-421	Teacher Education Project	363	4.9	397	100	0	5.4
5	65-3-600	Non Formal and National Literacy Campaign	120	1.6	120	110	10	1.6
6	65-3-620 65-4-620	Food for Education	660	8.9	758	121	636	10.2
7	65-3-630	Population Education	6	0.1	6	0	6	0.1
	Sub-Total non-Pooled Financing		1792	24	2325	422	1903	31.4
	% of expenditure in non-pooled financing					18.2	62.5	

The commitment to the availability of the fund is made both by the government through its medium term development plan and annual budget as well as the donors through their announcements in the donors' review meeting. The following is the donor's contribution

commitment made in the year 2006 by the five pooling partners in the scheme of joint funding for EFA.

Contributions from the five pooling partners will be US\$40m maximum.

<u>Donors</u>	<u>US\$m</u>
a. Denmark	7.5
b. DFID	3.5
c. Finland	3.4
d. IDA ⁴	20.7
e. Norway	4.8

B. Implementation of EFA goal

i. General policies and

The government of Nepal is committed to providing universal access to basic and primary education for all. For this it has been taking measures to expand the access. For the past several decades, there has been a significant expansion in the number of schools, teachers and students. However, there is still a large number of school age children who have not been able to join the school. The children who belong to the disadvantaged and the deprived communities and girls constitute a larger proportion of this population. The special needs children are the other significant section of this deprived population. Therefore, the major challenges towards meeting the goal of universal access to schooling relate to the following questions:

- how to reach the disadvantaged and deprived children, who remain un-reached by the current school system ?
- how to remove gender disparities in schooling?
- how to address the needs of the various special needs children (such as Kamaiyas, physically disabled, street children, orphans, child workers, etc.)?,
- how to make school and classroom responsive and sensitive to the needs and circumstances of the disadvantaged children?, and
- how to make the school and classroom truly inclusive on the basis of equality?

Following are some of the important measures undertaken by the government to meet the challenges:

- a. Special measures for the children of disadvantaged communities and girls to help them join and complete primary school cycle.
- b. Scholarship program for *Dalit* children.
- c. Scholarship program for girls.
- d. School improvement and expansion program in the areas of low enrolment, high repetition and dropout.
- e. School improvement program to improve the existing school physical facilities.

⁴ plus the \$US 4m for teachers explained in paragraph 30

- f. School feeding program in the areas marked by low nutritional status of the children. This program also provides extra incentive for the parents whose daughters complete primary cycle, at least complete grade 2.
- g. Alternative schooling programs to facilitate children in difficult circumstances -- school outreach for the children in remote and difficult areas, flexible school for working and disadvantaged children, and out of school programs for children who are not enrolled in a school, or who are school dropouts.
- h. Piloting of various approaches and programs
 - i. Piloting compulsory primary education in some districts.
 - ii. Piloting of inclusive education for special needs children.
 - iii. Piloting of community ownership and management of schools.
 - iv. Piloting education for children with disabilities.

programs ii Policies and programs mentioning specific target groups

The Basic and Primary Education Program (2001-04) as well as EFA core plan program (2004-09) have laid emphasis on prioritising access to and improvement of education for girls and disadvantaged children. The major policy considerations taken in this line are-- a) to increase girls' enrolment in primary schools, b) to expand alternative school programs for children between 6 to 14 years of age, and c) to increase the number of female teachers. The government of Nepal has formed the Women's Education Section (WES) under DOE for effective implementation of these policies.

Various other strategies and initiatives taken to ensure effective implementation of the policies include:

- Piloting of Decentralization (devolution of all educational activities through District Development Committee, DDC) in 14 districts, one each from 14 zones.
- Mainstreaming the educational provisions of the traditional religious institutions like Madrasa, Gumba and Gurukul.
- Reforming the existing system of the Resource Centers to enhance their role in the implementation of the policies.
- Developing partnership with NGOs.

Some specific steps/ actions taken to ensure effective implementation of the policies can be outlined as:

- Fixed date for scholarship distribution-- scholarship distribution day
- Categorized school grants-- block grants, earmarked grants and performance grants,
- Supported unaided community schools in the form of teacher salary grants,
- Undertook 'Welcome to School' program in collaboration with UN agencies, I/NGOs, CBOs, Journalists and stakeholders,
- Provisioned temporary classrooms to address the educational needs of the children who have migrated due to conflict and also to address the overcrowding of the classrooms due to the enrollment campaign,
- Developed focused program for Karnali zone children,

iii. Legislation and legal framework

The Education Act 2001 has provisioned that all children have free access to quality basic education. The government of Nepal has acknowledged the provision as an obligation. The Interim Constitution, 2007 has provisioned basic and primary education as the fundamental

right of all, with emphasis on ensuring the access to education for female, orphan, children with disabilities, ethnic or religious minorities and other disadvantaged groups. The Constitution has also provisioned primary education in mother tongue of the different linguistic groups in the country.

During the early part of 2007, MOES prepared a Three-Year Interim Plan to come into effect by the end of the 10th Plan in mid July 2007. This is an interim arrangement to align national planning with the current social and political developments in the country. The plan mainly focuses on reconstruction, reintegration, reconciliation and rehabilitation in the context of the post conflict situation in the country.

The system and provisions for the implementation of the constitutional decrees are yet to be developed. Similarly, legal provisions as well as programs for compulsory education also need to be developed.

iv. Responsible agencies and coordination of implementation

Department of Education, (DOE) implements the EFA program through DEO, RC and schools. The main role of DOE under the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) is to implement education policy and program of the government and to monitor the programs and activities to ensure norms and standards. DOE is also responsible for developing frameworks at regional, district and school levels for the implementation work.

DOE coordinates with the National Centre for Educational Development (NCED), Curriculum Development Centre (CDC), Office of the Controller of Examinations (OCE) and Non Formal Education Centre (NFEC) for the preparation, implementation, monitoring and reporting of the various programs.

At the district level, District Development Committee (DDC) is the governing body under which District Education Committee (DEC) makes District Education Plan (DEP) based on the Village Education Plans (VEPs). At the village level, Village Education Committee (VEC) under the Village Development Committee (VDC) prepares VEP based on School Improvement Plans (SIPs). At the school level, SMC is responsible for the development and implementation of SIP.

At the village level Incentive Management Committees (IMCs) are formed to plan and distribute the incentives and scholarships for girls and disadvantaged. At the school level this is done by SMCs.

The government of Nepal has devolved authority to local bodies and decentralized autonomy to community/SMCs towards facilitating the implementation of the policies and the programs. It has also established a collaborative relationship with the various agencies including the UN agencies, I/NGOs, and professional organizations such as CSNN, Teacher Union, PABSON, N/PABSON, Parents' Association, and Journalists.

v. Resource mobilization and allocation

Budgeting and financing strategies for implementation of the programs for UPE/UBE can be listed as the following:

- Core government stream – Regular funding through system based on the government budget allocation and the demands as per school based census statistics. This is administered by DOE through DEO which is helped by RC.
- Donors – Funding through bi-lateral, multi-lateral cooperation. The fund is available for major programs under the international declarations/commitments such as EFA and MDG. Currently, donors are supporting the government for EFA programs through joint fund (pooled) scheme and independent (non pooled) scheme. The fund

is made available through the national programs. Usually, total fund commitments are announced and made available annually based on the ASIP.

- NGOs/INGOs – Independent support scheme and provisions in line with the legal and system provisions.
- Community – Need based mobilization, particularly for fund for local level development; this usually consists of land donation, labour volunteer, and other monetary donations at the time of need.
- Parents – Mainly contributions to school operation, maintenance and other support through consultation and cooperation with the school management/administration.

vi. Quality assurance monitoring and evaluation

DOE is over all responsible for monitoring program implementation, quality assurance and evaluation. This is done with the system provisions for monitoring and supervision consisting of monitoring and supervision cells of RED, DEO as well as RC. At the school level, SMCs and PTAs are also responsible for monitoring and evaluation of school performance.

C. Progress in Achieving EFA goal

i. Performance indicators: measuring the gap between the target and attained level of performance

EFA MDA guideline provides three sets of indicators to assess the status of progress towards univeraslization of primary education to all school age children. These are;

- Policy and system indicators;
- Core EFA MDA indicators; and
- Additional EFA MDA indicators.

The school census and the regular flash reports have been used for the analyses presented in this report. Besides, the reports listed below are also used for the data, particularly to assess the status of access disaggregated by gender, *Dalit*, *Janajati* and children with special needs.

- Census Report, 2001
- Flash Reports,
- EMIS Reports,
- NLSS 2003/04,
- NDHS, 2006,
- ASIPs and Status Reports, and
- Other relevant documents

Targets and achievement

The 10th plan targeted securing 90% NER at primary level by mid 2007 while the NPA 2001-2015 scheduled securing the same by 88%, 90%, 95% and 100% respectively by the end of 2005, 2007, 2012 and finally, by 2015. The achievements made so far in terms of EFA indicators and the targets by 2015 are given below.

Table III-22: Status and targets of selected EFA performance indicators

SN	Indicators	Achievement				Target			
		2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2009	2012	2015

1	Percentage of New entrants at Grade 1 with ECD experiences	13.7	10.9	NA	18.3	51	60		80
2	Gross Intake Rate at Grade 1	117.1	125.9	148.1	148	108	110	111	102
3	Net Intake Rate at Grade 1	76.1	-	NA	86	89	95	89	98
4	Gross Enrolment Rate (Primary)	126.7	130.7	145.4	138.8	108	104	110	105
5	Net Enrolment Rate (Primary)	83.5	84.2	86.8	87.4	92	96	95	100

Source: ASIP 2006-07, Annex 13 and Status Report 2006, Flash Report I, 2006

Flash Report I, 2007 and studies conducted by the Non-Formal Education Centre (NFEC) indicate that up to 11% of the primary school-going age population is still outside the school system. A substantial proportion of these children are from the Terai and belong to poor or disadvantaged groups such as *Dalits*, girls, children with disabilities and other marginalized groups. In addition, the armed conflict in the past decade displaced many families causing a direct negative impact on schools and school-going children. Because a large section of the population is poor, any cost involved in education including the children's schooling time is an issue. Scholarship schemes, free textbooks and other incentives are addressed to this issue.

Analysis of access to school, participation and completion

Access to schooling: Significant expansion in the number of schools in Nepal during 1990-2005 helped to ensure access to primary schools within 30 minutes walking distance, as specified by the policy, to a large number of households in the country. According to the NLSS survey in 1995/96 and 2003/04, the proportion of households having access to primary schools within 30 minutes travel time has increased from 88.4% to 91.4%. In urban areas, almost all households (98.8%) have primary schools within the 30 minute distance. In the rural areas, 89.9% households have such access.

Access to lower secondary and secondary education also increased as indicated by improved ratio of primary-to-lower secondary and lower secondary-to-secondary school (NLSS, 2003/04). It is however to be noted that ensuring schools in 30 minute walking distance to the remaining households in the rural remote areas still remains a challenge. This is partly due to geographical barrier as well as sparse settlements.

Apart from the access to the government aided community schools, an estimated number of 8500 private schools⁵ in the country also contribute towards achieving better access to schooling. Similarly, many of the numerous religious institutions in the country such as *madras* as *gumba*, and *gurukul* also provide basic education contributing towards better access to primary schooling. The contribution of such religious institutions is rather informal and therefore the extent of their contribution is yet to be accounted.

With the improved access, the school enrolment has also steadily increased. The net primary school enrolment was 87.4%⁶ in 2006. Although this data is not verified by other sources, it has higher reliability because it is based on school reported census. The NER increase trend discussed later shows that enrolment rate for girls was seen better than those of boys.

In spite of the achievement of the net enrolment rate in primary education, critics point out that 'it is less likely that Nepal will achieve the target of primary education by 2015' (NPC & UNDP, 2005) because of the fact that bringing the remaining children to school would be much more difficult.

⁵ PABSON, a national association of private schools in Nepal, estimates almost 8500 schools are running throughout the country (UNICEF 2006)

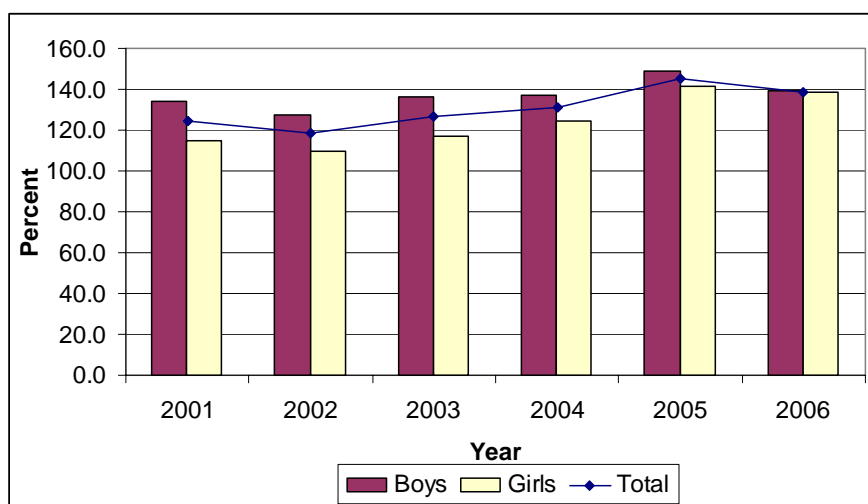
⁶ According to the Department of Education, a net enrolment rate for primary level in 2006 is almost 87.4%.

1. **Participation of children in schooling:** Availability of schools is a necessary but not sufficient condition to ensure universalization of primary education. The participation should be ensured in terms of gender, ethnicity, linguistic minorities, differently abled children, and people from different geographical variations and difficult circumstances. In the present context, the participation is unequal across income and social groups. The net enrolment for *Dalit* and *Janajati* students is not officially reported. Gender, caste, ethnic and disadvantage disparities increase with the increased level of education and poverty.

Steady progress was made since 1990, especially towards universal primary education (UPE) and gender parity, but the pace is not sufficient to achieve the goals of education for all by 2015. Since only 22% children in the 5 years' age bracket were enrolled in grade 1 in the school year 2005, timely access of all officially determined age specific children to the first grade, which is most essential if UPE is to be achieved by 2015, has not been assured. As participation rates in 2003/04 varied widely between consumption quintiles, urban and rural, and across the ecological zones of mountains, hills and Terai, the challenge has absolute and relative dimensions with critical implication to the poor, girls and women, and marginalized groups.

The challenge is much greater than the usual, conventional measures of school level educational statistics of the country indicate. In total, those mostly deprived of school education were from families within the poorest quintile (48% against the richest 5%), living in rural areas (26% against 10% residing in urban areas), and with the distinction of children in Terai (28%) and mountain (24%) zones being the most disadvantaged. Enormously, at all levels of schooling, boys' participation rate was higher than that of girls (31% against 18%).

Figure III-2: GER trends at Primary Level by sex (2001-2006)



The GER trend at primary level reflects the fluctuation from 2001 to 2006. The average annual changes on GER have increased by 1.8 percent in total, 3.2 percent for girls and 0.6 percent for boys. As of 2001, the GER in total was 124.7 and in 2002 it decreased by 6.3 percent reaching 118.4. Up to 2005, it reached 145.4 percent and in 2006 it decreased by 6.6 percent. In 2004 to 2006, the annual increment of GER has increased by 2.0 in total, 3.7 percent for girls and 0.5 percent for boys. It shows that girls' increment is higher than that of boys.

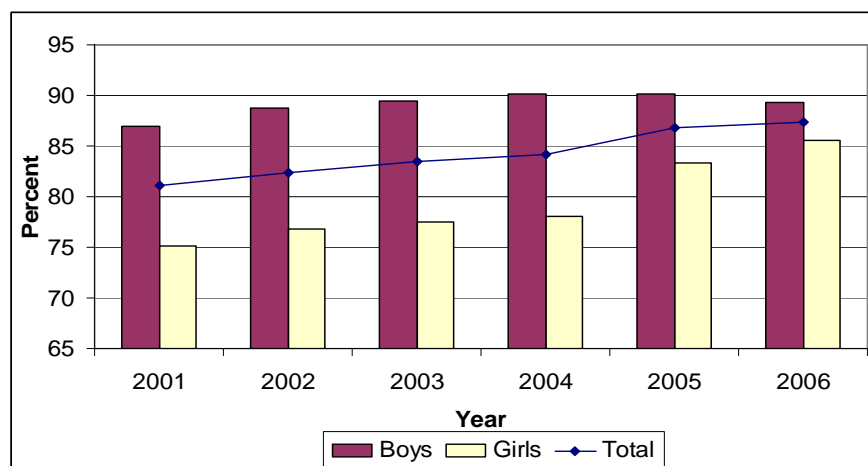
Table III-23: GER Trends at Primary Level by sex, 2001 – 2006

Sex	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Girls	114.7	109.4	117.1	124.2	141.8	138.4

Boys	134.1	127.1	136.0	137.0	148.8	139.2
Total	124.7	118.4	126.7	130.7	145.4	138.8

The NER trend in primary education from 2001 to 2006 indicates that the specific age group population seems to be increasing continuously. In 2001, 81.1 percent of total primary age group children were enrolled in schools across the country and in 2006 this increased to 87.4 percent but the government has targeted 96 percent NER for 2009 which can be considered to be in line with the program target of EFA.

Figure III-3: NER trends at Primary Level by sex (2001-2006)



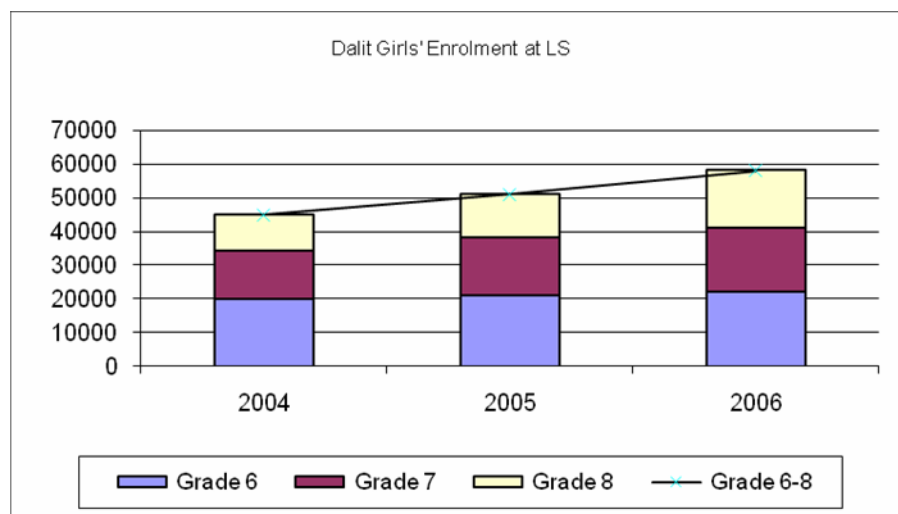
This means that the participation in primary education is increasing gradually from 2001 to 2006. Similarly, in the case of girls, the NER also increased from 75.1 percent to 85.5 percent. Comparing the NER for boys and girls, a gap for girls is still noticed. However, the NER for girls shows an upward trend indicating that girls' participation has increased from 75.1 percent in 2001 to 85.5 percent in 2006. The annual average increment from 2001 to 2006 has been found 1.3 percent on total, 2.2 percent for girls and 0.5 percent for boys. This sharp upward trend for girls indicates that their participation in primary education is increasing well. NER below 70 percent districts are such as Mahottari, Sarlahi and Manang which need to bring out of school children in the school or they may be in ECD/PPC classes or other religious schools. There is no district below 70 percent on NER

Table III-24: NER Trends at Primary Level by sex, 2001 – 2006

Sex	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Girls	75.1	76.8	77.5	78.0	83.4	85.5
Boys	86.9	88.7	89.4	90.1	90.1	89.3
Total	81.1	82.3	83.5	84.2	86.8	87.4

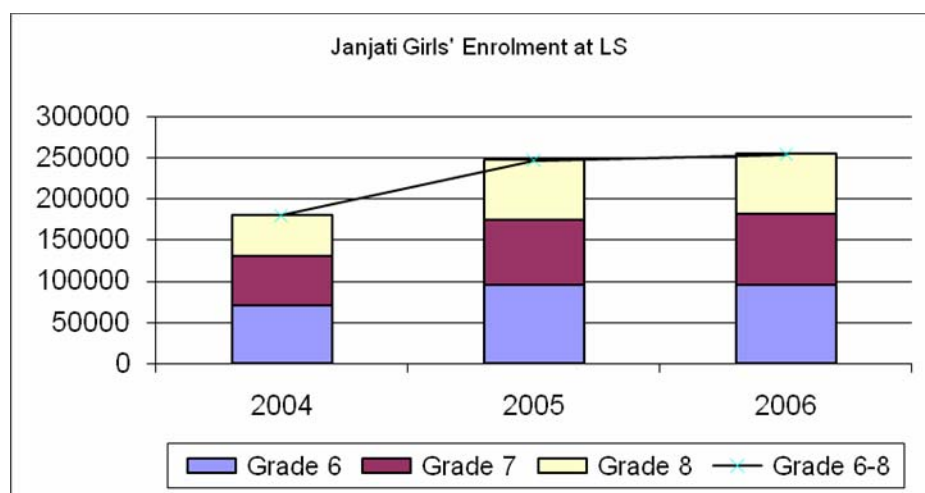
The share of *dalit* enrolment is 9.5 percent only where as the share of their population at national level accounts for 13.3 percent. The *dalit* enrolment reached 123378 in 2006 in total and 54404 for girls from 98133 and on total and 41923 on girls in 2004.

Figure III-4: Dalit girls' enrolment in Lower secondary schools



Comparing enrolment of 2004 with 2006, it is seen that the *dalit* enrolment has been increasing by 7.9 percent on total with 9.1 percent for girls. The average annual growth is higher in grade 8 by 13.5 percent on total and 15.1 percent on girls and lower in grade 6 by 3.6 percent on total with 5.1 percent for girls. So, on the whole, it reveals that the *dalit* enrolment is increasing annually at lower secondary level by almost 8 percent on total with 9 percent for girls. Interestingly, the average annual increment of girls also has increased substantially from 2004 to 2006.

Figure III-5: Janajati girls' enrolment in Lower secondary schools



The share of Janajati enrolment at lower secondary level is 38.6 percent, whereas the population share is 43.7 percent at national level. Comparing the data of 2004 with 2006, the Janajati enrolment has been increased by 6.4 percent and it reached 502040 in 2006 from 417356 on total with an increase by 6.4 percent on total and 7.6 percent for girls. On total, the average annual growth rate is higher for grade 8 and for girls, the higher rate is in grade 7. However, it is lower in grade 6 by 4.9 percent on total with 6.2 percent for girls.

2. **Retention:** In general, DOE school statistics shows that retention of children until the last grade of each level of schooling is a major challenge. Measured in terms of promotion, repetition, dropout, survival and transition rates to upper grades, it indicates slow progress in improving internal efficiency. Overall, the internal efficiency of school

education system is very poor. Factors contributing to this include (i) low literacy level of parents in rural areas, (ii) low Government investment in pre-primary and early childhood development programs, (iii) lack of focus in in-service teacher training programs to address the issue, (iv) lack of remedial teaching materials available for teachers to help slow students, and (v) lack of programs to raise awareness among SMC and PTA members and parents about the interventions required to address the issue.

Mostly, access is perceived as equivalent to enrolment. Two remarks are found widespread: First, that the government's responsibility is to establish or maintain school and it is for the families or parents of children to arrange their enrollment and regular attendance. It means that the first task is to enroll children and to place them in school. Therefore, availability of schools within a reasonable walking distance⁷ by all is the first step towards achieving universal primary education for all by the year 2015. Secondly, all enrolled children should complete their primary cycle in a set period of time with satisfactory level of quality education. Therefore, EFA objective 2 aims to ensure both universal enrollment (no disparities in terms of gender, economic status, urban-rural and other geographical differences, and ethnic and linguistic characteristics) and quality promotion. At the present time, there is a large gap between enrolment and completion of primary education in five year periods.

D. Implementation Gaps and Disparities or Variations

i. Identifying gaps and locating the reached and unreached

The data in the following table presents a spectrum of the situation regarding the school age children and their whereabouts based on the NLSS survey studies:

Table III-25: Population distribution by age and educational status

	1995/96			2003/04		
	5-9 years	10-14 years	Total	5-9 years	10-14 years	Total
1. Total population	2,942,140	2,524,057	5,466,197	3,327,074	3,132,797	6,459,871
2. Never attended	37.7	26.5	32.5	21.2	15.3	18.3
Total no. in school	43.3	31.8	38.0	26.8	21.3	24.1
Work only %	67.8+24.			5.4	16.6	10.8
Not active %				21.4	4.7	13.3
In school %	56.7	68.2	62.0	73.2	78.7	75.9
School only %				64.8	45.2	55.3
School and work %				8.4	33.5	20.6
Exact after initial	5.6	5.4	5.5	5.6	6.0	5.8
## of potential dropout % ⁸	13.3	24.1	18.8	13.3	24.1	18.8
7. Grade 5 completers						425,037
8. Transition rate to Gr 6						319,628
9. # not enrolled in Gr6						105,409
10. Grade 8 completers						270,131
11. Transition rate to Gr 9						230,422
12. # not enrolled in Gr 9						39,709
13. Exact in upper grades						145,118
14. Total excl	1,494,855	1,218,444	2,713,299	1,215,566	1,261,474	2,477,041

⁷ Not formally defined, but 30 minutes walking distance is considered to be reasonable for 5-9 years children

⁸ This represents proportion of children who were enrolled in April but dropped at the end of the year in 2005

More than 11 percent of primary school children (age 5-9) who never attended school need to work at home. In some cases, parents' unwillingness to send them to school could be another reason. Poverty, illiteracy and low level of income among the parents worked as demotivating factors for sending children to school. Analyzing the trend from the income distribution, the NLSS II identified quintile gaps as the most severe factor - only 2% of eligible students from the poorest consumption quintile attended secondary education compared to 53% from the richest quintile.

Drop out of the enrolled students is also a major challenge for ensuring access to education for all children. According to NLSS II, students dropped from schools because of either poor academic progress e.g failure (32%) or the need to help at home (27%) or high cost of schooling (12%). Further reasons cited for leaving schools were "parents did not want" (9%), "completed desired level" (4%), "moved away" (5%) and "other reasons" (13%). Although the problem of dropouts is widespread, Grade 1 has the highest percentage of school leavers followed by other grades, 2-5 in primary and even 6-10 grades in lower secondary and secondary education resulting in low retention, low survival and low completion rates. Overage of students distinguished by late entry in primary grades due to lack of awareness, poverty, distance to school are some the family related factors for dropouts. School related factors that contribute to dropouts include school fees, poor teaching methods and treatment of teachers. Poor methods of teaching resulting in low level of learning cause dissatisfaction among many children.

Other factors include child marriage, especially of girls which does not allow to move to upper grades. Low learning achievement is the most serious problem for hindering most of the students from continuing education and moving to upper grades. Children do not want to continue if they do not learn.

Essentially, there are seven categories of children (girls, children in remote rural areas, Dalit or "untouchables", disadvantaged ethnic groups, children of internally displaced persons (IDP), children with disabilities and extremely poor) who are deprived in terms of educational opportunity. At all levels of schooling, the number/ percentage of boys is higher than girls. Urban areas have higher percentage of participation of both boys and girls than rural areas, and so do richer quintiles compared to poorer quintiles. Dalit and disadvantaged groups have less participation rates in all levels of schooling. If a child is in two or more of the seven categories, it is highly unlikely that s/he will attend school or if s/he does, s/he will not complete the cycle.

ii. Analysis of differential impact of policy implementation

Policy implementations for UPE/UBE include incentives for *dalits*, disadvantaged *Janajati*, and girls. It is anticipated that expansion of access should be accelerated. The access could be reflected in terms of NER and GER. There is also an anticipation of better survival rate, lowered repetition and promotion. There is however no disaggregated data to measure the NER and GER by caste and ethnicity.

The GER for the period 2000-2005 show that there has been steady increase in the GER value meaning that the student number is increasing in the school. The NER value however does not show clear increase meaning the proportion of the primary school age girls coming to school is not improving as anticipated. It is however deductible that the absolute number of girls enrolled in schools is increasing.

The data for repetition rate of girls at grade 1 and grade 5 for the period 2000-2005 show no clear indication of lowered repetition rate among the girls. The statistical figures are rather erratic (See appendix). Similarly the GPI values for both NER and GER range from 0.8 to

0.9 during the same period. There is no provision in place yet to note the enrolment data disaggregated by Dalits, ethnicity or mother tongue. System indicator based longitudinal study under the Formative Research Project shows that it is rather difficult to observe steady growth in the enrolment: the data sometime shows better enrolment and at other time, poor enrolment. This situation could be an outcome of the conflict situation in the country whereby children were forced to stay away from school or even to migrate out from the village.

The data indicate that it is difficult to conclude that the policies have impacted as anticipated. Nevertheless, the gradual increase in the overall GER, NER, and GPI values do indicate an improving scenario.

iii. Disparities in quality of education across social groups and geographic areas

It is difficult to observe the quality of education in the schools. Nevertheless, several proxy indicators could be used to observe the quality conditions. One such proxy indicator is the survival rate of the children – better survival needs that the quality is conducive. The following tables list the survival rates – time based trend and regional variations:

Table III-26: Progress between 2000 to 2005 (National Level)

Year	Survival Rate to Grade 5			GPI
	Male	Female	Total	
2000	65%	68%	66%	1.054
2001	67%	71%	69%	1.063
2002	67%	71%	69%	1.056
2003	64%	66%	65%	1.028
2004	72%	81%	76%	1.113
2005	79%	75%	78%	0.947

Table III-27: Survival Rate to Grade 5 by sex and ecological zones

	Male	Female	Total	
NATIONAL	72%	81%	76%	1.113
Mountain	59%	67%	63%	1.146
Hill	66%	69%	67%	1.053
Tarai	84%	99%	91%	1.188
Valley	62%	65%	63%	1.057

Table III-28: Survival Rate to Grade 5 by sex and ecological zones

	Survival Rate to Grade 5			GPI
	Male	Female	Total	
NATIONAL	49%	53%	51%	1.084
Eastern	48%	51%	50%	1.076
Central	46%	49%	47%	1.075
Western	55%	60%	57%	1.087
Mid Western	47%	52%	50%	1.118
Far western	52%	55%	54%	1.076

E. Recommendations for adjustments in terms of

Challenges for achieving universalization of primary education

What needs to be done?

Several factors are affecting access to schooling, the teaching and learning process and its outcomes, as well as the efficiency of the primary education system. For example, the physical conditions of schools and classrooms; availability of drinking water, toilets, and electricity; textbooks and other learning materials; attendance patterns of pupils and teachers; policies and practices affecting the inclusion or exclusion of children with disabilities or learning difficulties; the provision of professional support and supervision of teachers; school

community interactions (e.g. active parent-teacher associations, use of school buildings and grounds for community activities and adult literacy programs). In order to universalize primary education, the reforms are necessary in policy provision, strategies, settings and program formulation and implementation.

Policy

1. Formulating and implementing appropriate policies to motivate children from excluded groups are the first and foremost step to achieve UPE;

Strategies

The following strategic measures are to be specifically spelt out by the government:

1. partnership;
2. capacity building;
3. institutional development

Program

1. All children must have the opportunity to reach and realise their right to quality education in schools or alternative programs at whatever level of education is considered basic. All states must fulfill their obligation to offer free and compulsory primary education in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international commitments. The international agreement on the 2015 target date for achieving Universal Primary Education (UPE) in all countries will require commitment and political will from all levels of government. For the millions of children living in poverty, who suffer from multiple disadvantages, there must be an unequivocal commitment that education be free of tuition and other fees, and that everything possible be done to reduce or eliminate costs such as those for learning materials, uniforms, school meals and transport. Wider social policies, interventions and incentives should be used to mitigate indirect opportunity costs of attending school. No one should be denied the opportunity to complete a good quality primary education because it is unaffordable. Child labor must not stand in the way of education. The inclusion of children with special needs, from disadvantaged ethnic minorities and migrant populations, from remote and isolated communities and from urban slums, and others excluded from education, must be an integral part of strategies to achieve UPE by 2015.
2. While commitment to attaining universal enrolment is essential, improving and sustaining the quality of basic education is equally important in ensuring effective learning outcomes. In order to attract and retain children from marginalized and excluded groups, education systems should respond flexibly, providing relevant content in an accessible and appealing format. Education systems must be inclusive, actively seeking out children who are not enrolled, and responding flexibly to the circumstances and needs of all learners. The EFA 2000 Assessment suggests a wide range of ways in which schools can respond to the needs of their pupils, including affirmative action programs for girls that seek to remove the obstacles to their enrolment, bilingual education for the children of ethnic minorities, and a range of imaginative and diverse approaches to address and actively engage children who are not enrolled in school.
3. In addition to the EFA 18 core indicators, all data relevant to national goals and targets should be collected in order to measure the progress toward these goals.

4. Innovative strategies showed a high rate of success not only to bring more children to schools but also to retain them through the whole cycle. Such programs include community school support project, community owned primary education, decentralized action for children and women, community based primary education action research program, community-based EMIS and child friendly school initiatives. Therefore these strategies should be expanded.

Theme 3: Appropriate Learning and Life Skills

A. National Action Plan / Education Reform Programs

i. Statement of EFA Goal:

Education is looked upon as a force to address the issue of poverty through human development measures by enhancing the capacity of the people in terms of appropriate life skills, knowledge and experiential wisdom to acquire economic and social prosperity. For the past five decades, educational development has been one of the most important priorities. Despite formation of many commissions and launching of projects to study the aspirations and needs of the people and to review the development courses, to streamline the courses and to accelerate educational development, Nepal still faces several limitations.

ii. Description of EFA goal and specific national target

The EFA National Plan of Action of Nepal was developed to specifically address both the six EFA goals defined at the Dakar world forum and one additional country-specific goal of addressing the need to provide basic and primary education in the mother tongues of the various indigenous groups in the country. It therefore contains a major section dealing with the development of life skills education. In this way, it responds to Dakar goal 3 that aims to ‘ensure that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programs’.

Program target

The program targets encompass improving relevancy of education to all, especially for the ethnic minorities, through curricular initiatives (local curriculum), education of disadvantaged, Dalits and marginalized groups through affirmative efforts, education of children with disabilities, and responding to the conflict and post conflict situations and mainstreaming religious schools. The main targets include:

- Networking, coordinating and mobilizing NGOs, CBOs and Human Rights Organizations (HROs).
- Curriculum Development – consultations and disseminations of local curriculum and textbooks including local languages.
- Scholarship to all Dalit children, girls, children with disability and conflict affected children.
- Continuation to run and strengthen 330 Resource Classes and 47 Assessment Centres.
- Mainstreaming of 100 traditional educational institutions - Madarsas, Gumbas, and Gurukuls.
- Orientation and training on IE including accreditation of 45-day IE training in 10 month training.

The Annual Strategic Implementation Plan (ASIP) 2005/06 had indicated its targeted focus based upon the EFA Goal 3 – “***Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programs***” as follows.

- Textbook writing and teachers training packages that would reflect the changes made in the curriculum.

- Designing and implementing instructional materials and bilingual education programs in school in cooperation with stakeholders and linguistic minorities.
- Emphasizing and strengthening the policy of school-based management providing a basis for addressing learning needs by using the local cultural and linguistic potentials as resources with a view to celebrating the diversity.
- With a view to updating saleable skills among youth and adolescents, skills development program would be designed. This would be extended to benefit secondary students, SLC failures and dropouts of secondary education in support of Technical Education and Vocational Training (TEVT) program.
- Establishing a mechanism at district level for identifying and supporting children affected by conflict. Allocation of resources for addressing this issue had been planned in the district level ASIPs.

iii. Strategies to Achieve the Goal

Nepal made a firm commitment to achieve the goals of Education for All. The National Plan of Action outlined specific objectives, programs, targets, strategies and financial provision. As indicated in the National Plan of Action, strategies for implementing EFA goal 3 are:

- ◆ Needs of the various age groups, social groups and special focus group should be addressed separately through an appropriate learning scheme to ensure provision of appropriate learning and life skills for all.
- ◆ School education should be improved to make it practical, effective and relevant to the life contexts.
- ◆ Community based provisions such as Community Learning/Resource Centres should be enhanced. The community resource centers should be strengthened and enriched. New centers should be established on the basis of social mapping. The focus of such provisions is to address the diversified needs of youths and adults by providing group facilitation, space for learning to every body and opportunity for mutual interaction. Such provision should be the physical base for forum for life skill education in a continuous way.
- ◆ Community organizations such as community support groups should be mobilized to take active role in keeping the resource centers alive and in regularly operating the forums.
- ◆ Self-learning module, promotional materials in the form of short messages, wall magazine with audiovisuals, community notice board should be developed and utilized. Local resources and indigenous wisdom should be capitalized for such material development.
- ◆ Open and distance mode of education utilizing Radio, TV, Internet, print media and other mode of communication should be developed. Community Learning Centre, Resource Centre, and other Education Institutions should be utilized to support open and distance learning.
- ◆ Association of out-of-school children and youths with the work places – association with service delivery system, with lived reality, ground support/facilities in matter of health, veterinary, agriculture and environment in learning centers and the institutions of their interest can provide appropriate learning in practical but informal ways. Occupational preparation by association with work through transitional scheme should be developed to bridge educational endeavor with work – bridging school and work; bridging literacy classes with work. Partnership/cooperation between services and education, promoting

local entrepreneurial aspects such as local artisan' skills are also some of the ways of giving wide exposure to the local know-how and appropriate technology.

- ◆ Appropriate learning and life skill education for the physically disabled will be geared to taking advantages of general provision and encouraging inclusive mode.
- ◆ Local entrepreneurial activities should be incorporated in life skill education program promoting local indigenous skills and knowledge.
- ◆ All the provision of education made should be incorporated in life skill education programs promoting local indigenous skills and knowledge.
- ◆ Support special focus groups (disadvantaged people) to take advantage of the provision of life skill education through social empowerment and economic support.
- ◆ Promoting local artisan's entrepreneurship to work with school graduates and dropouts.
- ◆ Ageing people need special support with special focus on health, companionship, and opportunities for continued social engagement.
- ◆ The experience and skills of the resourceful aged people such as retired professionals should be utilized by providing them space in the work place and in the society for volunteer services, social projects, etc. Aged people should be given due recognition and honors for their age status and past contributions; they should be invited to share their experiences/stories in the educational sessions of the youths. Social provision made for cultural activities involving aged people will be promoted.
- ◆ Because agriculture is the predominant social and economic contexts of Nepal, agriculture should constitute the core area of life skills education.

The following Table indicates Theme, Strategies and Major areas of activities /action programs to address goal 3, ***"Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills program"***:

Theme	Strategies	Major Areas of Activities/Action Programs
Appropriate learning for life skills	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Making primary school education life skill oriented and to associate school education with ground reality 2. Life-skill oriented flexible and alternative primary education to out of school children through non-formal modes 3. Strengthening community based facilities 4. Association of out of school children and youth with the work places 5. Local entrepreneurial activities incorporated in life skill education programs 6. Supporting special focus groups 7. Focus of aging people and their experience and skills utilized in the education of youth 8. Agriculture to constitute core area of life skill education. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reviewing and revising school curriculum, text books and current teaching learning practices 2. Orienting teachers and curriculum experts 3. Strengthening supervision and monitoring 4. Periodic assessment of transfer of life skills education 5. Incorporating components of appropriate learning life-skills in existing provisions for out of school children 6. Review the status of out-of-school children and identify their needs. 7. Developing distance and flexible learning provision. 8. Linking formal and non-formal mode of education for skill training 9. Develop Community Learning Centres to facilitate youths to get access to flexible learning 10. Develop suitable self learning modules for various physical disabilities with appropriate delivery approach 11. Social mobilization and awareness building

iv. Budget Allocation

As indicated in the Education for All National Plan of Action Nepal (2001-2015), the estimated cost of the program activities is given in Table 2.

Table III-29: Estimated cost of the program activities associated with EFA goal 3

Life Skills		(Rs. in million)				
SN	Expenditure Heading	Unit Cost	Tenth Plan	Eleventh Plan	Twelfth Plan	Grand Total
1.	Review and Studies	1.0	8.0	2.0	2.0	12.0
2.	Orientation teacher Training		3.5	2.0	1.5	7.0
3.	Material development		2.0	0.5	0.5	3.0
4.	Curriculum Revisions		0.5	0.5	0.5	1.5
5.	Link Formal / NFE		0.5	0.3	0.2	1.0
6.	Capacity Building		20.0	20.0	20.0	60.0
7.	Occupational Training / Skill Training		75.0	150.0	150.0	375.0
8.	School preparation for life skill training		100.0	100.0	100.0	300.0
9.	EMIS		5.0	3.0	2.0	10.0
10.	Supervision and Monitoring		3.0	3.0	1.5	7.5
11.	CLC Development	1.0	25.0	40.0	10.0	75.0
12.	Social Mobilization and Awareness		30.0	20.0	10.0	60.0
13.	Periodic Assessment		14.0	7.0	7.0	28.0
	Total		286.5	348.3	305.2	940.0
	Nepal Government					
	Donors		286.5	348.3	305.2	940.0
	Local Community / Parents					

Source: Education For All: Nepal National Plan of Action, 2001-2015(2003)

The cost estimation was made on the basis of the total activities visualized in the National Plan of Action. This included the cost to be expended through system mechanism as well as through the communities, home and individuals. The expenditure to be made through different sources was estimated as follows:

Table III-30: Estimated expenditure through different sources

Total estimated expenditure by different sectors		(Rs. in million)		
Nepal Government	46719.3	56281.5	54577.0	157577.8
Donor	29025.8	32817.3	20973.0	82816.2
Local Community Parents	12571.3	23261.8	19080.8	54913.8
Total	88316.4	112360.5	94630.8	295307.7
Donor + Nepal Government	75745.1	89098.8	75550.0	240394.0

Source: Education For All: Nepal National Plan of Action, 2001-2015(2003)

Theme wise expenditure of Nepal government was anticipated as follows in Table III-31

Table III-31: Theme wise expenditure

Theme-wise expenditure of Nepal Government		(Rs. in Million)			
SN.	Expenditure Heading	Tenth Plan	Eleventh Plan	Twelfth Plan	Grand Total
1	ECD	2007.0	1954.5	1181.0	5142.5
2	Free and Compulsory Education	650.0	650.0	390.0	1690.0
3	Life Skills	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
4	Gender Development	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
5.	Mother Tongue	375.0	1000.0	750.0	2125.0
6	Literacy	1200.0	1350.0	700.0	3250.0
7	Quality	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
8	Regular Budget	42487.3	51327.0	51556.0	145370.3
	Total	46719.3	56281.5	54577.0	157577.8
	US \$ Million	599.0	721.6	699.7	2020.2

Source: Education For All: Nepal National Plan of Action, 2001-2015(2003)

According to the Annual Strategic Implementation Plan (2006), the details of activities with unit costs, targets, allocations, and cost categories by districts are reflected in the SESP Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB). However, the total budget to this component of the main program targets comprises 1.2% of EFA budget amounting NRs 40.480 million (0.57 million US\$, is given in following Table 5

Table III-32: EFA: Meeting Learning Needs of All, 2006-2007

Components	Development of Curriculum & Textbook in local level (including bilingual teaching)	Mitigating the effect of conflict	Institutional inclusion of Ma, Gumba & Gurukul	Community mobilization including partnership with NGOs, CBOs	Educational Exhibition	Total
Budget S. N.	Allocated Budget	Allocated Budget	Allocated Budget	Allocated Budget	Allocated Budget	Allocated Budget
1.	2331	5000	13000	4500	1000	25831

Source: Annual Strategic Implementation Plan-2006-2007(2006, Annex 2)

B. Implementation of EFA Goal

i. General Policies and Programs

Nepal's commitment to 'The World Deceleration on Education for All' in 1990 and 'The Millennium Development Goals' in 2000, has been reflected in its priority given to the life skill education as pronounced through educational policies and programs. More relevant, functional and skill-based education has always been a priority in the educational planning and policy in Nepal. In this regard Education for All, Nepal Country Report (MOES, 2000) stresses that providing contemporary knowledge and skills needed for better living in the ever-changing world has been one of the important endeavors of Nepalese educational system. The national plans such as Eighth, Ninth, and Tenth plan have put ample emphasis on skill-based training and learning of life skills.

The main policies regarding life-skill education are to make the educational scheme more relevant to life. Emphasis on expansion of educational access through alternative forms of education to facilitate innovations and entrepreneurship is always there.

In order to meet the appropriate learning needs of young people and adults to enhance their life-skill, Nepal government has undertaken several strategies through the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) and other line ministries, NGOs, and INGOs. The policy measures of the MOES include:

- ◆ Making school curriculum more practical and relevant to day-to-day life. This entails curriculum revision for better relevance to day-to-day life and practical applicability.
- ◆ Developing technical and vocational education suitable and accessible to secondary school children who need/wish to join the job market. Vocational programs interconnecting the school system is being developed.
- ◆ Developing market-oriented and flexible skill training programs for adults related to cottage industries/home utilities -- Life skill as a means of poverty alleviation is always emphasized.
- ◆ Developing special programs for out-of-school youths.
- ◆ Developing functional literacy and post-literacy programs with skill training components for adults.
- ◆ Developing the system of life-long continuous learning through Community Learning Centres.

Following these guidelines, a national team was formed to integrate life skill-based education into the education system in Nepal. School level curriculum in Nepal is national level curriculum. Life skill education has been incorporated in the health education and population education subjects in the curriculum revision made in 2060 BS. There is also provision of 20% local curriculum. The revised 2060 curriculum blends 80% central curriculum and 20% local element decided at the local level in Social Studies, Creative Art and Physical Education

subjects. Besides, there is provision of 100 marks local subject which could be mother tongue or local subject as decided and developed at the local level.

The existing health curriculum for grades 1-10 has been reviewed and life skills have been integrated, facilitators' guides have been developed and life skills materials have been developed and field tested. Similarly, a limited number of teachers have been oriented/trained through a cascade model. CDC has piloted new textbooks based on the revised curriculum. Now grade one through three textbooks have been finalized and implemented in the national level since 2006. The programs for integration of life skill education in the Nepalese education system have been launched by CDC in the curriculum, NCED through teacher preparation activities, and by UNICEF/Nepal in its DACAW districts.

Recognizing the importance of proper education policy for bringing about greater equity, the Education Act (8th Amendment 2004) and the Education Regulations 2002 (revised 2005) have been put into effect. Other major policies for educational development include: free primary education, a teacher licensing system for quality education, decentralization of school management including transfer of management to communities, grants to schools, empowerment of school management committees, scholarship programs for children from disadvantaged communities, direct parental involvement in School Management Committees (SMCs) through election, discouraging teachers' direct involvement in politics, and establishing Village Education Committees to ensure access to education and regular monitoring.

ii. Policies and Programs mentioning specific target groups

The policy framework for basic and primary education is to develop a learning environment sensitive to the needs of girls, disadvantaged and displaced children. It aims at improving governance by promoting effective and transparent working modalities and system, and strengthening the capacity of management planning, including financial planning, at all levels (central, district and local).

Since life skill education equips the young generation with necessary skills to earn livelihood and help reduce poverty of the country, the basic education should make an endeavor to making an abundant ground for generating vocational skills in the subsequent levels of school education. Primary education curriculum should include elements that foster child learning to interact properly with his/her environment, develop critical thinking and balanced emotional development, develop self-esteem and self-confidence, and develop ability to make critical decisions that are essence of life skills.

The following principles have guided the efforts of MOES through DOE towards meeting the learning needs of all:

- ◆ Develop school curriculum that is practical and more relevant to the lives of children, youths and adults.
- ◆ Emphasized right-based approach to education as pronounced in curriculum through civic education.
- ◆ Use new communication technologies for expanding learning opportunities and diversifying ways of learning.
- ◆ Enable all children, youths and adults to live safer, healthier and economically and socially active and productive lives.
- ◆ Learn generic skills such as information gathering, problem solving, critical thinking, teamwork, negotiation, interpersonal skills, self-awareness, assertiveness, handling emotions, conflict resolution skills, living in harmony and peace with neighbours.

- ◆ Design and disseminate programs to prevent and combat HIV/AIDS.
- ◆ Provide alternative and flexible schooling.
- ◆ Develop extensive partnership at local, national and international levels with local bodies, CBOs, NGOs, INGOs and other private agencies for bringing additional resources, capacity, expertise for implementing program activities.

iii. Legislation and Legal Framework

According to the EFA 2004-2009 Core Document, since the foundation for basic and primary education has been provided by BPEP II and previous projects, EFA 2004-2009 is building on this foundation and lessons learned from past experiences. One of the important lessons of BPEP II is that future support and program for this sub-sector should be flexible and responsive to change. In addition, BPEP II has made it clear that it is necessary to have visions for schools, teachers, and local institutions. Besides, there has been a significant shift towards decentralization as indicated by the shift in budget allocation to districts from 44% in 1999 – 2000 to 87.1% in 2002-2003. The contribution and shortcomings of BPEP II as reflected by program indicators and the capacity of central and district level institutions built during the BPEP II period are taken into account when preparing the EFA 2004-2009 core document. Also this document guided by the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), Tenth Plan, and the National Plan of Action for EFA (EFA/NPA 2001-2015).

Building on the objectives of 'Education for All', the parts of the Tenth Plan that dealt with education aimed to improve access to and quality of primary education. The Plan intended to expand literacy program to improve the livelihoods of deprived groups, especially girls, Dalits and disadvantaged children. The Plan's objectives also include the development and expansion of secondary education, production of middle-level technical workforce through the expansion of vocational and technical education and production of a high-level skilled workforce through the development of higher education.

iv. Responsible agencies and coordination of implementation

It was collective responsibility of the concerned actors in undertaking activities and generating resources towards achieving the EFA goals. The Ministry of Education and Sports bore the responsibility to develop policy, approve annual programs and monitor and evaluate the implementation of the educational programs. The Department of Education, (DOE) is the implementing agency of school level educational programs, and a major line functioning organization under the administrative hierarchy of Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES). The main role of DOE is to implement policy and targets formulated by MOES and also to develop norms and standards in order to create working framework for regions, districts and schools through the five Regional Education Directorates and 75 District Offices (one in each district). Monitoring of the program and project activities against the set outcome and benchmarks is one of the major functions of DOE. As such, the DOE has the pivotal role to play in the implementation of Education for All (EFA) program.

Under the EFA program two financing modalities namely, pool and parallel, are simultaneously functioning. The pool funding is guided by Joint Financial Arrangement, (JFA) which is agreed upon by the pool financing donors; Nepal Government, Denmark, Finland, Norway, UK and World Bank. There are parallel funding donors namely, Govt. of Japan and UNICEF. ADB and World Bank have supported two different projects namely, Teacher Education Project and mode of decentralization.

Secondary Education Support Program (SESP) is a program agreed upon between Government of Nepal (GON), the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Danish Assistance for International Development (DANIDA). Similarly the Community School

Support Program (CSSP) is implemented with the World Bank support in order to transfer the school management to the community with a view to empower the community in line with the decentralization endeavor of the country. In order to provide access to the children of poor and disadvantaged communities with a focus on the girl child, the School Physical Improvement Program is implemented under the support of Japanese Assistance for International Cooperation (JICA) in 12 districts of Nepal.

The DOE is also responsible to coordinate with the program implementing Central Level Agencies (CLAs) as National Centre for Educational Development (NCED), Curriculum Development Centre (CDC), Office of the Controller of Examinations (OCE), Non Formal Education Centre (NFEC) in preparing program and budget, implementing, monitoring and reporting the program.

Beside this, the non pool partners have also supported to achieve the objective of EFA program, especially on capacity building (UNESCO), quality and girls education (UNICEF), Food for Education (WFP), Community Owned Primary Education (UNDP/COPE). Similarly, Save the Children Alliance, World Education and other NGOs /INGOs etc. have provided complementary support to government's regular program.

v. Budgeting and financing: Resource Mobilization and Allocation

All regular and recurrent types of expenditure were to be borne by the internal sources of the government with local community and local bodies sharing some portion of specific activities. External Development Partners were to meet all the development costs.

Resource mobilization at the community and family level was anticipated to be significantly high in the implementation of the plan. Of the total expenditure by the government, a significant amount was in the form of regular budget, consisting of the salary component. The government was to allocate 3.5% of GDP for the education sector and 1.5% of GDP for the Basic Primary education project sub-sector.

Following Table III-33 Table III-33 shows estimated cost and financing by different sectors:

Table III-33: Estimated cost and financing by different sectors

Expenditure	Tenth Plan	Eleventh Plan	Twelfth Plan	Total (Rs. In million)
ECD				
Total	15011.1	25511.5	20457.2	60979.8
HMG/N	2007.0	1954.5	1181.0	5142.5
Donor	4045.1	3957.5	2399.2	10401.8
Local Community/Parents	8959.0	19599.5	16877.0	43435.5
Free and Compulsory Primary Education				
Total	24919.3	25128.8	15846.2	65894.3
HMG/N	650.0	650.0	390.0	1690.0
Donor	20700.8	20910.3	13314.9	54926.1
Local Community/Parents	3568.5	3568.5	2141.3	9278.3
Appropriate learning for life skills				
Total	286.5	3458.3	305.2	940.0
HMG/N				
Donor	286.5	3458.3	305.2	940.0
Local Community/Parents				
Ensuring social equity and gender parity				
Total	24.0	18.1	14.4	56.5
HMG/N				
Donors	24.4	18.1	14.1	56.5
Local Community/Parents				
Ensuring rights of indigenous people and linguistic minorities to BPE through mother tongue				
Total	482.1	1166.9	880.8	2529.8
HMG/N	375.0	1000.0	750.0	2125.0

Expenditure	Tenth Plan	Eleventh Plan	Twelfth Plan	Total (Rs. In million)
Donor	88.4	135.7	105.8	329.8
Local Community/Parents				
Adult Literacy				
Total	3075.0	3395.0	700.0	3250.0
HMG/N	1200.0	1350.0	700.0	3250.0
Donor	1850.0	1982.5	1021.5	4854.0
Local Community /Parents	25.0	62.5	37.5	125.0
Improving Quality of BPE				
Total	2031.0	5465.0	3812.0	11308.0
HMG/N				
Donor	2031.0	5465.0	3812.0	11308.0
Local Communities/Parents				

Source: EFA National Action Plan Review Study; Key Findings (Section-2) (June 2005)

Based on the comparison of estimated costs against resource availability, the resource gap of Rs. 76.1 billion was estimated. This gap represented the amount to be met from additional source including additional support from external development partners.

vi. Monitoring and Evaluation

According to Education for All: Nepal National Plan of Action, the Ministry of Education and Sports is the main actor to bear the responsibility to develop policy, approve annual programs and monitor and evaluate the implementation of the educational programs. However, participatory monitoring process involving the stakeholders and program partners was initiated. Monitoring indicators, given below in Table 8, were also developed on a participatory basis and each VDC, municipality and district, were made responsible for ensuring the achievement of targeted indicators.

Table III-34: Program Activities and Targeted Monitoring Indicators

Program Activities	Responsible Party	Monitoring Indicators
Reviewing and revising school curriculum, text books and current teaching learning practices Orienting teachers and curriculum experts Strengthening supervision and monitoring Periodic assessment of transfer of life skills education Incorporating components of appropriate learning life-skills in existing provisions for out of school children Review the status of out-of-school children and identify their needs. Developing distance and flexible learning provision. Linking formal and non-formal mode of education for skill training Develop Community Learning Centres to facilitate youths to get access to flexible learning Develop suitable self learning modules (for various physical disabilities) / appropriate delivery approach Social mobilization and awareness building	Main: MOES, CDC, NCED, DOE, RC, NFE, MOLD, MOLT, MOWCSW, NGOs, Organizations of/for Disabled Groups Cooperating: Life Skills groups, CTEVT, Social Welfare Council, NPC, UN agencies, Donors, INGOs. Teachers, Community, Organizations, Local Development Groups, Local Government, Chamber of Commerce, FNCCI, CBOs, ILO	Formation of Life Skills Group/Forum Standard list of life skills for Primary School Revised curriculum and materials Teacher orientation package Trained teachers Document and Reports on provisions of flexible schooling and alternative forms of schooling Status report Need Assessment New set of curriculum and materials Increased access Identify the status of disabled people Document and Reports on current life skill education for youths and adults/ disabled people in Nepal Appropriate curriculum and materials Modules of self learning

Source: Education for All: Nepal National Plan of Action, 2001-2015(2003)

C. Progress in Achieving EFA goal

i. Performance Indicators

a. Literacy and Education

Almost all education indicators show a very noticeable improvement between 1995/96 and 2003/04. Overall adult literacy rate has increased by 12 percentage points, this increase being slightly higher for males. Proportion of population aged 15 years and above that ever attended school was 34 percent in 1995/96 which reached 46 percent in 2003/04. The mean years of schooling went up from 7.0 to 7.5 between these periods. Primary school net enrollment ratio (NER) increased from 57 percent to 72 percent, lower secondary school NER from 19 to 29 and secondary school NER from 9 to 15 over the last eight years. At all levels of schooling, increases in NER are higher for females. Likewise, private school participation rate has gone up from 7 percent to 17 percent during the same period. Following Table 9 shows the educational statistics of Nepal (NLSS, 2004).

Table III-35: Summary Statistics on Literacy and Education

Description	Nepal Living Standard Survey	
	1995/96	2003/04
Adult literacy rate, both sexes (15 years and above)	35.6	48.0
Males	53.5	64.5
Females	19.4	33.8
School ever attended, both sexes (15 years and above)	33.9	45.8
Males	50.0	61.2
Females	19.1	32.6
Mean years of schooling ever attended (years), both sexes	7.0	7.5
Net enrollment at primary school, both sexes	57.0	72.4
Males	67.0	77.9
Females	46.0	66.9
Net enrollment at lower secondary, both sexes	19.0	29.0
Males	23.0	31.1
Females	14.0	26.4
Net enrollment at secondary, both sexes	9.0	15.1
Males	13.0	16.8
Females	6.0	13.4
Attendance in Private School, both sexes	7.5	16.7

Regarding primary reason for leaving school/college for population aged 6-24 years who attended school in the past, a finding in the *NLSS 2003/04* helps explain how private costs of education might impact household decisions on whether or not to send their children to school. The survey was conducted among those who have never attended school in the 6-24 year category. As shown in the following Table 35, the highest percentage of female, urban, rural and total respondents answered that 'parents did not want' them to attend school, but this reason could be the result of other more explicit reasons such as 'had to help at home', 'too expensive', or 'other reasons'. By contrast, 'parents did not want' was ranked only third by the male respondents, with 'too expensive' being the first and 'not willing to attend' being the second. Hence, parents seem to have stronger reservations about enrolling their daughters than their sons in the school.

Table III-36: Reasons for Never Having Attended Schools among 6-24 Year Category

Reason for not attending school	Male	Female	Urban	Rural	Nepal
Parents did not want	17.8	38.4	33.8	32.8	32.8
Had to help at home	15.1	22.2	15.8	20.5	20.3
Too expensive	26.6	16.5	27.6	18.8	19.3
Not willing to attend	19.4	10.5	10.0	13.1	12.9
Too far	3.5	2.4	0.0	2.9	2.7
Absence of nearby school	1.8	1.2	0.0	1.5	1.4
Other reasons	15.9	8.7	12.7	10.6	10.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: NLSS 2003/04

b. Technical Education and Vocational Training

Greater access to relevant technical education and vocational training is critical for the numerous young school leavers without an SLC or marketable skills to obtain jobs available locally and abroad, and to engage in self-employment activities. The Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT), established in 1989 under the Technical and Vocational Education Act of 1988, is responsible for managing 15 public technical schools across the country, 2 Vocational Training for Community Development (VTCD) centres in Khudi (Lamjung) and Bhimad (Tanahun), and 1 Training Institute for Technical Instruction (TTI) in Madhyapur Thimi (Bhaktapur). There are also over 160 private technical institutions, which operate in affiliation with the CTEVT. Total enrollment capacity of these institutions is about 12,000. Level of training programs is categorized as short-term training, Technical School Leaving Certificate (TSLC) and Diploma. The following Table 11 indicates total enrollment capacity of CTEVT program and Table 12 shows total enrolment capacity of CTEVT managed technical schools.

Table III-37: Total Enrolment Capacity of CTEVT Programs ((2006/07)

Diploma Level								
SN	Program	Affiliated			CTEVT			Grand Total
		No. of Inst.	Quota	Total	No. of Inst.	Quota	Total	No. of Inst.
Health								
1	PCL Nursing	29	40	1160	1	40	40	1200
2	PCL Pharmacy	20	40	800	1	40	40	840
3	PCL General Medicine (HA)	14	40	560	1	62	62	622
4	PCL Lab technician	0	0	0	12	30	30	30
5	PCL Ophthalmic Science	1	25	25	0	0	0	25
6	PCL Dental Hygiene	4	40	160	0	0	0	160
	Sub Total			2705			172	2877
Agriculture								
7	Agriculture (AL &PL)	2	48	96	1	30	30	126
	Sub Total			96			30	126
Engineering								
8	Civil Engineering	8	48	384	2	40, 30	156	540
9	Computer	8	48	384	0	0	0	384
10	Electrical	1	48	48	2	24, 36	120	168
11	Electronics	4	48	192	0	0	0	192
12	Surveying	1	48	48	0	0	0	48
13	Mechanical	1	48	48	0	0	0	48
	Sub Total			1104			276	1380
14	Food technology	1	48	48	0	0	0	48
	Sub Total			48				48
	Grand Total	94		3953				4431

Table III-38: Total Enrolment Capacity of CTEVT Programs ((2006/07)

TSLC Level											
SN	Program	Affiliated (107)			CTEVT (17)			Annex			Grand Total
		No. of Inst.	Quota	Total	No. of Inst.	Quota	Total	No. of Inst.	Quota	Total	
Health											
1	CMA	62	40	2480	2	46, 32	156	0	0	0	2636
2	ANM	36	40	1440	4	40, 40, 65,32		0	0	0	1587
3	LAB	23	40	920	0	0	0	0	0	0	920
4	dental Hygienist	2	40	80	0	0	0	0	0	0	80
5	AAHW	5	40	200	1	40	40	0	0	0	240
6	AAM	1	40	40	0	0	0	0	0	0	40
7	Amchi	1	0	40	0	0	0	0	0	0	40
	Sub Total			5200							
Engineering											
8	Electrical	8	40	320	2	35, 32	134	4	40	160	547
9	Electronics	0	0	0	1	24	24	0	0	0	24
10	Civil Sub Overseer	7	40	280	5	48, 40, 44, 24, 32	940	3	40	120	1340
11	Mechanical	2	40	80	3	35, 24, 16	225	1	24	24	329
12	Basic Surveying	8	40	320	0	0	0	0	0	0	320
13	Auto Mobile	1	40	40	2	24, 24	96	1	24	24	160
14	Information technology	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	30, 34, 40, 40 ,40	920	920
15	Ref. & Air Condition	0	0	0	1	14	14	0	0	0	14
16	Sanitation	0	0	0	1	35	35	0	0	0	35
17	Junior Computer	1	40	40	0	0	0	0	0	0	40
	Sub Total			1080			1464	14		1248	3792
Agriculture											
18	VJT/JTA	10	40	400	8	50, 48, 40, 40, 32, 35, 44	2312	11	40	440	3152
Others											
19	Office Manageme nt	1	40	40	1	30	30	0	0	0	70
20	Social Mobilizatio n	3	40	120	0	0	0	0	0	0	120
21	Cooking & Hotel Mgmt.	0	0	0	1	30	30	0	0	0	30
	Sub Total			160			60				220

Since private technical training institutes tend to cater for the relatively wealthier segment of the population because of their very high fees, the CTEVT recognizes the urgent need to develop cost-effective skill development schemes for the wider population, particularly students from deprived groups and poor backgrounds, and/or unemployed and non-college

bound/drop-out youths who have little access to the existing technical education or vocational training opportunities.

In order to achieve this objective, the CTEVT has begun developing an Annex Program attached to general secondary schools. Using the secondary schools' existing physical and human resources, the program is managed and operated by the School Management Committee of the school, and offers mainly technical education programs, including civil engineering, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering and agriculture. Successful trainees are awarded a technical school-leaving certificate (TSLC). In addition to long-term courses, each school conducts short-term or modular training courses of 1 to 6 months' duration according to local employment demands. As suggested in the 10th Plan, the CTEVT aims to develop one program in each of the 75 districts, but it has so far established 15 and is planning to develop 15 per annum between 2007/08 and 2010/11. It is estimated to cost \$4.4 million to establish the 60 new programs and operate the entire project for the next four years. The following Table 39 indicates proposed budget requirement for establishment and operation of the Annex Program.

Table III-39: Proposed Budget Requirement for the Annex Program

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	Total	Total (\$ Million)
Establishment Cost (for 60/70 Districts)						
Construction of Workshop (100 sq. m.)	15.0	15.0	15.0	15.0	60.0	0.8
Renovation of Library, Toilet etc.	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	30.0	0.4
Procurement of tools and equipment	30.0	30.0	30.0	30.0	120.0	1.7
Sub Total	52.5	52.5	52.5	52.5	210.0	3.0
Recurrent Cost						
Salaries and Allowances	5.3	10.5	15.8	21.0	52.5	07
Teaching Materials	3.0	6.0	9.0	12.0	30.0	0.4
Procurement of Books	0.8	1.5	2.3	3.0	7.5	0.1
Administrative Cost (telephone, electricity, water & sanitation, etc)	1.5	3.0	4.5	6.0	15.0	0.2
Sub Total	10.5	21.0	31.5	42.0	105.0	1.5
Total	63.0	73.5	84.0	94.5	315.0	4.4

Source: Education Sector Development Program ESDP I (2007-2010), Final report, Volume II, Public Expenditure review for the Education Sector (June 2006)

Involvement of local people in training courses of the Annex Program is very encouraging. The trainings are designed to address the local needs and skill oriented training adopting indigenous technology. However, the people from disadvantaged group have not been able to take advantage from the skill oriented training of the Annex Program.

An ADB-funded Skills for Employment Project was started in 2005 to support the TEVT sub-sector. Its project appraisal document points out that the poor, disadvantaged and women in remote villages have had little access to TSLC skills-training programs run by the CTEVT partly because they are often unable to achieve high marks over 10 year of schooling, the entry requirement for the TSLC programs, and partly because skills-training programs tend to be provided in training centers located in urban areas. If access is the fundamental issue in the provision of skills-training for the poor and disadvantaged, establishing an Annex Program in every district might not help to mitigate the problem because these are most likely to be located in district headquarters. Unless the proposed Annex Program has a unique advantage in providing access for the poor in rural areas and is different from other skills training programs, it might only create another program for urban youths, failing to provide opportunities for rural ones. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the effectiveness of the existing 15 Annex Programs in terms of the provision of access to marketable skills-training for the poor before investing in the remaining 60 districts.

Trade school concept, which has been implemented in Nepal, is an initiative between the government of Nepal and the Nepalese Chamber of Commerce and Industries (FNCCI). This approach is a realization of the government and industry and business sector that mutual collaboration is essential between the two in order to make vocational training programs need responsive and relevant to the needs and requirements of the community and the individual. Realization of the importance of partnership between the government and the business sector in the development of skill development programs brought both parties into an agreement that a special type of vocational training institution i.e. Trade School, supported by both business community and the government, should be in operation. According to the agreement between the Government through CTEVT and FNCCI in 2003, five Trade Schools, which are known as Ilam Prasikchan Kendra, have been established in **Damak, Nuwakot, Taulihawa, Surkhet and Kanchanpur** in the form of five year pilot project for those unemployed youth who are interested in getting skill training, employees who are working in business and industries or as entrepreneur, and rural and disadvantaged groups. The FNCCI implements these Ilam Prasikchan Kendras and CTEVT provides technical support.

In response to the commitment of MOES to incorporate life skills component, the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) revised curriculum in 2003 **BS**. The knowledge, skills and attitude related competencies were integrated into the primary school level curricula of health education. The grade-wise curricular objectives were revised and made them knowledge, skills, and attitude level objectives. The contents related to life skills are incorporated throughout the curricular scope such as personal hygiene, environmental sanitation, nutrition, diseases, first aid, health services, etc. The revised curriculum and textbooks are being piloted in the 50 schools of 10 districts. After the revision based on the piloting, grade I textbooks have been finalized and introduced in the national level since 2006.

Primary level teachers and students activity book has been developed in collaboration with UNICEF/Nepal. But these activity book and some other instructional materials such as posters were found distributed in the UNICEF/Nepal supported schools only. The activity book is based on the revised curriculum and this revised curriculum and textbooks have been introduced in the national level in grade one from this year.

c. Knowledge of HIV Prevalence: Practices among Young People and Adults

According to the NLSS 2003/04 report, 58 percent of the population aged 10 years and older has heard about HIV/AIDS. About 65 percent of males were reported to have heard of HIV/AIDS compared to 51 percent of females. The percent of the people who have heard of HIV/AIDS is higher in urban (83 percent) compared to rural (53 percent) areas. Among rural groups, the proportion is higher in the West Tarai (60 percent) and the lowest in the East Terai (46 percent). The main sources of information that they have heard about HIV/AIDS are: radio, television, friends/relatives and newspapers/pamphlets. While TV, radio and newspapers/pamphlets are the main sources of hearing about HIV/AIDS in urban areas, radio, friends/relatives, and TV are the main sources in rural areas.

A study conducted in 2005 with 2401 young male and female aged 15-29 (among which 56% were under 19 years and 64% were unmarried) revealed that youth in urban areas had high level of knowledge about HIV and its prevention. Among them 95% had heard of HIV/AIDS and over 80% knew at least 3 correct ways of avoiding HIV transmission. However, knowledge level varied by geographical locations. In general, 93 percent among all age groups have knowledge about how HIV is transmitted. Table 40 below shows percentage of young people having knowledge of correct ways of HIV transmission:

Table III-40: Knowledge of correct ways of HIV transmission by age group

Age Group	No of correct ways known					Total
	1	2	3	4	>=5	
15-19 Years	3.4%	12.0 %	29.8 %	29.6 %	25.1 %	100 %
20-24	5.9%	11.4%	33.4%	28.7%	20.6%	100 %
25-29	5.2%	16.8%	32.9%	26.6%	18.5%	100%
Total	4.7%	13.1%	31.9%	28.5%	21.8%	100 %

Among these young people, 100% of youths who have completed secondary and lower secondary level of education, identified more number of correct ways of avoiding HIV transmission followed by those who have completed Primary (87%) and below primary (80%) level of education.

Another study on HIV/AIDS indicated that knowledge level about HIV/AIDS among primary students is very low. Both female and male secondary students have higher level of knowledge about HIV/AIDS than primary level students. However, primary female students are slightly less knowledgeable than males. At the secondary level, these gender differentials persist, but they are much less obvious. There are no major differences in knowledge levels between urban and rural schools. Numerous other surveys have also found that, while general HIV knowledge among the 14-25 age group is fairly good, knowledge about STDs is quite poor.

D. Implementation Gaps and Disparities

- ◆ The revised Health Education and Population Education subjects curriculum and textbooks have been limited for piloting in the 50 schools of 10 districts only. Moreover, besides textbooks, CDC has not developed and distributed any other curricular materials to support life skills-based education at the school level.
- ◆ Health and Population Education subjects in the revised curriculum contain life skills components. Textbooks based on the revised curriculum are introduced nationally at Grade I. But teachers still have not been provided with support materials and training/orientation about the revised curriculum, textbook, and life skills education. Teachers' manual on life skills is provided and limited number of teachers oriented/trained in short duration training with the support of UNICEF/Nepal and NCED's own initiatives. At the national level, curriculum and textbooks are already in use without support materials and teachers being oriented or trained.
- ◆ Another gap is in the introduction of the revised curriculum nationally without preparing teacher adequately (no orientation/training) and without provision of support materials to them. The curriculum has emphasized student-centered activities with the teacher having a role of facilitator. Group discussion, brain storming, role play, buzz session, game and simulation, debate, project work, field trip, case study, demonstration and enquiry are the suggested methods for health education.
- ◆ Lack of regular monitoring process, correcting shortcomings mechanism and recording of progress has made the teachers of the piloting schools (where CDC and UNICEF/Nepal have provided the revised curriculum and support for life skills-based education respectively) unable to notice the link between these two supports to fulfill the same purpose and relate them to optimize classroom delivery. The old and new curriculum and text-books have created confusion in teachers as which content or even context relate to which part of the textbook.
- ◆ The teaching methods suggested for life-skills based education are learning by doing, working in groups, brainstorming, role-playing, story telling, debating, and participating in

discussions and group activities. These are the methods included in the CDC curriculum and the NCED teacher training packages in the past as well as in the present. However, there is a gap in translating these techniques/methods in the classroom process. The methods of delivery of the life skills as suggested by the thematic report, curriculum and training put emphasis on student-centered approach with learning opportunity to the students through the classroom process. In this sense, the classroom process need to de-emphasize rote memorization and whole class teaching. This will require new orientation to the teachers to emphasize on students' learning (not teaching), provide individual attention to the students (not always whole class teaching), bring in the experiences of the students in the classroom (not limit themselves in the textbook content exposition), and so on.

- ◆ There is a controversy in understanding what life skills mean. On one hand, there is confusion on what constitutes life skills such as some of the teachers seem to limit life skills as education about sex education and HIV/AIDS. On the other hand, educationists have concern that the primary school curriculum does not include any topics on HIV/AIDS or any other area of sexual reproductive health (SRH). It is commonly argued that SRH education is inappropriate for primary school students mainly because they are too young.

If life skills education has to do something with HIV/AIDS, the content is not adequate, it is too content-driven, and does not focus on the development of essential life skills. In key areas, inadequate information is given and issues are not well explained. Moreover, the curriculum hardly deals with attitudes, beliefs and values related to HIV/AIDS.

- ◆ According to the Thematic Report for EFA, life skills are for employment and earning potential in the context of Nepalese society. Nevertheless, the proposed 'National Curriculum Framework' (NCF) for school education perceives 'livelihood skills' not to be 'life skills'. In its revised curriculum CDC adopted the life skill components emphasized by WHO and incorporated these in the Health Education subject. Whereas the NCF stresses life skills education to be spread across a range of content areas because these are more of generic life skills related to all aspects of life. Besides, donors, NGOs, INGOs and other key actors of EFA are interpreting life skills in their own way. Therefore, development of life skills education in the Nepalese education system seems to be ignored at the cost of the National Thematic report for EFA.
- ◆ The Annual Strategic Implementation Plan (ASIP) 2005/06 had also indicated its targeted focus on updating sellable skills among youth and adolescents through skills development program, which would be extended to benefit secondary students, SLC failures and dropouts of secondary education in support of Technical Education and Vocational Training (TEVT) program. However, the vocational training and skill development training of CTEVT are more focused on upper level. It is not directed to skill for livelihood, which is a part of life sustaining skills. This part is totally ignored. Moreover, skill development provisions provided either by the government or by the private sectors including NGOs are not being streamlined with EFA goal 3.

E. Success and Remaining Challenges in Implementing EFA goal 3

i) Success

As indicated in the EFA Status Report (2005) best practice in the area of meeting the learning needs of all is related to development of curriculum and textbook at local level, community mobilization, partnership with NGOs/CBOs in improving support to school and campaign for enrolling school age children in all schools and their retention. The physical and financial progress of this component was 85.31% as indicated by the report.

Development of curriculum and textbook at local level

- Mandate by the Curriculum Policy of the Government for provision of local curriculum by 20 %;
- Development of Grade 3 English textbook, and revision and publication of Grade 2 textbooks;
- Development and publication of child learning reference materials in 5 subject areas by Curriculum Development Centre;
- Development and publication of mother-tongue textbooks - Rai Chamling (Grade -2), Sherpa (Grade 3) Gurung (Grade 4), Rai- Bantawa and Magar (Grade -5));
- Publication and distribution of a brochure for bi-lingual education;
- Publication of School Level Evaluation Manual by CDC.
- Collection of feedback of Grade 1 textbooks through field visits and monitoring;
- Partnership with Nongovernmental Organization in providing support to schools is one of the major working strategies of the government. In this regard, 136 GOs/CBOs (SOs) were selected.

All children have right to education, which is obligatory for a nation to fulfil. However, each child has unique learning need and pace, which education system must regard. Similarly, each child can learn and it is the obligation of the system to devise delivery method appropriate to the learning needs. All initiatives towards meeting the learning needs of all in the past are guided by the above assumption. In the year 2005-2006, the status of the excluded by the education system was outlined as follows:

Minority linguist groups

- Orientation to Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and teachers in 210 schools of 22 districts in inclusive approach to education,
- Development of 45-day teacher training package in inclusive approach to instruction and conduction of training to teachers,
- Textbooks in 5 major local languages being prepared in view of supporting the learning of students with different mother language,
- A National Curriculum Framework has been prepared with provision of 20% local/contextual and 80% national contents.

Children with disabilities

- Operation of 47 Assessment Centres to identify children with disabilities, provide counselling services to identified children with disabilities and undertake other referral activities,
- Operation of 330 Resource Classes -156 for deaf, 113 for mentally retarded (MR) and 61 for blind,
- Operation of 9 integrated schools -4 for blind and 5 for deaf at secondary level,
- Special Education Council's support to run 34 educational institutions for children with disabilities - 6 for deaf, 13 for MR, 11 for blind and 4 for children with physical disabilities.

- Scholarship provided to 8000 students with disabilities in A, B, C, and D categories depending on the level of difficulties: from EFA, 2560 from SESP 4240 at secondary level and 1400 students from primary to secondary levels from 'Special Education Council' have received the scholarship,
- Extracurricular activities for children with disabilities organized in 63 districts,
- Scholarship to children victimised and orphaned in the conflict

Religious groups

Preliminary interactions with concerned stakeholders have been undertaken and consensus built for mainstreaming Madarsa, Gumba and Gurukuls with flexibility in the curricular materials to respond the needs of specific religious groups as well as mainstream their curricular demands.

Displaced and refugee children

A decade long conflict has had a significant impact on the education of children in Nepal. Displacement has caused many children to suspend their education. A recent study showed that only 39 per cent of children who had left school because of displacement had rejoined school in their new area of residence. The remaining 61 per cent were either staying at home or were working in low paid jobs. There are undoubtedly many reasons why children are not enrolled in a new school; however, a major reason appears to be a lack of the required documents especially when displacement has occurred suddenly or in secret. Recognizing this, the Ministry of Education and Sports has recently relaxed the rules on documentation and has instructed district education authorities to allow out-of-district children to be enrolled in school immediately rather than insisting on production of correct documentation first. In addition, the Ministry is piloting a child-tracking system to facilitate children who have had to leave their home districts, although in some areas it is not being fully implemented.

Conflict-affected children

When the breadwinners of households are displaced, their children often drop out of school either because there is not enough money or because children have to look after the home. In both cases, it is often children from the poorest families who are most affected. One study found that children from wealthier families who are displaced tend to transfer to private schools in urban areas or overseas rather than drop out of the school.

NGO collaboration is in practice to support rehabilitating 200 street children with their families and schooling them at 4 districts and to support education of orphaned and victimized children of conflict.

HIV/AIDS affected people

The current school curriculum provides basic information about HIV/AIDS and reproductive health but the adequacy of the information and delivery of it has often been of concern. There are major interventions targeting youth, which are expected to provide access to information, enhance their skills for reducing their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS and encourage the use of health services. Some of the most notable activities include youth friendly services centres, a life skills based media program called Saathi Sanga Mann Ka Kura (meaning 'chatting with my best friend'), life skills based education program through the education system and sexual and reproductive health related educational programs.

UNICEF adopted has a cross-cutting approach to the HIV response for children and young people in and out of school. Over the last four years they have been working with the Ministry of Education and Sports to integrate life skills based education for HIV and drug

prevention into the national health curriculum of school grades 1 to 10. The program is currently being piloted in 13 districts of Nepal.

Similarly, UNICEF and the UNFPA/Reproductive Health Initiative for Youth in Asia have a peer-based life skills program aimed at reaching out-of-school children in more than 32 districts. This is taking place through their numerous support and implementation partners at international, national and district levels. These peer education programs were scaled up in 2005 under the Global Funds for AIDS, TB and Malaria (GFATM) program. By the end of 2005, the program reported reaching close to 50,500 in and out-of school young people.

Program for Disabled

The government is committed to improving the access to education for disabled children and to promote inclusive models of education. Within the Ministry of Education, two organs have been established for providing educational programs for the disabled:

- The Special Education Council has the primary responsibility for the development of policy and programs
- The Inclusive Education Section is responsible for the implementation of the policy and programs

A program of inclusive education has been established in 47 of 75 districts throughout the country. The program has had a variety of limitations and issues and it is therefore that a pilot project funded by DANIDA was introduced in four districts under the Basic Primary Education Program.

The model of inclusive education involves a grassroots approach. The principle of the program is that inclusive education benefits all children and creates a better learning environment and quality education. The project was established in 2000 under the management of the Inclusive Education Section of the DOE. National guidance is provided by the central government, though districts can opt to vary the program in accordance with local needs, including geography, poverty and disability prevalence.

According to the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MWCSW), the Special Education Council under the Ministry of Education and Sports, operates Special Needs Educational Programs in 47 districts throughout the country. Approximately, 330 resource classes are currently being operated to provide special education for the blind, low vision, deaf and mentally retarded children. Support services along with residential facilities are provided to the needy disabled children in each school

According to the Ministry of Education, the number of disabled children receiving some form of special education is as follows:

- 1,499 children are in NGO managed special schools and resource classes supported by the Special Education Council
- 450 children are in NGO managed special schools without support from the Special Education Council
- 1,956 primary children are in government schools in resource classes supported by Inclusive Education Section of the Department of Education
- 890 primary children are in local schools supported by the Inclusive Education Section of the Department of Education
- 1,743 children with physical disabilities are in mainstream schools supported by scholarships.

The World Bank is funding the second phase of basic and primary education projects, partnering with other agencies to provide education opportunities to children from grades 1 to 5. This project supports inclusive primary education for children with disabilities.

Nepal Television has been broadcasting the news in Nepali Sign Language for the past several years. Sign language and Braille scripts are in use, though limitedly, in the formal education process in schools. There are sign language training programs run by several civil societies and DPOs. A sign language vocabulary of approximately 2,500 signs was developed. Computer training activities operated by the Government are also available.

ii. Challenges

Despite tremendous effort of the government in meeting the learning needs of all, some challenges are still prevalent in the EFA Program. They are as follows:

Learning needs of ethnic minorities

People of diverse ethnic and tribal groups living together respecting each others' social hierarchy, cultural values and mother tongue is the uniqueness of Nepalese communities. In this situation the education system has to meet their differing learning needs facilitating preservation, promotion and transmission of cultural values to the forthcoming generations with an emphasis on inculcating mutual respect to each others' values.

Learning needs of disadvantaged groups

Poor socio-economic conditions of many people have been one of the main impediments towards securing universal access to basic education. Moreover, the low level of educational awareness and social discrimination against them has remained a challenge to be addressed.

Learning needs of children with disabilities

A recent international publication entitled Measuring Out-of-school Children: Exclusion in Primary Education (UNESCO and UNICEF, 2006) revealed that only 2.7% of children with disabilities have access to primary education indicating that an overwhelming mass of school-aged children in this group is still out of school. Mainstreaming this group necessitates coordination of multi sectoral efforts, innovation of disability specific strategies along with instructional techniques and huge financial resources. Addressing this is a tough challenge.

Conflict and Post Conflict Situation

Addressing learning needs of conflict-affected students is another dimension of challenge for educational planning. Responding to the unforeseen situation of overcrowding classrooms, especially in the destined location of internally displaced students, shortage of teachers, learning materials and space in a classroom is very difficult. Since they are most dynamic and volatile in nature and different in terms of ethnicity, culture, age, gender, and the levels of schooling, meeting their learning needs is also a challenge. Upon the settlement of the conflict, post conflict arrangements are as indispensable as they are tough.

Mainstreaming religious schools

Different religious groups run their own schools without establishing horizontal and vertical relation with the national education system. These schools basically focus on their cultural and religious beliefs. However, in many cases these schools also indoctrinate their corresponding religious dogmas, which could be dangerous in a long run for social and cultural integration. Mainstreaming such schools with appropriate solutions has been a challenge. However, effort in this direction has already been initiated by the Ministry of Education.

Welcome to School Program

The recent policy of the government's regarding 'Welcome to School Program' has significantly increased primary school enrolment, resulting in 145 percent of the gross enrolment rate (GER) in 2005. However, it has not been that much successful to motivate the hard-core groups (children of disadvantaged communities, sparsely populated areas, and those below the poverty line) to come to school. Many of these children are an important source of family income, and are often discouraged from joining school by their parents. Likewise, the enrolment campaign of 2005 has added approximately 200,000 more school children. However, in the absence of a program/policy for retention, it is difficult to know how many will continue their schooling year.

Similarly, the provision of girls' scholarships, the girl's incentive program and female teachers at the primary level has contributed to closing the gender gap in school enrolment. However, while there is progress in increasing net school enrolment, the rate of completing primary level is still disappointing. A combination of additional resources and better use of existing resources is required in order to achieve the goal of the universal primary education. Furthermore, a holistic approach to school system development is required to accommodate a larger number of students completing primary education and going on to the secondary level.

iii. Remaining Challenges to Providing Education

A. Policy and Budget

Several issues related to government policy have been noticed in education sector in the country. There is a big gap between government owned and private schools and children from the government owned schools suffer from inferiority complex. The below 50% SLC result and unemployment problems indicate the status of education in the country. Monitoring and evaluation, as well as policy, programs implementation is very weak. Sufficient budget has been allocated but in practice the schools from remote areas could not receive the aid in time on one hand and the budget is not properly utilized and outcome or result is not satisfactory on the other.

B. Economic Factors

School dropout problems of children from poor family, especially of the so-called Dalit community, from the primary level has remained a challenge of government owned schools from remote areas. The children have to work for survival, handle household works, take care of their younger brothers and sisters and herd domestic animals. Children from the ultra-poor section of the society are even unable to buy the school uniform, copies, pens etc and pay nominal school fee. These facts, therefore call upon making education free and compulsory up to grade ten.

C. Social and Cultural Factors

Social and cultural factors such as primitive traditions, festivals, ritual processes, marriage procession and others directly influence children's education. In addition to these, other forms of discrimination and exploitation are still prevalent in the Nepalese society. Social justice and human rights issues are yet to be addressed reasonably.

D. Geographic Factors

About 80% population is residing in the villages (Mountains, Hills and Terai). Due to poor rural infrastructure, transportation, communication and electricity facility, children's education is very much affected if schools do not follow the settlement pattern. Sustainable infrastructures have to be developed to provide quality of education.

iv. Flagship Issues

Education in situation of emergency and crisis/conflict

After the recent creation of a wider inclusive environment and an interface for the positive communication between the conflicting parties, there has been a concept of 4R - - Reconciliation, Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Reunification approach in education sector. This approach brings together those people who have been excluded from the benefit of mainstream education due to a decade long conflict. Ways and means to strengthen this approach should be explored.

Focusing resources on effective school health to combat HIV/AIDS

Although lower secondary and secondary school curriculum includes content on HIV/AIDS, the information provided is not enough to make the children and young people aware of the diversity of the impact of HIV/AIDS. The subject matter like STD and HIV/AIDS is not regarded as a topic of open public debate. Since awareness toward HIV/AIDS is a part of life skill education, emphasis should be given on detailed information as well as subject teacher training to bring the desired change.

Girls education

The government has given priority to girls' education by providing many different programs. However, participation of girls in education is still low. Their participation in school is found higher in urban areas, but in rural areas the situation is still satisfactory due to lack of information at the grassroots level and social belief that does not give priority to daughters' education. The effort of the government needs to be continued on a renewed scale.

Right to quality education

Despite encouraging developments, there are still an estimated 115-130 million children not attending school in the world. A larger percent of them live in low and lower middle income countries like Nepal. Alarming are the countless others within the school system being excluded from quality education. Among those who do enroll in primary school, a large number drops out before completing primary education.

Current strategies and programs have not been sufficient to meet the needs of children and youth who are vulnerable to marginalization or exclusion. Achieving the EFA and Millennium Development Goals by the stipulated time line will require unprecedented inter-sectoral and interagency collaboration among partners. Education must be viewed as a facilitator of human development and its functionality, regardless of barriers of any kind, physical or otherwise, should be promoted. Therefore, disability of any kind (physical, social and/or emotional) cannot be a disqualifier. Inclusion, thus, involves adopting a broad vision of *Education for All* by addressing the needs of all learners, including those who are vulnerable to marginalization and exclusion.

Some examples of marginalized/excluded/vulnerable groups are: abused children, child laborer, refugees or displaced children, religious minorities, child domestic workers, migrants, poverty stricken children, language minorities, ethnic minorities, children in conflict zones/child soldiers, children with disabilities, nomadic children, HIV/AIDS orphans etc.

UNESCO views inclusion as a *“dynamic approach of responding positively to pupil diversity and of seeing individual differences not as problems, but as opportunities for enriching learning.”*

Therefore, the move towards inclusion is not simply a technical or organizational change but also a movement with a clear philosophy. In order for inclusion to be implemented effectively, countries need to believe in inclusive principles together with practical ideas to guide the transition towards policies addressing inclusion in education.

Literacy development

Since the 1970s, the Ministry of Education and Sports has provided basic literacy and numeracy classes for illiterate adults through the adult education package. The program focuses on reading, writing and numeracy for adults aged 15–45 years. The idea is to develop functional skills and build self-confidence. There is a special focus on women in adult literacy initiatives in Nepal. In addition to the Adult Literacy Program and the Women's Literacy Program, Community Learning Centres are an innovation within the Education for All Program. They aim to increase literacy, increase community access to functional and useful knowledge, and establish a link between development activities and education. These community-based centres, of which there are now some 40, have the potential to become real resources for communities. These need to be continued in a country like Nepal, where people in rural areas are uneducated, ignorant and innocent. The country needs to uplift the awareness level of these people even through literacy programs. However, there is a strong need of provision and implementation of effective monitoring and supervision mechanism for the best result of such programs.

Capacity building – individual and institutional

In order to improve all aspects of quality education, and ensure excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved, there is a need of individual and institutional capacity building. In this regard, capacity building of teachers through training is very essential. Pre-service and in-service training that are being implemented at present should be made effective by means of follow-up of the training and fair and effective performance evaluation system. Teacher qualification and training have to be well linked to meet the requirements of the curriculum in respect to effective teaching and learning. The effort has to be made to link KSA learned in the training with classroom practices.

Another aspect of good quality education is capacity building of the institutions. In other words, for quality education, not only trained and capable teachers are required but also facilities of the institution need to be good and suitable for effective teaching-learning process. Facilities denote conducive learning environment, enough space and furniture for the number of students, enough teaching-learning materials, play ground etc. The government needs to pay attention toward increasing capacity of teachers and institutions to promote quality education.

Conclusion

A significant percent of excluded an/or un- reached groups, whose learning needs are still unaddressed due to one or other reasons, makes it clear that strengthened and more focused efforts to improve access to and completion of quality basic and primary education for girls and ethnically, socially, economically and geographically marginalized groups should still gain high priority in the agenda of educational reform initiatives of the government. This will require a fully developed link between formal and non-formal education and a holistic approach for the comprehensive school education.

Learning interaction between teachers and children in the classroom, facilitating are open role of teachers in communicating life skills, analysis of whether inclusive education can be the guiding principle of classroom practice and can contribute to both access and relevance/quality in basic and primary education are some prime considerations that EFA has to take into account for its successful outcome.

F. Overall Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

1. The curriculum should be revised and made more relevant to life skills education by correcting or clarifying mismatch between National Thematic Report guidelines or indicators of National Plan of Action for EFA and current development in life skill education.

2. Teacher training for life skills education should be improved ensuring that all health teachers receive pre-service training and orientation as well as regular refresher training so that their pedagogical competencies are enhanced.
3. Monitoring and supervision mechanism should be strengthened catering to the needs of the targeted groups.
4. Life skills education program should be developed to meet the needs of all children, youth and adults including physically disabled groups, conflict victims, street children, HIV/AIDS victims and other disadvantaged groups.
5. Donors, INGOs and NGOs involved in implementing life skills education are interpreting life skills in their own ways. The concept of life skills defined in the EFA National Plan of Action Nepal is not internalized and disseminated among the main actors of EFA and people in general.

The concept of life skills described in EFA National Plan of Action Nepal (2001-2015) should be reviewed if necessary and endorsed by the key partners/ actors to follow and act accordingly. The concept of life skills should be brought into wide dissemination and included in teacher training as well.

6. Since all the skill development provisions provided either by the government or by the private sectors including NGOs are not being streamlined with EFA goal 3, these programs should be brought under the framework of EFA goal 3, and should be collaborated and reviewed by MOES.
7. Integration, collaboration and cooperation is much desired among sub-sectors of education (special education, vocational education, education for women/out of school youth and children). All these sub-sectors have been fragmented. Therefore, they should be working under the framework of EFA National Plan of Action Nepal.

Theme 4: Adult Literacy and Continuing Education

i. Statement of EFA goal

ii. Description of EFA goal and specific national targets

iii. Strategies to achieve the goal

iv. Budget (cost calculation, expenditure) and financing (sources of income to cover costs) plan

Introduction

Literacy has been defined as ability of a person to be able to read write and dally life related short and simple sentences written on his/her mother tongue or national language the ability to do simple calculation

Literacy is a key determinant for long-term human development and a significant factor to the social and economic improvement of individuals and a country. Generally, the term literacy embraces also 'numeracy' or the ability to make simple arithmetic calculations. Though the word literacy has been officially replaced by "non-formal-education", literacy as a skill in reading, writing has been still used to denote the literacy rate of the country.

In Nepalese context, It has been considered as a powerful means to address the issue of poverty through human development measures by enhancing the capacity of the people in terms of appropriate knowledge and skills to acquire economic and social prosperity. It is considered as a first step towards contributing to the promotion of education as well as improving the status of the poor, women and marginalized groups. In this regard, literacy is viewed as a continuum of knowledge and skills and has proved to be the foundation of economic and social development of the individual as well as the country.

The EFA Context

Nepal was one of the signatories of the Jomtien World Declaration on Education for All (March, 1990) which set the target to reduce the adult illiteracy rate to, , one-half its 1990 level by the year 2000, with sufficient emphasis on female literacy to significantly reduce the current disparity between male and female literacy rate. The Jomtien Declaration did not significantly influence Nepal in accelerating the progress to raise the literacy rate in the country within the given time frame.

A decade later of the Jomtien World Declaration on Education for All, the World Education Forum (2000) was held in Dakar where the six objectives declared in the Dakar convention, the fourth objective was to achieve a 50 percent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults. The convention has positively influenced Nepal to accept the literacy and NFE program as a main vehicle for the poverty reduction and social empowerment. Nepal has also developed and implemented National Plan of Action with a time frame to achieve the 15+ age group literacy rate of 90 percent by the year 2015. To achieve the anticipated outcome of the EFA goal on adult literacy and continuing education, verities of literacy, post literacy, and income generating programs have been designed and implemented nationally.

Ministry of Education has always been regarded as the sole agency responsible to raise the literacy level of the country. Other line ministries have also been involved in providing literacy skill as a tool to improve the performance in their respective sectors. Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Forestry, Ministry of Local Development have had such extensive programs to help the participants of their programs to be literate. But their contributions to raise the national literacy level are reflected only in the national census. The

Ministry of Education has not been able to capitalize on the contribution of the other Ministries.

Today, in Nepal, there are numerous NGOs and I-NGOs involved in running non-formal education programs. Conceivably, the focus of these programs is on human development with emphasis on fostering human skills in areas such as health, education, social living, awareness building, income generation, civic awareness, human rights, etc. It seems that these organizations have used their own modus operandi to conduct NFE activities.

Out of about a hundred INGOs registered in Social Service Welfare Council, about 50 percent of these INGOs operate programs with literacy component. These INGO sponsored literacy components are generally used as tools to achieve their specific objectives like awareness raising, empowerment, income generation, information sharing. Success to bring these INGOs sponsored literacy programs within the NFEC national network would have significantly helped towards qualitative and quantitative improvement in the national literacy Program. So far, this has not happened.

Although a large variety of literacy /NFE programs have been developed and implemented for decades, Nepal's achievement in terms of quantity has not been satisfactory. The 2001 census indicated that almost 46 percent of the population was still illiterate

Analysis of literacy status

Increasing the literacy rate to meet the targets set for 2007, 2012, and 2015 poses a significant challenge to the Government of Nepal. The present programs and targets may not achieve the goal set by the EFA/NPA.

According to the 2001 Population Census, there is a gender gap of more than 20 percentage points in the youth literacy rate (15 to 24 years), literacy rate (6+), and adult literacy rate (age 15 and above). Gender inequality is strikingly apparent in the adult literacy rate where only 35 percent of females are literate compared to 63 percent of males.

The Figure below illustrates disparities among the development regions and the ecological zones. The literacy rate is lowest in the mountains across all development regions. The central hill region, which includes the Kathmandu valley, has the highest literacy while the mid-western and far-western mountains have the lowest rates. In general, the hill areas tend to have literacy rates above the national average (except in the far and mid-west), the Terai is generally in the middle, and the mountain areas are usually below the national average.

Table III-41: Literacy percentage of 15+ ages in Development Region

Development Region	Male	Female	Total
Nepal	64.5	33.8	48.0
East	63.7	34.7	48.2
Central	60.5	31.8	45.5
Western	73.5	41.7	55.5
Mid-western	65.2	28.5	45.2
Far-western	65.3	27.4	43.9

Source: Nepal Living Standard Survey, 2004

Table III-42: Literacy percentage of 15+ ages in Ecological Zone

Ecological Zone	Male	Female	Total
Mountain	57.6	25.5	40.4
Hill	70.2	39.8	53.4
Terai	60.8	29.7	44.3

Source: Nepal Living Standard Survey, 2004

Table III-43: Literacy percentage of 15+ ages in urban and rural

Development Region	Male	Female	Total
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Urban	84.8	61.2	72.8
Kathmandu valley	90.0	68.3	79.1
Other	81.6	56.9	69.0
Rural	59.9	28.5	42.7
East mountain /hills	58.2	29.7	43.1
West mountain/hill	68.1	33.4	47.7
East Terai	52.7	22.5	36.5
West Terai	66.3	31.0	47.4

Source: Nepal Living Standard Survey, 2004

Table III-44: Literacy percentage of 15+ ages in consumption quintile

Categories	Male	Female	Total
poorest	36.7	11.6	23.1
Second quintile	52.9	19.7	34.9
Third quintile	61.3	28.6	43.3
Fourth quintile	72.6	40.4	55.1
Richest	86.8	59.1	72.3

Source: Nepal Living Standard Survey, 2004

Wide discrepancies in literacy rates are also evident among different caste and ethnic groups. The lowest literacy rate is found among the Dalits living in the *terai*, such as the Musahar (7%) and the Dom (9%); the highest groups are invariably high caste, such as the Hill Brahmin (75%) and the Maithil Brahmin (71%). Hill Janajatis, such as the Thakali (76%) and Newars (71%), also have high literacy rates.

The big gap in the literacy rate among different ethnic groups indicates clearly that the existing literacy programs have fallen short to reach out to the deprived ethnic groups. Accessibility of these groups to literacy programs either under the government's sponsorship or under I-NGOs'/NGOs' sponsorship has yet to be increased. Available statistics shows that the literacy rate of privileged groups such as Marwadis, Kayasthas, Brahmins, Newar ranges from 60% to 88% whereas the literacy rates of such disadvantaged ethnic groups as Chepang, Chamar and Musahar are as low as 14.6%, 10.8% and 4.5% respectively.

Janajati groups such as the Newars and the Thakali residing in urban areas are economically advanced, and they tend to have substantially higher literacy rates than those poorer groups found primarily in remote and mountainous regions such as the Tamang and Magar or the Tharu, living in the mid and far-western region.

Literacy and Non Formal Education in the Tenth Plan (2002-2007)

In order to address the development needs in the field of literacy and non formal education programs the following pledges have been made in the 10th plan:

- Formulate programs on formal and non-formal technical and vocational education for producing human power as required by the country, and implement those programs; and place emphasis on using technology.
- Implement programs on literacy, post-literacy, income generation and on other non-formal education for assisting particularly the backward community and women in increasing their living standard.
- Make 1,866,000 adults particularly the women literate to achieve the target of the literacy rate set in the plan; provide the newly literate 933,000 persons with the post-literacy education and provide 93,300 persons of them with skill training. Provide 200,000 boys and girls of school age with basic primary education under the non-formal primary education and set up 205 Community Learning Centers (CLCs) for testing the continuous learning process, and entrust the running of these CLCs to the local bodies.

- Increase the literacy rate by expanding the programs on the non-formal education.
- Implement effective adult literacy and child education programs inspiring the targeted community particularly the women to education; run the programs on literacy, post-literacy and continuous education in an integrated manner; and run these programs in coordination with other development programs with the involvement of the local bodies, governmental and non-governmental organizations for achieving the objective of increasing the literacy rate.
- Develop the National Non-formal Education Centre as an institution for policymaking, providing technical services, and conducting monitoring and evaluation; clarify the role of non-governmental organizations and local bodies in the implementation of the illiteracy eradication program; and entrust them the responsibility for implementing the program.

Job-oriented literacy program will not only make illiterate adults literate but also give them skills in jobs that will contribute to the increase in production as required in the rural areas. Programs such as literacy program and 'education for all' will make additional contribution to human development. *((10th Plan In the line of poverty alleviation and increase of the GDP) the targets and logical frame-work of 10th plan is mentioned in annex)*

Review of EFA Goal

'Achieving a 50% improvement in the level of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adult' as the EFA goal is a hard not to crack for a country like Nepal.

The government has been implementing women's literacy programs with specific objective of increasing their literacy rates and the quality of their life. Different kinds of readers, primers and continuing education materials have been developed and tested over the years. Currently the effort has been to connect the literacy completers to income generation activities.

Illiteracy and poverty are inexorably linked with each other. Therefore, the government has claimed to have given priority to conduct literacy programs for the disadvantaged social groups based on the following criteria:

Remoteness: The areas that are a long way from the road network or the airport and the far-western development region.

Dalit: The disadvantaged group of people from among the Dalits who fall under the priority groups in the National Dalit Commission document, e.g., Musahar, Dushad, Badi.

Minority Ethnic Groups: Raute, Rajbansi, Dhimal, Chepang, or the groups that are in the priority list of the National Ethnic Upliftment Academy.

Women: Women submerged into deprivation who are prioritised by the National Women's Commission.

Age-Groups: Adults, Adolescents and children,.

Economic: Landless, jobless, Dalits, women, people from ethnic groups, groups involved in production promotion, farmers, labourers, housewives, etc.

VDCs and DDCs identify top priority groups from among these categories.

Public awareness and active participation of stakeholders including potential participants are considered crucial for the success of non-formal education program. Campaigns have been launched to bring about awareness and to mobilize the public for this purpose. Media of mass communication has also been mobilized for creating awareness

Measures to establish complementarity between formal and non-formal education

Establishing complementarity between formal and non-formal education systems is important to make non-formal education and literacy effective and meaningful for long-term benefit. System of accreditation and equivalency of non-formal education with formal education system which exists now in a limited structure needs further expansion to facilitate functional

relationship and transferability of the students from one stream to another. The need for expanding the provision of post-literacy programs and establishing necessary coordination with institutions that provide skill training and also with the institutions that provide loan services needs further impetus which will help to link literacy programs with income generating activities so that the poverty alleviation program will get additional boost.

Community Learning Centre (CLC) for Community-based Literacy Program

A Community Learning Center (CLC) is a locally managed institutional provision for conducting continuing education in addition to other development activities. In view of the need for opening a large number of CLCs local primary schools can be utilized as in Thailand, Laos and Cambodia. CLC activities can be conducted before and after the school hours so as not to hamper the teaching schedule of the schools. At present, VDCs and the ward offices of the municipalities fulfill basic physical and technical requirements for the operation of CLCs.

Steps are being taken to revise and improve the existing curriculum and textbooks in order to make non-formal education socially and economically meaningful for the participants and to make it compatible with the formal system so that the completers of non-formal education could join the formal system for further education on the basis of equivalency test. Different agencies involved in the literacy programs obtain reading/learning materials from the market. Similarly, the private sectors are encouraged to produce these materials. The Non-Formal Education Council is involved more in research activities than in developing NFE curriculum and materials.

The Non-Formal Education Council is expected to strengthen itself as a professionally efficient organization. It has got to fulfill its responsibilities for the promotion of basic and non-formal primary education for which, if there be any need, its structural set up has to be reformed and/ transformed with the placement of NFE professionals and experts as well as with the autonomy assurance. Structural designs bearing all essential qualities and capabilities to effectively conduct NFE activities will have to be installed in the DDCs and VDCs.

Now there is a growing concern to launch literacy campaign in the country. A perspective plan on NFE/literacy has been developed with the aim to make a holistic move in the advancement of NFE/ literacy including literacy campaign. It has been envisaged that for the launching of the campaign representative organizations of the stakeholders and sister organizations of political parties as well as members of trade unions will be mobilized.

The literacy campaign will be managed through necessary adjustment in the local government. The Council will make arrangements to provide block grants to the districts on priority basis. Then districts and villages will be encouraged to make as many people literate as possible.

The district level literacy personnel will receive orientation training on the key teaching/learning methods through I/NGOs. Moreover, the local bodies will be made responsible for choosing the methods / approaches.

DEOs' efficacy will be raised through the process of capacity building in publishing quarterly newsletters to be used as reading materials for the neo-literates.

Present Implementation Status

- NFE has been considered as a main vehicle to reduce the poverty and create social awareness by 10th Plan
- NFEC has been responsible to execute non-formal and continuing education
- There are numerous NGOs and I-NGOs involved in running non-formal education programs.

- A 10 year NFE Plan has been developed and implemented
- Literacy campaign
- VEP preparation
- Establishment of CLCs
- Linkage between formal and non formal education
- Provision of open learning
- Awareness programs

Table III-45: Progress of Adult Literacy Achieved by National Program (male literate)

F.Y.	Female	Male	Total
2000	93497	29914	125411
2001	94164	25458	121623
2002	82082	22764	106848
2003	31578	7963	41544
2004	57470	25729	85203
2005	67663	24140	93808
2006	87204	30540	119750
2007	75686	26593	104286
Total	589344	193101	782445

Table III-46: Progress of Women Education (female Literate)

F.Y.	Female	Total
2000	26635	26635
2001	28188	28188
2002	23942	23942
2003	26733	26733
2004	29970	29970
2005	66140	66140
2006	33591	33591
2007	59340	59340
Total	294539	294539

Total literate during the EFA implementation:

Male: 195489

Female: 562775+236494= 799269+5868=805137

Female Literate from NGOs: 5868

Total Literate: 100626

Table III-47: Participants of post literacy

S.N.	Programs	2000/001	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	005/6	Total
1	Male	10784	4807	3454	8109	5856	13333	46343
2	Female	62975	38566	34867	46413	44897	48109	285827
Total								332170

Table III-48: Involvement of female in Continuing Education Program

Year	2000/1	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	Total
Number	204	72	603	1183	4401	9081	15544

Table III-49: Establishment of CLC

Year	2000/1	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	Total
Number		5	15	20	11	99	150

Status of literacy

Total literacy: 53.74

Male: 65.08

Female: 42.47

Table III-50: Age group illiteracy rate

Age-group	Male	Female	Total	Total in %
6-10	635070	740355	1375425	20.9
11-14	161216	278915	440131	6.7
15-25	509420	1131314	1640734	24.9
26-45	1066120	2070413	3136533	47.6
Total	2371826	4220997	6592823	100

Source: HMGN, NFEC, 2002

Table III-51: Comparison of number of illiterate people, progress of the EFA period and target for 2015 (only the age group of 15+)

age group	male		female		total	
	number of illiterate in 2001	literate made in EFA period	number of illiterate in 2001	literate made in EFA period	number of illiterate in 2001	literate made in EFA period
15+ age group	1575540	195489	4777267	805137	6352809	824686
remaining illiterate by 2006	1380051		3972130		5352181	
Number of people to be literate by 2015 (75%)	1035038		2979097		4014135	

4. Challenges and Issues

Challenges

- inadequate and insufficient resources
 - human
 - financial
- lack of monitoring
- insurgency
- equivalency
- Inadequate Linkages with local development
- lack of need identification
- unsuitable time for class conduction in different geographical regions
- procedural shortcoming regarding the NFE material development and distribution
- lack of responsible implementing unit in district and grass roots level

Issues

- policy and plan
- financial allocation
- management structure
- research
- linkage between formal and non formal education
- absence of elected bodies at the local government
- coordination

- human resource development
- decentralization

Recommendations

- Policy reform
- provision should be made for non freezing account
- provision for budget allocation in previous year for printing and distribution of NFE material
- decentralization for need based material development

Review of implementation strategies

- flexibility on quota system
- partnership with local bodies
- implementation of each one literate one
 - the other local development activities
 - formal and non formal education
- equivalency
- establishment of NFE unit in district level
- adequate budget allocation

Log Frame (10th Plan)

Overall National Objective: To decrease significantly and permanently poverty of Nepalese people (women and men)

Sector comprehensive objective: To develop human resources and increase their productivity

objectives	policies	indicators	Source of Information	main program	external risk factors
Increase sustainable access to education,	Make literacy program widespread	Literacy of men & women 75% (6+ yrs) - Women literacy (6+ yrs) 67% - Adults (15 + yrs) 63% - Women literacy (15 + yrs) 60% - Gender parity index 0.8	-Four monthly and annual progress reports of D.E.O & MOE -Special surveys & Evaluation reports Site inspection	Provide adults & children deprived from going to school with job-oriented non-formal education	If knowledge of importance of education in adults & their initiative is lacking
non-formal education	appropriate education	-At least 20% of graduates of post-literacy education have skill training -At least 200,000 out of school boys/girls of 6-10 yrs & 10-14 yrs receive basic non-formal education separately		-required for literacy & job-oriented non-formal education -Run adult literacy program & out of school boy/girl literacy program separately Set up community study centre, run non-formal education in cooperation with community development work	

Task objective: Achieve 90% adult literacy rate by 2015 (with special reference to women) and provide opportunities for continuing education for neo-literates			
Program activities	Time frame	Main Actors	Monitoring Indicators
Review and reform of policies regarding NFE Conduct literacy campaign Implement client-centered innovative program like LEA, REFLECT, Whole Language approaches etc. Orientation program for VDCs DDCs, Municipalities personnel involved in educational activities. Establishment of coordination and facilitation committee at central level. Orientation/Seminars on different methods and approaches. Finalize policy to provide NFE fund to VDCs, DDCs. NFEC to work as a national resource center of network	2003 Periodic review and change in strategies and activities (if necessary) in 2005, 2007, 2010, and 2015	VDCs, Municipalities, DDCs, NGOs, CBOs, NFEC, Cooperating: Professional civil society groups and possibly other Ministries, UNICEF/ UNESCO and others (INGOs, UN agencies, Bi-lateral donors)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in literacy rate. - Documents and records. - Increasing number of VDCs involved in literacy activities. - Implementation of innovative programs. - Increased number of NGOs implementing NFE program. - New policies and full decentralization of NFE program to local bodies. - Direct channelisation of fund from center to VDCs.

Task objective: Ensure opportunities for basic education for out-of-school children. (EFA NPA)			
Program activities	Time frame	Main Actors	Monitoring indicators
Expansion of OSP for the disadvantaged and never-been-to-school children especially for girls. Child-focused training program. New type of training for facilitators and supervisors.	2003 Review target. Set new target in 2010. Updating in 2015	NFEC Cooperating: VDCs, DDCs and professional NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased access and number of children in schools and OSPs. - Increased number of classes. - Revised OSP program. - Implementation of Urban OSP.

Task objective: Promote critical awareness of participants about literacy.			
Program activities	Time frame	Main Actors	Monitoring Indicators
Revise the present package for awareness raising as well as the NFE and literacy activities and reform/update them. Revitalize the present awareness program with the use of electronic media and other means of mass media	2003 Periodic review of impact of program and reset target in 2005, 2007,	NFEC Cooperating: NGOs, CBOs, VDCs, DDC, Municipalities, other government line agencies and UN	Awareness raising materials Forums activities Awareness raising activities conducted

Task objective: 4. Make literacy life-related. (EFA NPA)			
Program activities	Time frame	Main Actors	Monitoring Indicators
Finalization of policy for Community Learning Centers (CLCs). Distribution of CLC manual. Motivate other stakeholders to open CLC. Promotion of mother tongue literacy programs Development of local materials. Orientation training for all stakeholders: DEO, VDC, Municipality, DDC, etc.	2003 Periodic review of impact of program and reset target in 2005, 2007, 2010 and 2015.	NFEC Cooperating: NGOs, CBOs, VDCs, DDC, Municipalities, other government line agencies and UN agencies.	- Increased number of CLCs. - Strengthening CLC by introducing multi-media program. - Increased number of stakeholders opening CLC in all parts of Nepal.

Cost estimation

Literacy		(Rs in Million)				
SN	Expenditure Heading	Unit Cost	Tenth Plan	Eleventh Plan	Twelfth Plan	Grand Total
1	Adult Literacy Campaign		1100.0	1100.0	550.0	2750.0
2	Women Literacy (WEP)		550.0	550.0	275.0	1375.0
3	Post Literacy		550.0	550.0	275.0	1375.0
4	Continuing Education		600.0	600.0	300.0	1500.0
5	Research		10.0	10.0	10.0	30.0
6	CLCs (1000)		100.0	250.0	150.0	500.0
6	CLCs Operating Cost		100.0	250.0	150.0	500.0
7	Advocacy Social Mobilization		5.0	5.0	3.0	13.0
8	RC Support Program		10.0	10.0	6.0	26.0
9	NGO Mobilization		40.0	60.0	30.0	130.0
10	Monitoring and Evaluation		10.0	10.0	10.0	30.0
	Total		3075.0	3395.0	1759.0	8229.0
	HMG/N		1200.0	1350.0	700.0	3250.0
	Donor		1850.0	1982.5	1021.5	4854.0
	Local Community/Parents		25.0	62.5	37.5	125.0

Theme 5: Ensuring Social Equality and Gender Parity

Gaps, Disparities or Variations

Equity in Access

The MOES data shows a long term growth of primary level enrolment of 3% per annum since 1990. Annual growth rate of girl students is higher at 5%. It has resulted into increasing the proportion of girls' enrolment from 36% in 1990 to 48% in 2006. However, the enrolment includes both under and over aged students.

Despite the progress made so far, many children are still out of school and those who are enrolled either drop out or complete school with knowledge and skill that would hardly qualify them for further study or work. Disparities in terms of gender, caste and ethnicity persist. Moreover, many children are still out of the reach of education.

Viewed from equity perspective, disparity is evident in ECD/PPC enrolment as well. The Tarai has the lowest ECD/PPC GER of girls, followed by the Mountain region. Dalit children's representation in ECD/PPC is very low, girls' being 15.2% and boys' 14.7%. Janajati children's presence is better than Dalits' girls' being 41.4% and boys' 40.9%. The gap between Dalits' enrolment in ECD/PPC and other groups is much higher than that of Janajatis and other groups. The following table shows disparity in school level enrolment.

Table III-52: Enrolment: NER, GER (all levels)

Indicators		2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
NER (Primary)	Total	82.4	83.5	84.2	86.8	87.4
	Girls	76.8	77.5	78.0	83.4	85.5
NER (Lower Secondary)	Total	40.4	42.9	43.9	NA	52.3
	Girls	35.8	38.7	40.2	NA	47.8
NER (Secondary)	Total	27.5	29.5	32.0	NA	34.7
	Girls	23.9	26.3	28.8	NA	32.4
GER (Primary)	Total	118.4	126.7	130.7	145.4	138.8
	Girls	109.4	117.1	124.2	141.8	138.4
GER (Lower Secondary)	Total	57.5	60.0	80.3	76.0	71.5
	Girls	51.2	54.3	73.9	68.2	65.4
GER (Secondary)	Total	44.8	46.4	50.4	49.3	56.7
	Girls	38.7	41.3	45.2	45.5	53.1

Source: DOE- EMIS, 2006

The above table shows that access to primary education has improved substantially. This scenario correlates with the NLSS finding that over the period of 8 years (1995/96 to 2003/04) Nepal observed an increased access to primary education. (CBS, 2004). It also affirms that during the same period physical access to primary school also improved with an increase from 88.4 to 91.4 per cent households having access to primary schools within 30 minutes walking distance. Regarding grade one enrolment, although it decreased in 2006/07, it is still 3 per cent higher than that of 2004/05 academic year (TRSE, 2007). Expansion of ECD program and reopening of the private schools, most of which were closed down during the insurgency, contributed to this situation (TRSE, 2007).

Though the national average shows improvement, the enrolment of Dalit and Janajati children is, however, still very low. Out of total enrolment, Dalit children's share in primary, lower secondary and secondary levels is only 17.7 per cent, 9.5 per cent and 5.3 per cent respectively. Janajati children's situation seems to be better than that of Dalits but it is still low. Out of total enrolment their share is 38.8 per cent, 38.6 per cent and 29.9 per cent in primary, lower secondary and secondary levels respectively (DOE, 2006 Flash Report I). Situation of children from marginalized Janajatis is bleaker with only 3 per cent enrolment in primary level (TRSE, 2006). Poverty incidence among Dalits and marginalized Janajatis is

also higher. This indicates that there is a positive relation between poverty and education. NLSS 2004 also confirms that there is no considerable increase in the primary and secondary level enrolment of the bottom quintile. In the case of gender parity in enrolment at primary level, it is almost close to the goal for the primary level. At the national level, it is 0.94 in 2006. At the district level, most of the districts from Tarai and Mid Western and Far Western region are still facing the problem of balanced GPI in enrolment. For example, the GPI in enrolment at primary level is only 0.74 in several districts from the Tarai region.

The GER is increasing by around 4 percent point every year and NER by one percent point in each school year. It shows that the gap between GER and NER is 2007 increasing which is not a good sign of healthy education system. Moreover, the studies (TRSE, CERID, 2005, 2006) show that access to primary education from bottom quintile is quite low compared with high economic quintile. Dalit and other vulnerable groups are behind in both GER and NER. In 2006, the gap between boys and girls in NER was only 0.4, in the previous years it was 2 percent points and in 2002 and 2003, it was 11 percent points. From 2004 to 2005, Girls' NER has increased by 8 percent points indicating some problems in data collection and reporting as well.

The literacy rate of Dalits also, to some extent, explains the school enrolment pattern of Dalit children. The findings of a survey carried out in 3 Hill districts and 3 Tarai districts reveal that 54.9 per cent among the Hill Dalits and 20.2 per cent among the Tarai Dalits are literate (Nepal (NNDSWO, 2006). The gender and regional disparity in Dalit literacy rate follows the school enrolment pattern. In the Hill districts, literacy rate of male Dalits is 74.2 as opposed to 53.1 per cent for female Dalits. Whereas, in the Tarai districts, literacy rate of male Dalit is 33.2 per cent as opposed to 14.6 per cent of female Dalits. Low literacy districts are concentrated mainly in Far western and Mid-western Mountain and Hill districts as well as in Central Tarai districts and high literacy districts are concentrated in Central and Western Hills with a few districts in Eastern Tarai. The percentage of literate persons in 15 to 24 years population group ranges from 34.7 percent in Humla to 91.3 percent in Syangja

Wide gender gap in literacy prevails at Far-western and Mid-western mountain and hill districts. Considerable gender gap exists in selected Terai and hill districts adjoining the Eastern and Central regions. Western and Central districts, in general, are characterized by a low gender gap in literacy status.

The poverty incidence among hill Dalits is 48 per cent whereas it is 46 per cent among the Tarai Dalits. Though more Dalits in hill are poorer than the Tarai Dalits, the gap is very small and therefore justifies that the higher poverty incidence lowers the chances of being educated.

Nevertheless, the GPI has improved over the period of 3 years. It has reached 0.94 (Flash Report I, 2006) from 0.87 in 2004. The GPI of primary level enrolment of Dalits and Janajatis is also high with 0.93 and 0.97 respectively but the GPI of children with disability is lower than that of other groups (Ibid.) The GPI across poverty levels however positively correlates. The table below shows that GPI among poorer groups is worse and it is more evident in higher grades. In other words, among the poorer population, the GPI is in favour of boys.

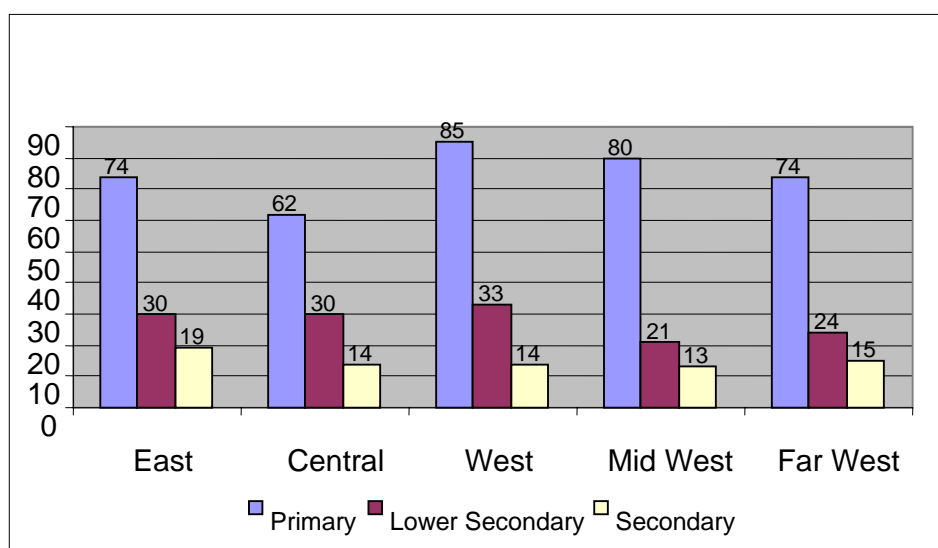
Table III-53: GPI in GER by consumption quintiles

Consumption Quintile	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary
Poorest	0.68	0.68	0.11
Second	0.79	0.70	0.66
Third	0.85	0.93	0.69
Fourth	0.93	1.21	0.58
Richest	1.03	0.97	1.06

Source: NLSS, 2004

Despite the increased enrolment and availability of primary level schools within 30 minutes walking distance, the ecological variation in access is also prominent. Out of total primary level enrolment, Tarai holds 44.1 per cent. The proportion of primary level school age population is also highest in this region with 50.4%. But the number of primary schools in Tarai is only 28.2 per cent (Flash Report I, 2006). The figures below show that the primary level NER ranges from 62 per cent in the Central development region to 85 per cent in the Western development region. The lower secondary and secondary level NER is much lower than the primary level NER. The figure below shows NER in all five development regions.

Figure III-6: Net Enrolment Rate by development region



Source: NLSS, 2004

Central and Eastern regions, though comparatively better in HDI, have low primary level NER. And it has to be noted that Central region houses most of the Tarai districts.

There is no systematic approach to collect data of out of school children and those who are multiply vulnerable. 'Hard to reach' people are scattered throughout the country. Therefore one track monitoring system has failed to locate them. If a system to collect household data is devised and implemented or a perennial source is negotiated outside of the system, information gap does not remain in education sector thereby continuing the ease to locate the 'hard to reach' children. For example, updated and exact information about working children or child labour, HIV affected children, children in institution, and children affected by natural and human-made disaster is still lacking. Mostly I/NGOs are serving these children but in limited scale therefore there are many children who are still out of the formal education system. The existing system has reached most of the vulnerable children through non-formal education which itself is in disadvantaged position due to inadequate financial and human resources and institutional structure.

Children from religious groups such as Muslims and Buddhists have the option of attending their own schools- Madarsa and Gumba. Authentic and adequate information regarding these religious schools is not available. Limited studies (CERID, 2003, 2004, 2006 and Acharya, 2007) particularly on Madarsa, reveal that, though attempts have been made to teach mainstream curricula, the teachers in Madarsa are not prepared to teach them, many Muslim children attend Madarsas, and apprehension of interference is there if they are mainstreamed. Nevertheless MOES has made an effort to explore possible ways to mainstreaming them in the regular education system.

Children with disability have a limited access to education. UNICEF (2006) has estimated that '10 per cent of primary school age children have physical and mental disabilities, and most of them are out of school' (Cited in Acharya, 2007: 60). According to the Flash Report I, 2006 male disabled children's proportion in primary level is higher with 55% than that of female, which is 45%. The GPI is 0.82, which is lower than that of Dalits, Janajatis and other social groups. Likewise, the proportion of teachers with disability is also meager with 1.1 per cent in primary level.

Equity in Quality

Generally, both quantitative and qualitative variables are acknowledged as quality indicators. Variables such as student achievement (i.e. marks obtained in particular subject), promotion, repetition, dropout, survival, student/teacher ratio (STR), teacher composition, teacher training status, etc. are quality indicators which can be measured quantitatively. Qualitative learning achievement, school environment, curriculum, student/teacher behavior, social discrimination and classroom practices/interaction can be categorized as qualitative indicators of quality. But national student achievement test is not undertaken recently and qualitative approach to data gathering has not been incorporated in EMIS. Therefore there is an absence of systematic assessment of quality variables to determine the achievement made so far in this area. Nevertheless, the status of quantifiable variables such as promotion, repetition, dropout, survival, student/teacher ratio (STR), teacher composition, teacher training status is available and used for the purpose of this assessment.

The overall promotion, repetition and dropout rate of primary level shows an improving trend. Girls' share of promotion has also increased. Repetition and dropout rates of boys and girls decreased in primary level grades. The following table shows a comparative picture.

Table III-54: Promotion, Repetition and Dropout rates by gender and grade (primary level), 2000-2005 (%)

Grade	Promotion				Repetition				Dropout			
	2000		2005		2000		2005		2000		2005	
	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls	Total	Girls
1	44.6	44.7	59	58.1	38.7	38.3	28.3	28.8	13.6	14.3	12.7	13.1
2	77.8	78.1	78.6	78.1	16.8	17	16	16.5	5.7	5.1	5.4	5.3
3	82.5	83.5	81	80.9	12.3	12.3	12.9	13	4.8	4	6.1	6
4	82.3	83.9	79.7	79.9	12.7	12.9	13.8	13.8	4.8	6.2	6.5	6.3
5	76.5	76.8	78.1	77.6	9	9.1	10.4	10.7	12.7	12.9	11.5	11.7

Source: DOE EMIS

However, according to TRSE (2006), Dalit children's chance of survival decreases as the grade increases. Interestingly, in all the grades, Dalit girls are more likely to survive than Dalit boys. Unfortunately, similar data is not available for Janajati children.

The MOES data shows low level of the survival rate (pupils starting in Grade I and reaching grade V) and internal efficiency rate for the primary level with no substantial improvement in the last decade. As the MOES data shows, the survival rate is 80% in 2005 (Flash I, 2006)

which increased from 68% in 2002⁹. There is a 3 percent point gap between the sexes. The TRSE findings show that the survival rate is quite low for Dalit with only 8%¹⁰. Dalits' enrolment has improved but their low promotion rate and high dropout rate in both cases – total and Dalit alone, are visible. This situation demands greater attention to the educational performance including other quality aspects of all children, particularly Dalits.

The STR which is also a quality indicator has increased, but unevenly across ecological zones. Urban schools have faced more pressure than the rural schools in this respect. In 2002 the primary level STR was 35.7 (Joint Government–Donor Evaluation of BPEP II) but in 2006 it has reached 54.7 (DOE, Flash Report I, 2006). Tarai is the most disadvantaged among the ecological regions with respect to STR. The primary level STR in community schools in Tarai is 72.3, whereas it is 49.1 in the Hill and 42.2 in the Mountain. (Flash Report I, 2006). Due to the increased internal migration caused by armed conflict, the STR has increased in the urban schools. However, in the case of Kathmandu Valley, the STR is only 23.5 (Ibid.).

Teacher composition, which is both the access indicator and quality indicator, remains to be one of the key issues. The so-called high caste males dominate the teaching force at all levels. In 2004 out of total teachers in the primary public schools, there were 23.4 per cent females. It increased to 30.6 per cent in 2006. The number of female teachers decreases in upper levels of education (DOE, Flash Report I, 2006). Social group wise data of teacher composition is even grave. Dalit's low participation in education is reflected in teaching and managerial positions. In primary level there are only 2.5 percent Dalit teachers (DOE, Flash Report I, 2006). Their share of head teachers at primary level is only 3 per cent (TRSE II, 2005). Dalit's participation in managerial/administrative positions from school to central administrative level is negligible. Participation of Janajatis in teaching and managerial positions is also not very encouraging. Their share in primary level teaching force is only 17.8 per cent (DOE, Flash Report I, 2006). Similarly, among the SMC members, only 3 per cent is from Janajatis and 12 per cent from Dalits (TRSE, 2006).

Regarding the training status at present, the percentage of trained teachers is 59.9 (Flash Report I, 2006) as opposed to 16.23 in 2002 (Joint Government–Donor Evaluation of BPEP II). Similarly, the percentage of trained female teachers has also increased. It was 28.64 in 2002 (Joint Government–Donor Evaluation of BPEP II). At present, the percentage of fully trained female teachers in all types of schools is 56.8 (DOE, Flash Report I, 2006). However among the untrained teachers female's proportion is still slightly higher than that of males.

Presence of women, Dalits and Janajatis at district and central level administration is negligible. There is one female officer among the 19 Class I positions within the MOES. Similarly, there are 9 female officers out of 138 Class II positions, followed by only 46 female officers among 789 Class III positions. Since social group wise data base is not available, representation of Dalit and Janajatis could not be determined. But it is understood on the basis of consultation that their representation is extremely low. Similarly, 15 per cent females are found out to be on the total School Management Committee (SMC) (TRSE, 2006) though the Education Act mandates, at least one woman on each SMC. However, Dalits' and Janajatis' representation in the SMC is not mandated by the Act.

Regarding bi and multi lingual teaching learning situation, in addition to the national Nepali language curriculum, textbooks have been developed in 12 other local languages and nine supplementary readers are developed in mother tongues. Additionally, piloting of bi-lingual teaching is about to begin very soon.

⁹ MOES has changed its methodology to calculate Survival rate, in this case it is not comparable from 2002

¹⁰ Methodology for calculating survival rate is different.

No systematic data is available regarding school physical facilities and environment (i.e. classroom practice, teacher behavior, social discrimination, etc.). Sporadic studies and media highlights show that school improvement and development initiative is disproportionate. So is their physical facilities and environment. Schools still lack separate facilities for girls (CERID, 2006). And some others are operating under hazardous conditions (Kantipur Daily, March 5, 2007). Nevertheless, temporary classrooms construction in overcrowded schools and additional construction fund to schools with higher number of Dalit and girl students are both commendable provisions from equity perspective.

Many years of armed conflict also paralyzed the education system and severely affected children's chances of education. Both the teachers and students were victimized. They were abducted and tortured. As a result many of them were compelled to flee their homes, traumatized, many children ended up working as child labourers. Children from poor families whose parent/s were tortured and killed in insurgency were affected the most. This resulted in challenges to schools as they have to address the children's psychological problems on one hand and overcrowded classrooms on the other, particularly in the case of urban based schools.

Equity Related Policies and Strategies

Equitable quality education for all has been the principle as well as major policy of Nepal (EFA, 2004-09). In order to materialize this principle and policy several strategies and activities have been devised and widely practiced. Strategies are implemented to achieve equity in access to school education construction and rehabilitation, alternative/flexible schools, free school education, free textbooks, school feeding, and scholarship. Strategies implemented to achieve equity in quality include curriculum improvement, teacher training, RC professional support, improvement of school environment, reform in school exam. Policy and subsequent strategy to increase female teachers, which is also an important strategy, is relevant from both access and quality perspectives. In addition to the above mentioned policies, increasing institutional capacity and enhancing school autonomy are also the major strategies which have direct bearing on equity in education. The institutional capacity building policy includes strategies such as improved EMIS, decentralized management and HRD plan. Whereas, enhancing school autonomy includes school management and block grant.

i. Policy/Strategy Implementation

The EFA program and plan for each EFA goal were devised separately with little linkage with the overarching goal of equity and universal primary education. Though equity- related issues are progressively captured in the EFA 2004–09 core document, the use of “mainstreaming” equity and inclusion concepts is relatively limited.

Nevertheless there is no dearth of policies and strategies to achieve both equity in access and equity in quality. Though modification is urgently required, importance and contribution of the existing strategies cannot be negated. The challenge however is the efficient implementation of these strategies. Achievements and major challenges faced in the implementation of the policies/strategies are:

- **School construction and rehabilitation:** With support from both pool and non pool funding, supports are available for school construction and rehabilitation. As a result, many classrooms were added, many buildings were rehabilitated. But the challenge is the school construction support from non-pool funding resource i.e. support from JICA is totally managed by Japanese companies including the supply of raw materials. In this case, the local stakeholders remained to be mere silent recipients of such support. This practice

contradicted with decentralization perspective and Paris Declaration on Aid harmonization.

- **Alternative/flexible schools:** Those who for several reasons couldn't attend regular schools have been benefiting from the NFE program. Many have also been able to join regular schools after completing NFE. NFE national policy has also been prepared and approved. But the challenge is that of no updated NF-EMIS, due to inadequate institutional structure, poor monitoring and supervision, inadequate and poorly equipped human resource. No systematic upward moving ladder is there in the NFE program, no provision of equivalence certificate, reading materials are not readily available and they do not reach the learners in time, and NFE is inadequately funded. In such situation, NFE is deemed to be a second class education for the poor and disadvantaged rather than a potential system to achieve equity in education.
- **Free textbooks:** Primary level students attending community schools receive free textbooks. In order to make the textbooks easily available, the publication of grade five textbooks has been given to a private company as a trial to decentralize publication and distribution. But the challenge is that the textbooks are not delivered on time.
- **School feeding:** Food for education jointly implemented by MOES and WFP has been a supportive in achieving equity as well as quality in school education. Girls have been benefiting the most by the Girl's incentive program in which cooking oil is given to the family who regularly send the daughters to school. WFP is retargeting the Food for Education project to the more food insecure districts which may result into phasing out of some of the Tarai districts. Partnering with UNICEF in some of the selected Tarai districts with low girls enrolment to implement Girls Incentive Program has also been planned.
- **Scholarship:** Monetary incentive has been a very popular strategy to improve access. Many non-government agencies have also been providing this support to the students. The challenge however is that, not all who are supposed to obtain the scholarship are receiving it. For example, 50% girls and all Dalits are supposed to receive the scholarship according to the policy directives but not all of them are receiving it. Moreover, the scholarship amount is inadequate even to meet the direct cost of schooling. Another major challenge is the management of scholarship fund and accountability at the school level.
- **Curriculum improvement:** A national curriculum framework of grades 1 to 12 has been prepared. In order to ensure inclusion and equity, curricular materials were reviewed from gender, caste and ethnicity perspectives. Recommendations made by the reviews were incorporated in the framework. Challenge however that is the review and revision of curricular materials is not a regular process as such process has not yet been institutionalized.
- **Teacher training:** Teacher training materials have also been reviewed and/or revised time and again but like the curricular materials, oftentimes, this also occurs through the initiation of outsiders or for the purpose of particular projects. In general, the major challenge however is the transfer of skills in the classroom. Change in teacher behaviour in terms of gender and social inclusion has also been a persistent concern.
- **RC professional support:** Resource persons (RPs) are overloaded with responsibilities but short of technical back up and skills. When talking about RC and RPs, the role and expectation of school supervisors should be considered. But at present, the school supervisors' roles and efficiency are a matter of serious concern.

- **School environment:** School environment can generally be viewed from 2 lenses- physical and non physical. Regarding physical environment, a lot has improved though there is no definite data to claim so. However, qualitative studies time and again show the lack of basic facilities such as separate toilets with running water, drinking water and classroom management. Regarding non physical environment, discrimination in terms of gender, caste, language is reflected in teacher behavior, peer behavior, classroom practices/management, and institutional rules.
- **EMIS:** With the introduction of Flash Reporting system, the database has improved. Gender, caste and ethnicity disaggregated data is now available. But the data gap is still observed to understand and analyse the complex social exclusion, as the available school level data and the quantitative data are not enough. Moreover, a nationally agreed qualitative monitoring tool is absent and whatever available is not comprehensive. The focus has been on upward reporting, rather than for school improvement purposes as per local needs.
- **Decentralized management:** Move towards decentralization has begun primarily through block grant provision and school management handover to the community. Though the block grant is equity based distribution system to ensure equity among schools, it does not ensure equity within the school. Moreover, constraints are still attached to the schools with regard to fund mobilization. While this seems to be against the spirit of decentralization the challenge is there to ensure accountability at the ground level. Until a strong and effective monitoring system with adequate technical back up to the schools is ensured, devolution remains a challenge. Equity based budget allocation is still not fully practiced. The horizontal equity perspective still dominates most of the initiatives introduced to address inequity in school education. On the other hand, transfer of school management to the community has been very slow due to many institutional contradictions, objection of the teachers and inadequate technical and financial resources at the school level.
- **HRD plan:** NCED is mandated to respond to the capacity building needs of the education sector, particularly of school education. NCED has also prepared a human resource development policy for MOES. Both pool and direct funding are invested in capacity building activities. Formal sector is more fortunate in this respect than NFE sector. Here the challenge in gender is more focused than other equity related issues. The policy document also reflects this observation. Capacity building activities however are scattered and not many in the system have adequate insight into social exclusion and its impact on children's education. Training manuals particularly on gender perspective are abundant. But there is not adequate human resources who can undertake equity analysis thereby informing policy and strategies. While human resources able to do the quantitative analysis are available there is hardly anybody who has grip on qualitative analysis of gender and social exclusion.
- **Female teacher:** Policy provision to increase female teachers from a minimum of one to a maximum of three is a progressive move. However this has not been met due to several reasons. One of the main reasons is that most women prefer and are concentrated in urban based schools. Additionally, in remote villages due to security reasons it is difficult for women to relocate themselves to where the school is, and gender biasness in recruitment and promotion, difficulty in working as a single woman in male dominated environment, and incidents of sexual harassment have also been the challenges faced in relation to female teacher recruitment.

E. Challenges in Implementation of EFA Goal

The poverty dimension from supply side indicates that higher poverty incidence diminishes children's chances of being schooled. Moreover, poverty is interlinked with caste and gender. For example, poverty incidence among Dalits is higher and their participation in education is lower. Likewise, where poverty is higher, boys over girls get priority in education. Due to poverty, children are required to contribute to the family livelihood. Since girls are married off at young age, boys are perceived as social security of old age. Therefore, it makes more sense to give priority to male child's education and better prepare him for future role as bread winner. Positive relation between poverty and children's health/nutrition and family cohesiveness further impinges on children's education. From demand side, though the system has changed to a more equitable distribution pattern, it still embraces the horizontal equity outlook. As a result those who need more financial support are not getting enough and those who don't require are getting it. Moreover, the government subsidy is higher in upper level education (i.e. higher education) where mostly the students from the richest 20% of the households attend (Sigdel, 2005).

The caste dimension, if viewed from supply side, clearly visualises the economic hardship combined with social discrimination impinging the Dalit children's access to quality education. Atrocity and social exclusion against Dalits is still practiced making it difficult for them to take benefit of the services like education. Remote and/or rural area is more difficult for Dalits in this respect. The self perception of Dalit children shaped by the experiences of discrimination and harassment also negatively contributes to their failure in school. The failure reinforces their inhibition towards schooling. The tendency to turn their back to the family occupation after finishing the school on one hand and come out of school with skills which do not qualify children for other better earning jobs also put parents in difficulty while making decision about sending their children to schools. Therefore the fear of losing helping hands to continue the traditional occupation which has been Dalits' means of survival for ages has also been the reason for not sending children to schools. From demand side the school culture which has been shaped according to the culture of elite and so called high caste people does not match with the Dalit children's home culture. For example, insensitive behavior and language of the teachers and peers, the sophisticated discourse, etc. negatively impact Dalit children's schooling. The teacher training and capacity building initiatives designed for non teaching service providers do not necessarily change behavior or attitude. The institutional arrangements also favour some and ignore others. For example, Dalit's representation is not mandated in SMC neither is the evaluation of the service providers including the teachers counts their behaviour and attitudes as a criterion.

The gender-based dimension is perpetuated because social demand and necessity of marriage, social restriction on girls' mobility and sexuality, patrilocality, patrilineality and dowry system all contribute to low participation of women and girls in education. Consequently, self-perceived roles combined with social norms and economic structures reduce girls' chances of being schooled. For Dalit girls and women the situation is worse because of untouchability and poverty. At the supply side teacher's attitude towards girls including their level of expectation from girls, and inappropriate physical and non-physical environments of the schools push girl children away from school. Lack of connection between the classroom pedagogy and girls' ways of knowing and learning also deter them from fully enjoying and continuing the school.

In the supply side of the ethnicity dimension, there are economically and socially highly marginalized groups within Janajatis. Poverty is the biggest challenge among the highly marginalized Janajatis. Tarai Janajati women and girls are more disadvantaged because due to poverty and cultural norms parents are compelled to marry off their daughters as early as

possible. Keeping them home to grow and be educated increases the burden of dowry. Particularly, among Hill Janajatis the tendency to travel abroad to work for better earning and bring home amount of wealth also encourages younger generation to follow the same path. From demand side Janajati children do not find the curriculum relevant to their needs and expectation. Culture, religious orientation and language of instruction in schools oftentimes differ from what the Janajati children are exposed to and practice at home. All of these are attributed to their resentment towards mainstream schools.

Language dimension has been a major determinant of schooling for many children with non-Nepali (official language) mother tongue. Most of these children gain mechanical and/or spoken language skills but they have difficulty in understanding academic language and expressing themselves. As a result it is likely that they either drop out or complete school with limited communication skills. However, many parents, because of the options that their children may get in the future, opt for teaching learning in Nepali official language or English. Therefore, in most cases schools have used the optional curriculum to teach English instead of local language. But the teacher composition reveals that there are very limited number of teachers whose mother tongue is other than Nepali official language. Therefore they are less likely to be able to help children who come from the non Nepali language background. There is no definite language policy and bilingualism is still on trial. There is short of human resources as well who can provide technical back up to the teachers in bilingual teaching.

Religious groups, particularly Muslims, do not take the mainstream schools as safe, convenient and reliable as the Madarsas. Absence of religious teaching, absence of female teachers, difference in language, and financial liability in the mainstream schools encourage parents to rather send their children to Madarsas. But children who graduate from Madarsas or other religious schools oftentimes do not have necessary skills to compete with graduates of mainstream schools. System or the demand side has no definite or clear plan or policy to address the issues related to religious schools. National level consultation has also been sought with major religious institutions in this regard. Meanwhile there is inadequate and sporadic information regarding the existence, operation and processes of the religious schools.

Another major dimension of quality of education is disability, or children with disability. Viewed from demand side, disability is a sin. To have a disabled child is connected with parents and/or the child's wrong doings in the previous life. It is therefore a shame to give birth to a disabled child. Where the family livelihood is dependent on children's contribution, disability is also seen as being useless. This makes both parents and a child with disability feel burdensome. The attitude and behavior of family and neighbours, topography, poverty and lack of skills to assist the disabled children in their study and everyday life cause disabled children oftentimes to end up living in a miserable condition. Viewing the situation from demand side, the system has made attempts to facilitate the teaching learning of disabled children. However, most schools are not physically and technically well equipped to provide service to the disabled children. Shortage of funding is an on going issue. Socially and culturally developed attitude and behavior towards disabled people are reflected in teachers and students as well.

Armed conflict damaged the education system, particularly the schools severely. As a result many children were victimized, and compelled to flee. Many children who witnessed the atrocities (e.g. killing of their parents) developed psychological disorder which prevented them from concentrating in their study. Infrastructure of many schools was also destroyed and teachers were indiscriminately victimized during the armed conflict. Armed conflict constrained the government to reach schools and deliver the usual support. Urban based schools ended up accommodating children beyond their capacity. Despite the joint effort of

the government and non government sector the damage caused by the armed conflict to the school system is very extensive that it will take long to repair the loss.

Poverty, armed conflict and social discrimination not only push children out from school they also cause family to disintegrate. Children in these circumstances are likely to deviate from normal course of life. They migrate for work, and/or are exposed to anti social behaviour like substance abuse, theft, human trafficking and prostitution. Some even land in unorganized and poorly maintained children's homes. When children are exposed to such behaviour they are likely to be infected by HIV AIDS. Children whose parents migrate for work are also likely to be infected by HIV AIDS and consequently, put their children at risk. From educational perspective the supply side lacks a systematic approach to gather information about these children. The monitoring system which is focused on school level data can not capture multiply vulnerable children. If by any chance these children got opportunity or decided to educate themselves they most probably end up joining NFE classes which does not provide opportunity to upward academic mobility and are still not recognized as complimentary to formal education.

Thus multiple factors contribute to gender and social disparity in education. Incidences of poverty, armed conflict and natural disasters added to social exclusion have compounded the challenges of addressing equity in education. In this situation, existing policies and provisions therefore seem to have favoured some children and not others.

In addition to the above deliberations teacher deployment is a major challenge that can not go unnoticed. Since appropriate STR is also an important quality indicator this has been a major concern. STR is inconsistent as some districts and schools have tremendously high STR and some others, much below the national average. In this respect lack of policy/strategy and political commitment is clearly visible.

F. Recommendations for Adjustment

The suggestions for future direction are outlined as the following:

- All capacity development activities are required to mainstream gender and other forms of social equity related concept, and skills to undertake equity analysis.
- Checklist should be developed and followed from central to school level and from policy to all the other levels (management, curriculum, capacity building, and examination) to ensure gender and social equity.
- Capacity building on gender and social equity provided to all levels of practitioners should be linked with their performance evaluation.
- Both quantitative and qualitative information gathering tools have to be utilized. Household level data is required to identify and devise a tailored program for 'hard to reach' and other out of school children.
- Data from other sources should be regularly utilized to the maximum extent while determining implementation strategies. At present in addition to the other studies and reports, recently undertaken studies (Joint review of EFA, and Social inclusion: gender and equity in education swaps in South Asia: Nepal Case) should be utilized for the purpose of redesigning the EFA.
- Well coordinated institutional arrangements and inter-ministerial collaboration are required in order to holistically address gender and social exclusion in education.
- Communication and consultation with school level stakeholders is to be a regular exercise

- RPs and School Supervisors are required to bring under one umbrella community managed institution with strong technical back up. Both financial and social accountability at the school level should be ensured by the government.
- Service delivery mechanism should be revised. For example, in the case of material delivery decentralized approach should be adopted. Similarly, transparent, measurable and equitable scholarship distribution criteria, and delivery mechanism are to be strengthened.
- Budget allocation should use equity perspective, and gender budgeting mechanism should be adopted.

Theme 6: Improving Quality of Primary Education

Implementation of EFA Goal

i) General Policies

Development and expansion of quality education according to the development need of the country and making quality primary education easily accessible, defining quality education, strengthening the system of supervision, monitoring and evaluation as well as developing infrastructure at all levels, making the teaching licensing compulsory at all levels and specifying intermediate level as the minimum qualification plus 10 month training for the primary school teachers are the major policy objectives of the 10th Five Year Development Plan (NPC, 2002) with expressive implications for quality education.

In order to achieve the EFA goal of improving all aspects of quality education, the EFA core document (2004-09) has set its principles and strategies which are focused on raising the competence/qualification of the teachers, improving learning environment in classroom, enhancing the quality of curricula and textbooks and ensuring their timely distribution, developing school based autonomous supervision and monitoring and ensuring decentralized management of schools (EFA core document, 2003).

Teacher training: Policy provisions on teacher training have been formulated as:

- Existing basic qualification in the case of primary teachers will be upgraded.
- 10-Month teacher preparation course as pre-service training on top of the prescribed academic qualification will be made mandatory for primary, lower secondary and secondary teachers at the entry point.
- Teaching license will be made pre-requisite for the teaching profession in the school system, also provision of license renewal will be established.
- Teacher selection process will be gradually localized in line with the spirit of the Local Self-Governance Act (LSGA).
- All untrained working teachers in the school system will be trained in 10 month training at the earliest possible time line.
- Training, licensing and professional development process will be linked to each other in order to consolidate the teacher development provision at all levels of school education.
- Short term training, refresher training, and recurrent training will be accredited as a part of the certification training program.
- Effective training curriculum and materials for in-service and pre-service teacher training will be developed and implemented.
- Well qualified, trained and committed trainers will provide teacher training.
- Training facilities will be ensured, improved and upgraded for the availability of conducive learning environment.
- Appropriate measures and efforts will be adopted to improve the efficiency of training management at all levels and institutions.
- Monitoring and post training support scheme will be implemented as a quality assurance measure in training.
- For the continual improvement in training, NCED and its institutions at various levels will carry out research, monitoring, and evaluation activities.

- Performance indicators will be developed and used for the assessment of the work of training institutions, schools and teachers.
- A continuous evaluation system will be applied to assess trainees' achievement in the training
- Serious efforts will be made to maintain gender sensitive and gender balanced behaviors and practices in all programs.
- Job-induction training will be considered as a pre-requisite for newly appointed managers (Class II and Class III), including school heads of all levels before holding the position.
- Education management training will be mandatory to all educational managers and school heads working at all levels.
- The opportunities for continuous professional development will be created through refresher training programs and self learning materials and on-site support scheme.
- For the purpose of promoting motivation level and morale of the managers and also for encouraging high performers, special deployment scheme will be devised and implemented.
- Special package program will be designed and implemented for trainer preparation, trainer development and motivation to ensure the retention of qualified, trained and committed training professionals in the training institutions.

Curriculum and assessment

In order to make curricula and instructional materials more child friendly, flexible, and qualitative, a National Curriculum Framework has been formulated with the following major policy interventions:

- Curriculum will be developed based on the principle of broad and balanced education
- Various learning areas of education will be organized while developing curricula
- Curriculum will be developed based on the principle of integration and coordination
- Curriculum will be developed based on child-friendly principle
- Basic education will be provided in the mother tongue
- The concept of inclusion will be followed while developing curricula
- Priority will be given in developing and implementing local needs based curricula
- Western knowledge and values will be integrated into the curricula
- Major emphasis will be given on ICT while developing curriculum
- Curriculum will address the life skills components
- Curriculum will be directed towards the world of work
- Participatory development process will be followed in the formulation of curriculum
- Curriculum will provide opportunity for open and distance learning
- Curriculum will be developed based on Nepali norms and values
- Research and innovation will be the integral part of curriculum development and implementation process.

Progress in Achieving EFA Goal

The following table presents an assessment of the progress made in achieving the EFA goals. All the EFA goals have direct implications for quality education.

To enhance efficiency in the management of education

Program activity	Time frame	Target	Progress till 2006
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<i>To delegate school management authority to community level</i>			
i) Introduce block grant system	Start in 2002 and complete in 2015	All schools	Block grant system in funding school education has been introduced into all schools since 2004
ii) Handover of schools to community	Start in 2002 and complete in 2015	All community schools	Management of 2808 schools has been handed over to the community (Primary, 1605, Lower sec, 318 and Secondary, 138)
iii) Provide orientation training to DDC, VDC, Municipality, SMC	2005	All	13698 members of DDC, VDC, and SMC have been oriented.
<i>Effective leadership:</i>			
i) Provide at least one month training to HTs to conduct in-house teacher training	Complete by 2015	All	1015 HTs have been trained
ii) Introduce system to recruit and retain capable HTs	2005		Certification training for HTs on school management has been introduced
iii) Strengthen SMC			The formation of SMC was made more representative.
<i>Teacher management:</i>			
i) Upgrade the minimum qualification required for primary teachers	2005		Policy has been introduced / formulated
ii) Provide 10 months basic training to primary teachers	2007	All	57191 Primary teachers have been trained
iii) Implement the mandatory provision of teaching license	2007		Policy has been introduced and all primary teachers have received teaching license
iv) Establish requirement for teacher accountability	2005		Code of conduct for the teachers has been formulated by the education regulation
<i>Supervision services</i>			
i) Provide more frequent and localized supervision services through supervisors and RPs	2002 and contd.		The Head teachers are supervising the classroom activities, RPs are providing supervision services at the RC level. School supervisors are coordinating the delivery of supervisory services through the RCs under their cluster.
ii) Provide training to supervisors and RPs	2002 and contd.	All	A total of 564 Supervisors and 1091 RPs have received training of different duration
iii) Provide post supervision workshop			A post supervision workshop has not been initiated as a regular practice.
<i>Monitoring</i>			
i) Set standards for quality education	2003- 2005		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite the indicators mentioned in the NPA, specific standards for components of quality education have not been set yet. School inspectorate guideline has been introduced Zonal wise monitoring desk has been established at the MOES, DOE and REDs
ii) Establish reporting requirements	2003- 2005		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reporting mechanism has been established Monthly, trimester and annual reports of each district reaches the DOE through REDs Provision of Flash report system

Enhancing situational efficiency in the management of education

To improve primary curriculum and assessment system

Program activity	Time frame	Targets	Achievement till 2006
i) Develop comprehensive Teachers' guides/ Teacher support materials based on national curriculum	Start in 2007		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on revised primary curriculum (2062) Teachers Guides (CRC) for grades 1 and 2 have been developed. Grade 3 TGs are in a development process. A total of 74085 sets of curriculum, subject elaboration, curriculum dictionary, Teachers' guides and textbooks have been distributed to primary teachers
ii) Develop work books, and other supplementary materials (local involvement) for core subjects, grade 1-3	Initiate in 2005 and continue		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The work books are not developed yet. Supplementary materials for primary children have been developed, printed and distributed to RC level (in total 15 types of materials have been developed covering various subject areas and five more materials are in a development process).
iii) Revise Primary curriculum	By 2007		The primary curriculum (1992) has been revised and implemented in grade one throughout the country Grade 2 and 3 curriculum is being piloted.
iv) Disseminate curricular materials	By 2007		The curricular materials with a focus on grade one have been disseminated to 12000 teachers
vi) Introduce curriculum based tests at different levels (RC, District, Regional and national for grades 3, 5)	By 2007		Initiation to this effect has not been taken yet
vii) Institute school evaluation and ranking mechanism	By 2007		The DOE has started school evaluation and ranking process
viii) Expand continuous assessment system	By 2007		The newly revised primary curriculum has accepted CAS as an integral part of pedagogy and thus it has been expanded throughout the country

Analysis of primary curriculum and assessment system

Though school ranking and evaluation criteria are formulated, they are not yet applied to evaluate the school performance from the perspective of quality education. The need is therefore, there to immediately implement these criteria to facilitate the objective evaluation of the schools for quality education.

To improve the physical facilities and learning environment

To improve the physical facilities and learning environment the following initiatives have been taken:

A total of 2980 classrooms have been constructed (up to 2005)

A total of 1600 temporary classrooms have been constructed (up to 2005)

A total of 1500 schools have been rehabilitated (up to 2005)

External environment of 1595 schools has been improved (up to 2005)

Program activity	Time frame	Targets	Achievement till 2006
i) Maintain appropriate class size at grade one # 25-30	2005		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The education regulation (2059) has defined minimum class size at grade one to be 40 in Mountain, 45 in Hill and 50 in urban and Terai belt. Maintenance of appropriate class size at grade one (25-30) has yet to be started

ii) Maintain appropriate class size at all primary grades # 30-35	2009		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The education regulation (2059) has defined minimum class size at grade one to be 40 in Mountain, 45 in Hill and 50 in urban and Terai belt. Maintaining of appropriate class size at all primary grades (30-35) has yet to be started
iii) Ensure minimum classroom space per child # 0.75	2009		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The education regulation (2059) has defined minimum classroom space per child to be #0.75 sq. meter for primary level The newly constructed school buildings have followed this provision.

Analysis of the physical facilities and learning environment

Education expenditure

Program activity	Time frame	Targets	Achievement till 2006
i) Maintain a balance in the share of budget allocated on recurrent and development expenses # 70:30	2011		NA
ii) Facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide 2 computers to each of the primary schools Establish school libraries in all primary schools Establish science laboratories in all primary schools Develop adequate facilities at schools 	By 2015		Selected secondary schools have been provided 2 computers, not the primary schools All primary schools have received RS 2000 for establishing book corner in the school This program has not been operationalised yet Disaggregated data on the adequacy of facilities are yet to be documented

What are the composites of quality education? What makes education qualitative in nature? And what parameters are required to judge the quality and standards of education are still unanswered questions, so far as the wider concept of quality education is concerned. The perennial question is: how to define standards of quality education and what types of indicators best describe the quality? Time is therefore, ripe to set and define the standards of quality education by specifying its indicators in measurable form. Once the standards are set for quality education, the existing indicators as outlined by the NPA/EFA are to be revisited. This means quality of education is to be reviewed along the changed perspective of the country shaped particularly by the successful completion of the *Jan Andolan second* (peoples' democratic movement second) in 2006.

Remaining challenges of quality primary education

The observation, analysis, and interpretation of available data pertaining quality education have come up with a number of challenges which demand a revisit of the EFA /NPA in relation to its quality components. The challenges are indicative of the fact that updating of relevant information is a must and continuous investigation of quality components as they relate to classroom instruction is to be made. Addressing of these issues and challenges through appropriate educational interventions is possible through the application of measures such as capacity building of both the institutions and individuals, linking outcomes of educational research to further educational plans and programs, strengthening professional support mechanism, devolution of educational authorities and services to the school level. In addition to these measures, disaggregated data on different quality components is only

possible through a well established EMIS system at the district level which is nearly missing there. The challenges can be briefly outlined as following:

- Contextual definition of quality education is a necessity, based on this, specific and measurable indicators of quality education are yet to be developed.
- Transfer of management of school to the community is at the core of developing efficiency in school management. The transfer of management is not well supported by the timely preparedness of community due to lack of proper dissemination of the intended message behind the transfer.
- The local level authorities namely, SMCs, PTAs, VDCs, municipalities are ill prepared to undertake the new responsibility.
- School management practice is yet to be institutionalized through the initiation of appointing a qualified and trained head teacher in the leadership position as evidenced by an existing gap between the intended performance and actual delivery of management services.
- Objective and specific indicators for measuring the learning outcomes of the students are yet to be established.
- Disaggregated data on different components of quality education are not well documented for their common use.
- A strong monitoring mechanism supported by continuous research findings is yet to be institutionalized at different levels of educational delivery.
- Curriculum innovation and renewal process has been very much sidelined at the school level in the overall process of designing and delivering the intended educational gains.
- As indicated by the national assessment studies, improving learning achievements in primary education has remained a pedagogic challenge
- Ensuring universal completion of primary education, especially by the disadvantaged groups of children, has been an overriding concern of the stakeholders.
- As quality of education demands an increasing budgetary allocations in areas other than the regular expenditure such as salary, administrative cost etc., diversion as well as increment of budgetary expenditure in quality components has ever remained a challenge
- The proposed educational structure of 1-8 basic education demands an improvement in the qualification of teachers on one hand and entry of qualified workforce in teaching profession is a challenge on the other.
- Achieving teacher pupil ratio of 1:25-35 as envisaged in the NPA is still an unmet reality
- Deployment and distribution of qualified teachers in schools as per their need and demand has remained a felt issue over the EFA period. Similarly, recruitment and placement of teachers at the grassroots level from females, disadvantaged groups, disabled, ethnicity, local language groups has remained to be a difficult task
- Rigorous exercises in the field of curriculum such as curriculum based instruction and evaluation, formulation and implementation of local curriculum, transaction of curriculum through local language, classroom based realities feeding into the design

and transaction of curriculum are much desired for the promotion of quality education.

- Creation and facilitation of conducive / inclusive learning environment to make it more child-friendly is a desired necessity for which the existing teaching force is either ill prepared or reluctant for the intended delivery. This is further aggravated by the existing inadequate learning environment of the school.

ii) Policy strategies

The following strategic measures are developed to meet the goal of quality education for all.

- Adoption of a decentralized work frame through the devolution of educational services at the resource centre and school level.
- Local level capacity enhancement program by strengthening the RC system.
- Promotion of inclusive education by initiating it in selected schools of the country.
- Promotion of inclusive gender parity by increasing girls' incentive.
- Coordination and partnership at the local, regional and central levels.
- Transparency in the allocation of financial resources and their distribution.
- Demand-driven program development and implementation.
- Performance /achievement based grant provision.
- Initiation of public auditing system.

iii) Policy gaps:

- Quality education has yet to be defined
- Quality indicators are yet to be developed as cross cutting issue of overall education system.

Theme 7: Indigenous People and Linguistic Minorities

A. National Action Plan/Education Reform Program

i. Statement of EFA goal

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

ii. Description of EFA goal and specific national targets

Nepal is a multilingual, multicultural and multiethnic country where most of the 102 castes and indigenous groups speak more than 92 languages as their mother tongues. According to School Level Educational Statistics of Nepal (2005), of 4,502,697 students at primary level 16,02,047 are from indigenous groups. In addition, it has also been found that most of the school dropouts belong to these non-Nepali speaking communities. Apart from them, a large number of children from these vulnerable groups have no access to school and are debarred from the right of achieving basic education.

It has been widely accepted that all children should have opportunity to receive basic and primary education through mother tongues as their right. If we provide primary education through mother tongues children can have better learning as they can engage more actively in understanding and learning activities through their greater proficiency in them. Besides, it also can help to attract the out-of-school children from indigenous and minority language groups to join school as they will feel homely with the use of their mother tongues in education.

Taking cognizance of this situation, Government of Nepal (GON) has now envisaged a policy to introduce mother tongue as medium of instruction at primary level of education. *The Interim Constitution of Nepal* (2007), which ensures equal status to all mother tongues spoken in Nepal including Nepali, makes a provision of imparting primary education through mother tongues.

Government of Nepal (GON), which participated in different international fora like Jomtien Convention and Dakar Forum, is committed to making quality primary education accessible to all children including children from indigenous and minority language groups. In pursuance of this commitment, one more goal for Nepal has been included besides the other six universal goals of EFA for ***ensuring the right of indigenous people and linguistic minorities to basic and primary education through mother tongue.***

To achieve this goal, strategies undertaken are i) use of mother tongue as a subject of study and the medium of instruction, ii) bilingual education, iii) teacher recruitment, training and deployment, and iv) special programs for endangered languages and cultures. Different activities are being carried out in line with these strategies.

Six years have already elapsed since the Dakar Forum 2000 declared to achieve the goal of Education for All. It is time to assess the policies taken and programs and activities carried out and progress attained so as to follow up the implementation of the EFA goals. The thematic group on Ensuring the Right of Indigenous People and Linguistic Minorities to Basic and Primary Education through Mother has worked to assess and analyze the concerning policy issues, program achievement and through impact the contact and coordination in relation to the right of indigenous people and linguistic minorities to basic education along with the recommendation.

Present policies

The Interim Constitution of Nepal (2007) states that each community should have right to get primary education through mother tongue as prescribed by the law.

The Constitution of Nepal (1990) had stated Cultural and Educational Rights as: (1) Each community residing within the Kingdom of Nepal shall have the right to preserve and promote its language, script and culture; and (2) Each community shall have the right to operate schools up to the primary level in its own mother tongue for imparting education to its children.

According to the educational legislation, the medium of education is Nepali, but education up to primary level can be given in mother tongue. The operation of schools in mother tongue is a right given to each community. Education is not compulsory in legal terms, but a right in Nepal.

The Tenth Five-Year Plan 2002–2007, which is the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper for Nepal, was prepared by the government. The Tenth Plan identifies human development and social inclusion as the main pillars of the poverty reduction policy. In this regard, the Tenth Plan document provides two major aims for the five-year period: (i) improving access to and quality of primary education and (ii) providing education in mother tongues of communities up to primary level.

The Language Policy Recommendation Commission constituted in 1993 has made the following two major recommendations:

- The schools where almost 100 % students speak mother tongue (local language) can be identified as a mother tongue school.
- Bilingual Education can be used as an alternative strategy of the mother tongue primary education in different circumstances.

The five-year strategic EFA plan within the EFA 2015 framework aims at (i) ensuring access to and equity in primary education, (ii) enhancing quality and relevance of primary education and (iii) improving efficiency and institutional capacity.

According to the resulting vision of the EFA core document, every child has a right to receive education of good quality in Nepal by 2015, and the schools will be inclusive learning centers of excellence that respond to the learning needs of all children. The core document as well as the Nepal EFA National Plan of Action underline the need of ensuring the rights of indigenous people and linguistic minorities to basic and primary education through mother tongues. The programs that provide education in mother tongues are encouraged in order to increase access of children from diverse linguistic groups to education.

Programs and Activities

To achieve the EFA goals through quality education, the GON and donors/agencies have been supporting mother tongue education/bilingual education in various ways. Some of the activities undertaken are:

- Department of Education (DOE) has completed a study on topics such as “Bilingual Education” (2000) and “Mother Tongue Intervention at Primary Level” (2004).
- Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) has developed textbooks for teaching mother tongues as an optional subject for primary level.
- Ministry of Education and Sports has approved 'Transitional Bilingual Education' Program for all non-Nepali Speaking Children'. Initially, CDC has undertaken the following tasks:

- a. Translation of Nepali textbooks into various mother tongues and
 - b. development of children's supplementary readers in various mother tongues
- The World Bank and DANIDA have jointly prepared Vulnerable Community Development Plan for Nepal Education for All Program which recommends bilingual teaching to facilitate home-to-school transition and academic success for children for whom Nepali is not a mother tongue.
 - Finnish Technical Assistance Support has recently been launched under the name of 'Multilingual Education Program for all non-Nepali Speaking Students of Primary Schools in Nepal' for a duration of 2 years and a half starting in the second quarter of 2007.
 - Save the Children Norway has supported nearly 142 native language speaking teachers through District Education Offices in Kavre, Sindhupalchowk, Surkhet, Jumla, Humla, Mugu, Dolpa, Kalikot, Dang, Rukum, Rolpa, Salyan, Udayapur, Banke, Bardiya, Baglung and Myagdi districts. Teachers from grades 1-3 are encouraged to be bilingual. Early Childhood Development Centres in supported districts are encouraged to use native languages as medium of instruction.
 - UNICEF has supported to carry out situation analysis of Limbu language in Panchthar .
 - UNESCO and World Education have jointly supported the project “The literacy program for ethnic minorities utilizing bilingual/multilingual method”.

C. Progress in Achieving EFA goal (on the basis of EFA Action Plan)

Program Activities	Time Frame	Progress
1. Use of mother tongue as the subject and the medium of instruction Phase wise introduction of minority languages PHASE I To establish mother tongue schools (introduce minority languages as medium of instruction) for the language groups with literate traditions To include minority languages with literate traditions as subjects in multi-lingual context: Include the minority languages in the primary school curricula & teachers' training	2003-2005	Mother tongue and bilingual schools have so far been identified by 25 DEOs while other DEOs have not yet responded. However, no mother tongue school has so far been established to introduce mother tongue as medium of instruction. Textbooks for literate mother tongues as subjects have been developed in the following languages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maithili, Bhojpuri, Awadhi, Tharu, Limbu, Newar, Tamang, Rai Bantawa, Magar and Gurung (1-5 grades) • Sherpa (1-4 grades) • Rai Chamling (1-3 grades) <i>A template including guidelines has been developed at CDC for preparing mother tongue textbooks. However, no initiatives have been taken in the field of teacher training.</i>
2. Bilingual education To prepare textbooks and train teachers Teachers' recruitment, training and deployment To prepare reading materials with focus on ethnic cultural values	2003-2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A proposal for transitional bilingual education program was envisaged and discussed with the assistance of Finland. • Bilingual education brochure has been developed and distributed to each school. • Progress in teachers' recruitment, training and deployment is still not

		recorded. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 textbooks for grade one have been translated in some languages. • 9 supplementary readers for mother tongue have been developed and distributed in the concerning districts.
3. Teachers' deployment recruitment and training,	2003-2005	No progress to date
4. Special programs for endangered languages and cultures (Non-formal education and adult literacy for linguistic and ethnic minorities) To prepare reading materials with focus on ethnic cultural values To develop adult literacy and non- formal education programs in local languages incorporating local social and cultural contexts.	No timeframe given	No progress to date

D. Implementation Gaps and Disparities

i. Policy Gaps

- There is no comprehensive policy to provide primary education to the children through their mother tongue. To get information about the policies for mother tongue education a number of documents are to be collected.
- The policy documents say nothing about teacher recruitment and teacher deployment to support primary education through mother tongue.
- There is no policy for production and distribution of reading materials in mother tongue education. Curriculum Development Center (CDC) used to develop, produce and distribute such materials in the past but the system has been changed. CDC used to develop reading materials but it does not produce and distribute these materials now. It is said that the budget to purchase the reading materials is provided to schools and the schools can buy the reading materials as per their need by themselves from the private publications. The private publications neither have developed mother tongue textbooks nor can they reprint and sell textbooks developed by CDC. So the reading materials are not being available as per the need of the schools at present.
- The criteria to identify mother tongue and bilingual schools and responsible agency for it are not clear.
- There is no data keeping system of the teachers and students on the basis of their mother tongue to help produce reading materials, teacher deployment and teacher training.

iii. Program Gaps

1. There is no separate and comprehensive program for mother tongue education. Most of the activities indicated in the EFA Plan of Action (2001-2015) and The Bilingual Transitional Education Program for All Non-Nepali Speaking Children are yet to be carried out.
2. Except 25 districts, other districts have yet to identify mother tongue and bilingual schools.
3. The task of teacher training has not been initiated for mother tongue education as directed by the EFA Plan of Action (2001-2015).

4. CDC has initiated translation of textbooks in mother tongues but the translated textbooks do not represent cultural needs of the mother tongue students.
5. About NRs. 10.6 million is allocated for reading materials' development and production for a period of five years (past four years and this year). It is a very little amount of budget for the mother tongue education.

E. Recommendations

1. The local authority or the school management committee should be given the responsibility to decide the language of medium of instruction. They can decide their schools as the mother tongue schools or bilingual schools or Nepali medium schools. Mother tongue schools or the Nepali medium schools should also use bilingual/multilingual strategy if students from other language communities are enrolled there.
2. The authority to recruit mother tongue teachers should be given to school management committees as per their need.
3. The teacher deployment policy should be formulated as soon as possible and the concerning language speaking teachers should be transferred to their respective language schools.
4. The teacher training task should be initiated from the schools of non-Nepali speaking areas.
5. District Education Offices should be encouraged to keep the data of the local language speaking students and teachers.
6. Private sector should get involved in producing and distributing mother tongue reading materials. Private publishers should get permission to reprint the materials developed by CDC.
7. A system for regular monitoring of the programs of mother tongue education and classrooms of the concerning schools is to be developed and implemented.

Summary

Goal 1

There is national action plan for ECD in place with specific targets and strategies with costed action plan. The country has set a target to cover 80% of the children aged 3-5 with ECD services by the year 2015. It has also targeted to have 80% new entrants at grade 1 with ECD exposure by the same year. The strategies to achieve this target are i) building coordination, networking and partnership with related organizations including CBOs, NGOs, INGOs, and UN organizations; ii) decentralized management; iii) community involvement; iv) human resource development and ; v) use of communication and mass media.

There is an estimated costing of the tasks which is about NRs. 60979.8 million. The government contribution is expected to be about 8.5% of this budget followed about 17% contributions of donors and 74.5% contributions from the community/parents. The costing is also made by major time line, i.e. the national development plans periods. The current Government annual expenditure of the year 2005/6 is about Rs. 177.5 million. There is likely to be funding gap if the current trend continues without major expansion.

The government has prepared strategies in the national development plans and is reflected in the working documents of EFA core document as well as ASIP. Policy measures are taken to support the implementation of the strategies. The major policy focus is to provide ECD as per demands from the communities. The government provisions are focused to the disadvantaged pockets of the country, high risk groups such as street children, orphans, and children with disabilities, child labourers, *kamaiya* and *dalits*.

The enrollment of children in ECD centres has increased rapidly over the years, GER has increased from 11.7% in 2000 to 41.4% in 2006. The intake rate at grade 1 with ECD exposure has increased from 9.6% in 2002 to 18.3% in 2006. The enrollment of boys and girls is almost the same. And there is no marked difference in terms of enrollment of *dalit* and *janajati* and others.

Obviously the development trend towards achieving the ECD goal for EFA is remarkable. However the challenge still exists in terms of achieving the set target, e.g. by 2009 the target is to achieve 51%. There is regional difference regarding the growth of GER. The other important aspect relates to quality of ECD provisions which is rather very poor in most of the school based as well as community based centres. The issues and challenges of ECD mainly relates to the parental awareness and involvement, qualification and training of the facilitators, and capacity of the system. There is still a need for the development of the norms and standards regarding the qualification of the ECD workers, there is still a need to develop criteria for implementing ECD programs at the district level. Parental advocacy in a systemic way is another important need.

Goal 2

The national target of achieving universal primary education is to achieve 90% NER by 2007 (10th national development plan) and eventually to ensure 100% by 2015. The EFA core plan for 2004-09 has extensively outlined targets and the strategies by the core EFA indicators. The major strategies include: i) ensuring that the school is within the walking distance of a child; ii) making primary education free of fees of kind, supply of free text books iii) providing incentives to the needy students such as school dress and scholarships iv) ensuring basic needs in the school such as drinking water, toilet, safe environment and in some disadvantaged places, day time meal v) ensuring inclusive environment socially, culturally, linguistically and physically.

The estimated cost of achieving the goal of universal primary education is about Rs. 65894.3 million. The government is expected to bear about 2.6% of the budget followed by donors which is 83.3 and local community/parents 14.1%. This is additional EFA cost in addition to the regular primary education cost of the government. The total education expenses of Nepal is about Rs. 18059 million in the year 2004/5 this is about 16.2% of the total national budget. The primary education expenditure is about Rs. 11169 million for the year which was 61.8% of the total education budget. Currently (2005/6 the government share of the funding in EFA is about 70% and donor's share is 30%. There has been substantial increase in the overall expenses of education budget (from about 14 to current about 17) between 1998/99 and 2003/4, and also primary education share from 48.7% to 60%. The EFA budget, pooled as well as non-pooled, are reviewed and adjusted annually with the participation of the stakeholders, i.e. the donors.

Besides the strategies outlined in the EFA core plan (2004-09), Ministry prepares annual strategic implementation plan (ASIP) with specific program and activity-wise costing. There is provision of biannual reviews and implementation monitoring involving the donors and partners. Policy measures are taken to support the implementation of the strategies and program activities. The currently considered major policy focuses include i) rights to basic education ii) improving quality of basic and primary education including enhancement of teacher qualification and training iii) inclusive approach to education – linguistic, cultural, social and physical iv) Primary education in mother tongue v) ECD as strategy for preparation of children for school education to ensure retention and promotion

Currently (year 2006) the NER for the primary level is 87.4% and GER is 138.8%. The NER increment trend is rather gradual, about 1% per year. The NER for girls and boys are 85.5 and 89.9 respectively. The high GER shows that there are many overage/underage children in the primary schools. There are regional variations in primary school enrolment, 21 districts have GER less than the national average, it is less than 100 in 13 districts mainly in the western mountains and central Terai. Although NER and GER for dalit and janajati are not available, case studies show that their enrolments are less than the national average and that their dropout rate and repetition rate are higher compared to the others. The completion rates for Dalit and Janajatis are low (FRP/CERID 2006).

The trend analysis shows that achieving 100%NER by 2015 will not be possible despite the magnitude of the current EFA efforts. Special efforts are therefore needed. Rights based education is one such step taken by the government, however there is still a need to develop system and mechanism to ensure implementation of this policy. Ensuring a fully operational school in all region, districts and settlements is still a challenging task, many schools do not have adequate number of teachers with required level of training, many schools lack classrooms and ensuring basic facilities is still a challenge. Effective implementation of policy provisions such as primary education in mother tongue is still far from being realized. Similarly education for disabled children is still not available for majority of the children in need. Also, norms and standards regarding primary school provisions are yet to be developed.

Goal 3

The strategies of the government regarding provision of appropriate learning and life skill education include: i) curricular reform to include important aspects of life skills such as health, sanitation, general knowledge and skills at primary and secondary level; ii) mobilizing and enhancing technical education and vocational training for youths iii) General training and orientation for youths and adults on contextual issues and topics such as HIV/AIDs, micro credit and saving, health issues, family planning etc. iv) making adult literacy program functional and relevant in the contexts of life skill education needs. There are several

programs targeted towards achieving this goal. There is however no specific quantifiable target for this goal.

The policy framework regarding life skill education is to develop learning environment sensitive to needs of girls, disadvantaged and displaced children. The policy focus is on developing necessary skills

- to earn livelihood and help reduce poverty, with emphasis on vocational education
- to develop skills of safe health, sanitation and prevention from health hazards including HIV/AIDs and epidemics
- to develop personal skill for better interaction with environment – self esteem, self confidence, critical thinking, problem solving and balanced emotional development
- to use different means of communication for information and expanding opportunities including learning opportunities
- democratic ways and values, team work, conflict resolution, harmony, linking with/partnership
- to promote local entrepreneurship, especially through the promotion of indigenous skills and knowledge

The major strategy for the implementation of the policy focus include: mobilization of community based provisions such as CLCs and community support groups will be mobilized for the policy implementation; development of materials for self learning; mobilization of media and various means and modes of communication; open and distance learning workplace association for out of school youths; utilization of experienced and skills of the resourceful people/retired people.

The EFA national plan of action listed various activities and cost towards achieving the goals of providing life skill education. Accordingly the total estimated budget is about 940 million. Since the programs and the activities listed do not come under the regular education budget in a clear cut way and that there is unlikely for cost sharing by parents/community people in the present contexts, it is expected that the total budget should be met with the support of the donors.

The current provisions for life skill education is rather very small compared to the needs. Studies show that a large proportion of youths and adults (about 80%) are not covered by any institutional provisions of learning. There is an emerging trend of private sector involvement in the provisions of skill development, particularly in profitable areas such as health, education, computer, and small trades. However a systemic approach based on data and strategic information is still lacking.

It is difficult to estimate the progress towards EFA goal of life skill education. One of the challenges is to develop information system that lists the needs and the provisions, and trend. There is also a need for specific program development as per policy focuses and the strategies listed. Particularly there is a need for development of life skill education program to meet the learning needs of children from ethnic minorities, disadvantaged groups and disabilities. There is also a need to address the children and youths affected by conflict situations. There is still a need to develop consensus regarding the scope and coverage of life skill education and their prioritization. There should be coordination among the various stakeholders involved in the development and provisions of life skill education. There is also a scope for developing and adopting a national framework for life skill education so that different programs could fit in the framework of EFA.

Goal 4

Illiteracy is considered one of the major causes and also indicators for poverty. Therefore the policy and strategy regarding literacy education are to ensure that it is targeted to and prioritized according to the needs of disadvantaged groups – particularly the needs of poor, *dalits*, disadvantaged ethnic minorities, women and those in the remote areas. The focus of literacy programs is to support enhancing quality of life by linking literacy with health, sanitation, income generation, and social empowerment.

Since the tenth national development plan (2002-07) NFE has been considered as a main vehicle to reduce the poverty and create social awareness. Towards this the government of Nepal has provisioned Nonformal Education Council as well as Nonformal Education Center to coordinate NFE initiatives and to provide policy thrust and program support.

The following are the major strategies of national literacy programs as listed in the EFA national plan of action: i) Development of Community Learning Centers (CLCs) at the village levels for institutionalized provisions of literacy and post activities; ii) Developing linkage between formal and non formal education to support children and youths who are potential dropout, or out of school, both drop-outs and non enrolled; iii) Provision of open learning for expanding literacy provision as well as for making it adjustable to the day to day life; iv) Awareness programs for motivating people to eradicate illiteracy.

The EFA literacy target for the adults (15+ years) is to achieve 75% by 2015. According to 2001 census the literacy rate for this age group was 46%. A demographic health survey indicated that in the year 2005/6 the reported ability to read is about 64%.

Literacy is highest among 15-24 age group 70% in the year 2002 and targeted 95% by 2015. The literacy of 6+ in the census year was 54% and EFA target by 2015 is 90%. Gender disparity has been one of the major concerns of literacy, according to the census 2001, the literacy rates of male and female (6+ years) are 65.08 and 42.47 respectively (GPI .65). Gender inequality is strikingly apparent in the adult literacy rate where only 35 percent of females are literate compared to 63 percent of males (GPI .55). Most importantly the magnitude of illiterate population is huge, total of 6,592,823 are illiterate. This size is beyond the capacity of the current provisions to cope with, for achieving the target. With the current pace of literacy provisions it is unlikely that the literacy targets will be met by 2015.

Public awareness and active participation of stakeholders including potential participants are considered crucial for the success of non-formal education program. The role of media of mass communication is considered important for this. Most importantly it is important to develop partnership and with the numerous NGOs and I-NGOs involved in running non-formal education programs. The focus has been to undertake such campaign at the village level with the preparation of village education plans (VEP). Recently a 10 year national literacy plan has been developed and adopted by the government. A national literacy campaign is being planned.

However challenges remains: development of system provisions remains a challenge; resources for regular budget as well as programs remains too small compared to the needs; literacy programs, materials and contents are still driven by providers' perceptions and provisions due to lack of localized system; CLC numbers are too small (about 150) and their expansion challenging. There is a need to explicate the national commitment in terms of policy as well as provisions including funds to ensure fulfillment of literacy targets.

Goal 5

Nepal observed increased access to primary education over the period of 8 years (1995/96 to 2003/04) not only in enrolment but also in physical access to primary school as evidenced by

a change from 88.4 percent to 91.4 percent households having the physical access. Expansion of ECD and reopening of private schools may have contributed to this rise in access. The annual 5 percent growth rate of girl students as indicated by the MOES data has resulted into increasing the proportion of girls' enrolment from 36 percent in 1990 to 48 percent in 2006. Despite this encouraging trend, disparities in enrolment at primary level in terms of gender, caste and ethnicity persist. These disparities are more evident by geographical region, ethnicity and caste both at primary and pre-primary (ECD) level.

The government of Nepal has adopted the policy of equitable quality education for all as a principal policy of the EFA movement. To materialize this policy, strategies to achieve equity in access and quality, school construction and rehabilitation, alternative/flexible schooling, free school education including the textbooks, school feeding and scholarship incentive, curriculum improvement, teacher training, increasing the number of female teachers, enhancing school autonomy, improvement of school environment, reform in school exam are already in place.

Gender parity index has improved over the period of three years from 0.87 in 2004 to 0.94 in 2006. This holds true for the GPI of primary level enrolment of Dalits and Janajatis. The GPI of children with disparity is however lower than that of other groups. As positive relation between poverty and education is established (NLSS, 2004), considerable increase in the primary and secondary enrolment from the bottom quintile is still desired on one hand and low GPI in several districts from Tarai, that too in favour of boys, indicate the implementation of more affirmative actions and strategies mainly at the grassroots level.

Challenge is perceived in the absence of systematic approach to collect data of out of school children and those who are multiply vulnerable. Hard to reach children are scattered throughout the country and are difficult to locate. Updated and accurate information about working children or child labour, HIV affected children, children in institution, children affected by natural and human-made disaster and children with disability are still lacking. So is the information about children from religious groups and the religious schools they are attending. All this has a telling effect on ensuring social equality and gender parity. And inadequately funded NFE seems to be the educational provision for poor and disadvantaged children who for several reasons could not attend regular schools. The incidence that poverty is interlinked with caste and gender makes this situation all the more critical.

Marked progress is observed in achieving GPI in general despite some imbalance noticed in enrolment in some Tarai districts and between boys and girls and the Dalits. However, the need for capacity development activities to mainstream gender and other forms of social equity is there to address issues of social inequality and gender imbalance. Furthermore, to address the issues of gender and social exclusion in education from a holistic perspective, inter-institutional arrangements and inter-ministerial collaboration are required. The recently undertaken study on 'Social inclusion: Gender and equity in education swaps in South Asia: Nepal Case' should be referred to redesign the EFA from the perspective of gender parity and social equality. Moreover, equity perspective should be considered in allocating budget and gender budgeting mechanism should be adopted.

Goal 6

Quality of education in general and that of primary education in particular has remained an elusive yet an overriding concern for all. It is much sought for but yet little understood and practiced. A comprehensive definition of quality of education is the desired need but the contextual variation that makes it so difficult to arrive at a common concept makes it all the more an interesting issue of wider debate. The EFA-NPA and core document have underscored this difficulty yet its indicators have been roughly outlined. It is realised that

bringing together the many dimensions-learners, environment, content, process and outcome-of educational quality is a difficult task which requires knowledge, resources, commitment and willingness to change (UNICEF, 2000).

The policy of the government on improving the quality of education, especially after the commitment on improving the Dakar framework on EFA, relates to ensuring gender parity, reaching and bringing in the mainstream the disadvantaged children, advocating right-based approach to education, increasing public investment in education, updating curriculum reform and teacher training, upgrading physical environment of the school, promoting inclusive approach in education and decentralized management of education services.

The EFA-NPA has broadly categorized the indicators of quality primary education as +being enhanced efficiency in the management of education, improved primary curriculum and assessment system, improved physical facilities and learning environment and increased education expenditure. Analysis of these indicators shows that initiation has already been taken to delegate school management authority to community, head teacher training as a certification training is already in place, teacher management system is already effective in terms of upgrading the qualification of the teachers, providing 10 month training, implementing teaching license as a mandatory practice and establishing requirement for teacher accountability, supervisory services are brought nearer to school to provide professional support to the teachers and monitoring of the standards for quality education including the establishing of reporting requirements is initiated. Similarly, primary curriculum was revised in 2004 and teachers' guides and teacher support materials based on the national curriculum were developed. A national curriculum framework was developed by CDC and approved by the Council, however, marked shift from existing textbook based assessment to curriculum based assessment is yet to take place. Construction and rehabilitation of school physical facilities and ensuring minimum learning environment have been the prime concern of the government but visible improvement in the school environment is to be strongly effected.

Educational expenditure has remained another major concern of quality education. Quality is often associated with increment in expenditure. The available financial data indicate that demand for quality education has not been sufficiently met by a corresponding demand for increasing educational expenditure. Increment in the share of national budget to education has always been a nagging concern which has often gone unattended. It will be difficult to wholly address the issue of quality education with the continuation existing budgetary provision for education.

The pronounced goal of EFA to improve quality of education with focus on raising the competence/qualification of teachers, improving teaching learning environment in classroom, enhancing the quality of curricula and textbooks with their timely distribution, developing school based autonomous supervision and monitoring and ensuring decentralized management of schools is very much challenged by the existing near absence of continuous investigation of quality components as they relate to curricular transaction in the classroom. Further, scanty efforts to effectively apply measures such as capacity building of both the institutions and individuals, linking outcomes of educational research to further educational plans and programs, strengthening professional support mechanism, devolution of educational authorities and services to the school level and making available disaggregated data on different quality components through a well-established EMIS system at the district level remain as big challenges to quality primary education.

Goal 7

Goal 7 of the EFA-NPA to ensure the rights of indigenous people and linguistic minorities to basic and primary education through mother tongue has been unique to Nepal's multi-ethnics, multi-lingual and multi-cultural situation in order to address the issue of diversity. Available school level educational statistics indicate that of 4,502,697 students at primary level, 16,02,047 are from indigenous groups, that most of the school dropouts belong to these non-Nepali speaking communities and that a large number of children from these vulnerable groups have little or no access to basic and primary education. It is in this background that the Interim Constitution of Nepal (2006) has ensured equal status to all mother tongues spoken in Nepal including Nepali to make a provision of imparting primary education through mother tongues. The government of Nepal, to this effect, is, therefore, committed to making quality primary education accessible to all including children from indigenous and minority language groups.

To achieve this goal of ensuring the right of indigenous people and linguistic minorities to basic and primary education through mother tongue, the strategies taken by the government under the EFA program are:

- i. use of mother tongue as a subject of study and the medium of instruction,
- ii. bilingual education
- iii. teacher recruitment, training and deployment, and
- iv. special programs for endangered languages and cultures

Some of the major programmatic activities undertaken are: completion of studies on Bilingual educational and Mother-tongue intervention at primary level, development of textbooks by CDC for teaching mother-tongues as optional subjects for primary level, approval of transitional bilingual education program for all non-Nepali speaking children, translation of Nepali textbooks into various mother tongues and development of children's supplementary readers in various mother tongues, preparation of vulnerable community development plan for EFA with a recommendation of bilingual teaching to facilitate home-to-school transition and academic success for non-Nepali speaking children, Finnish technical assistance support to launch multi-lingual education program for all non-Nepali speaking students of primary schools in Nepal for a period of 2 and half years (2007-09), Save the Children Norway's support for nearly 142 native language speaking teachers in different districts, encouragement for teachers to use native languages as medium of instruction and UNESCO and World Education support for conducting situation analysis of Limbu language.

An assessment of the progress indicates that mother tongue and bilingual schools have been identified in 25 districts by DEOs, textbooks for literate mother tongues as subjects have been developed in 14 languages, transitional bilingual education program is in full-fledged operation, bilingual education brochure has been developed and distributed to each school, a total of 30 textbooks for grade one have been translated in some languages, nine supplementary readers for mother-tongue have been developed and distributed in the districts and a template including guidelines has been developing CDC for preparing mother tongue textbooks.

Some policy gaps still exist: no comprehensive policy is there to provide primary education to the children through their mother tongue, policy documents remain silent about teacher recruitment and teacher deployment to support primary education through mother tongue, production and distribution of reading-materials in mother tongues education, which used to be the task for CDC, has now been left to the private market, criteria for identifying mother tongue and bilingual schools are rather vague and the data on the teachers and students on the basis of the mother tongues are nearly absent. Also, the budget made available for

development and production of reading materials (Rs.10600000) for 5-year period is inadequate.

The need therefore is there to devolve the authority to school or SMC to decide the language of medium of instruction, determine their schools as mother tongue, schools or bilingual schools, use bilingual/multi-lingual strategy to students from other language communities and to recruit mother tongue teachers. Given the large number of students from ethnic and language minority groups, adequate amount of money should be budgeted to develop and produce reading materials for these students. Teachers' development policy in mother tongues should be given priority by the government.

IV. Challenges to Providing Education

Majority of the primary school age children are now at least enrolled in schools (NER 89.1%, DOE 2007). The remaining 11% children who are never enrolled in a school are believed to be from the hard core unreached groups. Besides, a large section of children enrolled in a school drop out before completing grade 5. Many children (about 30%) repeat grade 1, many of them repeat the same grade for many years and eventually drop out. Dalits, communities in remote mountains all over the country, remote hills in the mid west and far west regions and the rural hinterlands of Terai region, mainly in the central Terai, are more likely to be from among the unreached groups. NLSS 2003/4 indicates that these hardcore unreached groups mainly belong to the poorest quintile. Most of the people from the poorest quintile belong to the disadvantaged, minority language groups, ethnic minorities, people who need to migrate seasonally as laborers, and nomadic groups who have subsistence living in the forest.

Reaching these groups with ECD centers, schools, life skill education provisions, vocational training and technical education, nonformal education etc. is rather a very challenging task. NLSS data also indicate that girls in these communities are likely to be more sufferer than in other communities. The issue of relevance of education is also crucial for these communities as they need to subsist on hard labour on day to day basis. Even participation in school or educational provision taxes their earning for livelihood on daily basis. Stories (Kantipur, December 15, 2007) of communities such as Raute having to bind themselves for work in future just to earn a meal today indicate the pathetic situation where in the past people were made bonded laborers in the mid west and far west Nepal. For them the crucial issue is -- what value addition comes from education in helping them to get rid such living conditions on day to day basis?

On the other hand, it is these groups who needed focused attention and support not only in terms of school education but also in the form of basic life skills. For example, there are stories of Chepang women (Kantipur, Decemebr 15, 2007) falling at risk of life and death because of lack of knowledge and support regarding reproductive health, particularly at delivery time. This indicates that there is an urgent need for provision of basic health related life skill education for such groups.

Quality of education must be strongly related to relevance to the communities like those of Rautes and Chepangs. And there are numerous communities needing such relevant education all over the country. And the issue of quality and relevance relates not only to the poverty and vulnerability but also to the existence of such communities. A story of Meche Community in the Eastern Nepal, in Mechi zone (Gorkhapatra, 15 Dec, 2007) reports rapidly disappearing Meche community for several reasons including education in the National language – new generation who got school education tended not to speak Meche language, many Meches preferred to change their surname dissolving into other communities, many migrated to India because of the decreasing forest resources on which they subsisted and the high risks from the other communities who encroached their habitat.

One of the crucial challenges at present is how to reach the unreached groups. The first requirement to reach the unreached is to identify exactly the population, their whereabouts, and their needs. Disaggregated data including school census data as well as literacy, life skills provisions and other support provisions are still missing. There is an urgent need to address this with an appropriate EMIS database in place to specifically plan an intervention in support of such disadvantaged groups. There is also an urgent need to revisit the EFA indicators to include comprehensive aspects of quality, relevance, access, parity as well as literacy and life skill education.

One of the major challenges to providing quality basic and primary education for all relates to the political contexts based on the social and cultural basis. There are numerous groups in Nepal that have been marginalized in the past and continue to be at the periphery because of the past. These include:

- a) Disadvantaged ethnic minorities (As per the list of the Council of the Ethnic Groups)
- b) *Dalits* (Disadvantaged caste groups among the Hindu religious groups)
- c) Residents of the rural districts (Northern zones, especially in the mid-western and far-western development regions and middle part of the southern Terai)
- d) Minority language groups

Obviously, there are substantial barriers to education for these disadvantaged or marginalized groups. The challenges to overcome these barriers relate to the issues of:

- a) Language
- b) Relevance of education for their day to day life
- c) Poverty, need for day to day subsistence earning
- d) Poor quality of environment in the classrooms and the schools in the disadvantaged areas, and
- e) Lack of sensitivity, awareness of the teachers, managers and administrators

Since the 90s, there have been positive efforts to address these issues, for example, incentive programs in the form of scholarships for *Dalits* and girls; school feeding and oil for sending girls to school in some rural areas; and prioritized development of classrooms and physical facilities in the disadvantaged areas.

The major incentives for disadvantaged groups include text books for all primary school children, scholarships for all primary dalit children, 50% primary school girls, all children and students with disabilities, special scholarship for the children and students of Karnali zone, and children of martyrs; day meal to primary school children in selected poor districts and grants to lower secondary and secondary schools to provide free education to dalit students. It is estimated that out of total education expenditures in 2005-2006, nearly 9% was spent on disadvantaged groups.

Recently, the new interim constitution of Nepal decrees that primary education will be provided in mother tongue and that strategy of inclusive classroom will be in place. However, the efforts are yet to show improvements in the situation for two main reasons – the provisions are not adequate to bring substantial changes, and there is lack of systemic capacity in terms of resources, skill and sensitive attitude. And often the efforts to address the issues, particularly the language issue, tended to be a token effort rather than rationalized or need based. Although demographically over 40% of the population belongs to different ethnic groups with mother tongues other than the national language, the budget allocation for primary education still lacks mother tongue focus.

Budget allocation is rather a challenging aspect for resource poor Nepal. Currently, the gross allocation is about 3.7% of GDP (GDP is about 628 billion Rupees in the year 2006-7, about 9 billion USD). The total share of education budget in the annual national budget is 16.8%. This is at the lower side of the current world trend. Most importantly the budget for nonformal education is about 1% which is insignificant compared to the huge illiterate population (According to census 2001 the adult literacy is 48% only). Similarly, the budget for TEVT is about 1% where as the youth population who are not covered by any institutional provision of education is about 80%. Obviously meeting the literacy target as

well as providing life skill education is likely to remain challenging with such inadequate resource provisions.

Percentage of budget allocation alone is not the indicator of the magnitude of accomplishments, for example the budget for ECD is also about 1% where as the GER for ECD has increased substantially. Obviously, in ECD the community contribution, NGO and INGO contributions which are not reflected in the government budget seem insignificant. Nonetheless, the policy and program to address the literacy and life skill education need serious consideration.

Although gender parity of school enrolment at primary level has increased to almost 0.94, the issue of gender equality in education remains challenging. The global monitoring report 2006 has clearly pointed out that many countries including Nepal failed to fulfill the 2005 target of gender equality. The challenge relates to the ratio of female to male among teachers and educational personnel. The quality of gender environment in the schools and educational workplaces remains still behind the expected changes. The perceptions of the people still lack gender sensitivity. In many instances gender needs are not even reflected in the educational development planning. There is a need for review of policies, programs and their implementation practices to address these issues.

Quality and relevance of educational provisions are generally inadequately addressed as a cross cutting issue in different sub-sectors of the education system. This is one of the reasons why children drop out from the system without completing even the primary cycle, as well as lack of attraction of the youths and adults in literacy programs or life skill education programs including TEVT. There is a serious need to consider this issue in terms of policy as well as programs for improving quality and relevance. One of the urgent needs is to establish basic norms and standards regarding the educational provisions and that they are implemented and ensured through system of monitoring.

Economic factors still remain major challenge for ensuring participation of all children in school and meaningful completion of even the primary education cycle. This is also a big challenge in the development of quality provisions for literacy and life skill education at the community level. Many good ideas such as community learning centres, school based technical education, and other community based educational activities could not be expanded or even sustain those which were piloted because of the lack of economic resources. Investment in adult education is still not a priority among most people particularly in the rural areas where people are needed to work for their subsistence living.

Social and cultural factors are also important aspects of challenges regarding education for all. Firstly in Nepal there is an oral tradition instead of literary tradition; this is one of the reasons why the illiteracy rate is so high among the adults, mostly the rural adults. Also this explains why they are not easily concerned/attracted to literacy classes provided by the government. Social and cultural beliefs and practices are also the other main factors relating to gender inequity. Traditionally, female roles are perceived to be limited to household work, child rearing, and some social customs/festivals etc. The public roles in the new social, economic and political realms are just being considered as a matter of concern. Social cultural factors are also responsible for the creation of discrimination such as discrimination against dalits and ethnic minorities. Changing social and cultural factors is rather a difficult task. Information or knowledge alone is inadequate to bring change, whereas there is still a need to develop inbuilt programs in education to bring the desired changes.

There are many legal provisions now in place regarding educational participation for all including the disadvantaged on equal basis, and even supporting for the disadvantaged with special provisions. However there is still a lack of implementation mechanism to ensure effective translation of the provisions into reality. Besides the inertia of social/cultural values

tended to over ride the legal provisions especially in the cases of discrimination based on caste, ethnicity and gender.

Nepal is a country of geographical diversities. Topographically, mountains and hills constitute over 70% of its land. Naturally, there are many rivers, cliffs, valleys, etc. Transportation is a major challenge for ensuring safe and easy access to educational institutions, particularly for children. The diversities are also a reason for existence of social diversities including so many languages, dialects, customs, etc. All these aspects are very challenging to address.

Because of many such challenges, the focus of educational development in Nepal has been to ensure equal access, participation in learning and general measures to bring quality in educational provisions. Consequently, there has been little scope for other contextual issues and needs such as addressing the issues of natural disasters, child labor, epidemics and health related issues including HIV and AIDS and drugs etc. Such contextual and topical needs are addressed in the form of general introduction in regular curriculum, such as introduction of natural disasters, child labor and HIV and AIDS. There is no program to enable the children in terms of both knowledge and skills to deal with the real situations. There is therefore a need to give serious consideration regarding policies and programs to ensure that children are prepared to deal with the actual situation such as taking preventive measures, participating in rescue or relief tasks. There is also a scope for mobilization of NGOs and other organizations working in the area to link their work with educational provisions.

V. Linkage between the Goals in lifelong perspective

The focus of the national EFA program is to ensure equitable access to quality primary education with focus on disadvantaged groups. In this regard, the program addresses expansion of access to school education, mainly primary school, which is up to grade 5. This covers the access of children aged 5+ up to 10 years. Two issues are recognized with this thrust – 1) lack of effective provisions for out of school children 2) Lack of systemic linkage between regular school education and nonformal education. These issues still need serious consideration as almost 13% of the children are never enrolled in a school (2006) and that almost 40% of children drop out from the school system without completing the primary education cycle. There are provisions of flexible schooling and alternative schooling as well as non formal education. However, studies show that few children from nonformal stream are enrolled in regular schools.

The other major issue relates to transition from primary to secondary level. The GER at lower secondary level (grade 6-8) was 72% and for secondary (Grade 9-10) 57%. The NER at the lower secondary and secondary levels are 52% and 35% respectively. This shows a significant gap in the transition from primary to secondary level. There is a big gap in the flow of education from primary to secondary level. And there are little scope and provisions for the children who are left out from the flow.

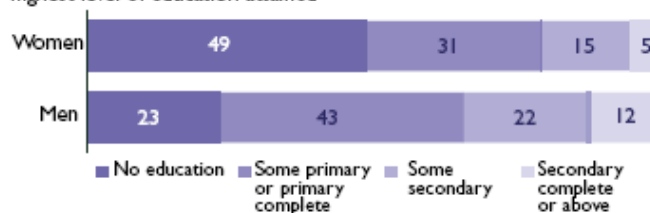
According to the NDHS 2006, 51% of the women and 23% of men were never enrolled in a school. Of the total population, it is estimated that about 31% women and 43% men have primary education (some completed primary cycle, some have just attended). Similarly, 15% female and 22% male have some secondary education; 5% female and 12% male have secondary or higher level education.

Education

Almost one-half of women and one-quarter of men in Nepal have never attended school. Only 12 percent of males and 5 percent of females have finished secondary or higher level of schooling. Education has improved since the 2001 NDHS when 32 percent of male household members and 60 percent of female household members had no education.

Education

Percent distribution of household population by highest level of education attained



The provisions of NFE in the form of adult literacy, female literacy, post literacy and income generation activities all combined cover about 250,000 adults. According to 2001 census, the illiterate adult population (15+ years age group) was 6,352,809. The total coverage by CTEVT and affiliated institutions at TSLC level (secondary level) and diploma level (tertiary level) combined is about 11,000. There are various small shops/ workshops where people are engaged in apprenticeship. But there is no information about such provisions. Nevertheless, the total coverage remains too far from the needs and demands.

There is good linkage of transition from ECD to primary school because of the systemic coverage and progression. However, linkage between nonformal and formal school has been considered at the conceptual level. Institutionalization of such linkage still remains to be developed. There is similar problem of inter-linkage between the provisions of TEVT and formal education. TEVT can absorb children coming out from secondary school but there is no provision for the TSLC students to join formal higher education. There is therefore a flaw in terms of opportunities for the students for their upward mobility in terms of continuing education.

Provisions like open and distance learning are still at preliminary and conceptual levels. There is therefore a huge scope and urgent need for restructuring education as well as expanding educational streams to address the needs of people left out from the main stream education system as well as to create opportunities for continued lifelong education. Particularly there is a need to initiate the development of values and culture for lifelong learning.

VI. EFA Strategies and Flagship Issues

EFA Strategies

The Dakar Framework of action states (point 43) that

“Education for All is a basic human right which is at the heart of development. It must be national and international priority that requires a strong and sustained political commitment, enhanced financial allocations and participation of all EFA partners in the process of policy design, strategic planning and implementation of programs. Achieving the six goals necessitates a broad based approach which extends well beyond the confines of formal education system.”

The framework outlined 12 strategies to realize the spirit mentioned above:

1. Mobilizing the strong national and international political commitment with national action plan and enhanced investment in basic education
2. Promote policies within a sustainable and well integrated sector framework clearly linked to poverty elimination and development strategies
3. Ensure the engagement and participation of civil society in the formulation, implementation and monitoring strategies for educational development
4. Develop responsive, participatory and accountable system of educational governance and management
5. Meet the needs of education system affected by conflict, natural calamities and instability and conduct educational programs in ways that promote mutual understanding, peace and tolerance, and that help to prevent violence and conflict.
6. Implement integrated strategies for gender equality in education that recognize the need for changes in attitudes, values and practices
7. Implement as a matter of urgency education programmes and actions to combat the HIV/AIDs pandemic
8. Create safe, healthy, inclusive and equitably resourced educational environments conducive to excellence in learning, with clearly defined levels of achievement for all
9. Enhance the status, morale and professionalism of teachers
10. Harness new information and communication technologies to help achieve EFA goals
11. Systematically monitor progress towards EFA goals and strategies at the national, regional and international levels
12. Build on existing mechanisms to accelerate progress towards Education for All

The strategies are reflected in the policies as well as in the Nepal EFA National Plan of Action (2001-15). The EFA core plan has also given attention to the strategies listed. Strategies 1-6 are evident in the government policies such as right based education, free education up to secondary level, community based school management.

Government has been undertaking programs to address the need of children in difficult circumstances including education of the children affected by conflict and also to address post conflict needs. Emergency provisions are made for the children affected by natural calamities, mainly flood and landslides. However these programs are rather inadequate and there is a lack of systemic approach to deal the issue on a continuous basis.

There is no specific government program regarding education of the children affected by HIV/AIDS. There is no clear statistics and information about such children.

The national EFA program emphasizes on the need to create safe, healthy, inclusive and equitably resourced educational environments conducive to excellence in learning, with clearly defined levels of achievement for all. There are classroom construction/reconstruction programs, program of piloting of inclusive classrooms, revision of teacher training with special focus on making the classroom child friendly and programs for reforming student assessment through the introduction of continuous assessment to ensure better learning achievements.

Similarly a comprehensive teacher training program is being launched to develop professional capacity of the teachers. Measures to ensure teacher service and recognition of their contributions are taken through the Council of Teacher Service. Teacher salaries are also improved from time to time at par with the other civic services. Nevertheless, there are still problems of teacher deployment to the rural schools. In many schools, volunteer (emergency provisions) teachers are working instead of the fully employed teachers.

Strategy 11 is still at the preliminary level in Nepal. This area needs capacity building at institutional level as well as individual level.

Systematic monitoring of progress towards EFA goals and strategies is being undertaken through assessments and activities inbuilt in the EFA program as well as through research provisions. The strategy has been to build on existing mechanisms to accelerate progress towards Education for All.

Flagship Issues

Nepal has been directly participating in the following major Flagship programs for EFA including

- Early childhood care and education
- Right to education for persons with disabilities: towards inclusion
- The United Nations Girl's Education Initiatives (UNGEI)
- Literacy in the Framework of the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD)

It is also addressing the other major flagship issues through various government programs, NGO initiatives and joint activities. The following table lists various programs and initiatives undertaken so far,

• Impact of HIV/AIDS on Education	• NGO initiatives
• Education for rural people	• Income generation program, literacy program,
• Education in the situation of emergency and crisis	• Government program for children affected by conflict
• Focusing Resources on Effective School Health (FRESH)	• School improvement plan at the school level
• Teachers and quality of education	• Comprehensive teacher training program developed

These programs provide a platform for those interested in education, or in broader general issues, to speak with the same voice and work in coordination to help achieve MDGs and EFA goals that are UNGEI's guiding framework and inspiration.

The flagship issues are important for Nepal because the issues exist in the country and the solution to the issues is rather difficult because of the fact that they have come to perceptual awareness recently and that functional mechanism to address them is being considered only

recently. For example, traditionally disabled children and those with other special needs are simply excluded from the schooling facilities. The Salamanca Declaration and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (Salamanca, Spain, 1994): “Schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions” is currently being considered in the policy and program formulation at a pilot stage. It has been undertaken in collaboration with various organizations and with the support of international partners.

The focus now is on understanding the issues critically and forming collaboration to address the issues. Both institutional as well as individual capacity is crucial for this, and Nepal needs a thorough development in this aspect.

VII. Managing International Support and Coordination of EFA Partners

The EFA campaign for ensuring equitable access to quality primary education for all is a joint effort of the national and global community. EFA, in other words, stands as a global commitment to reach all children, particularly the disadvantaged, marginalized, excluded, the girl child and children with disability, mostly from the least developed and developing countries, forming mainly the hard core groups of the out-of-school children. National governments alone, in these countries, are not in a position to meet their national goal for reaching the un-reached and ensuring all an equitable access to quality primary education because of their scarce resources to be distributed to other equally demanding sub-sectors of national development. Managing international support and bringing coordination of bilateral, multilateral organizations, UN agencies and other forms of international community has always remained one of the strategic challenges of these governments. This is more so in the countries where the risks of not attaining the EFA goals are high. Nepal is one of these countries with its sagging and vulnerable agro-based economy.

The support that Nepal needs from international community and EFA partners is to be more directed toward ensuring access to quality primary education than to increasing access to primary education. The progress toward ensuring access to quality primary education is not as remarkable as that of increased access to primary education. Primary education cycle completion rate, retention, promotion and curbing dropout and repetition rates stand as a challenge. Addressing of these challenges needs a concerted effort at multiple fronts where international support and coordination of EFA partners count much. International support is sought from development partners in meeting the development cost which comes to be around US\$ 1061.7 million as against US\$ 2020.2 million to be met by the national government (EFA National Plan of Action, 2001-2015). The resources gap between estimated cost and actual fund available is already there which is expected to be about US\$ 976 million for the EFA plan period.

As UNESCO's Global Monitoring Reports (2006, 2007) indicate that the developed countries' commitment to contribute to the EFA by at least one percent of their GDP has not been met, a country like Nepal suffers from such situation. Nepal's pooled resources from friendly countries and development partners support the EFA activities, sincere implementation of which is demanded by the partners and donors. Donors and partners of EFA in Nepal have a demand for making necessary reforms and implementing them with commitment and competence from the government. Systemic capacity of the ministry, transparent operational system, redeployment of teachers, proper utilization of resources at the grassroots level, outcome-based monitoring and supervision, effective teacher management, empowered school management, equitable access of vulnerable community to educational opportunities are part of the demand.

Nepal's effort toward addressing the above challenges is also contingent on the performance, support and commitment to contribute to the needed resources by the international community. It is the experience of the country that the donor partners' demands are not always coupled with the need Nepal expresses for the resources in order to achieve the EFA goals within the stipulated time frame. The EFA-NPA for Nepal seems to be an ambitious plan against the available resources. This is suggestive of the fact that international support needs to be increased under the coordinated effort of the government.

VIII. Overall Conclusions and Recommendations

Recommendations by 7 themes

Development of basic and primary education has been a major national endeavor particularly since 1990. The development activities in the earlier period took place as basic and primary education project. From 1997 it became a national program and continued until 2004. Many reform activities took place during this period including creation of the Department of Education to undertake the national programs. Based on BPEP experiences a core document was prepared for EFA 2004-09 as a medium term strategy of the EFA National Plan of Action 2001-15. Secondary School Support Program supported the EFA national core program. Currently, School Sector Reform (SSR) program document is being prepared to follow up the EFA core plan and SESP in a comprehensive way. These educational development activities have been taking place with the inspiration and support of the world EFA campaign started in 1990 from Jomtien. These activities have been undertaken as core national reform programs implemented by the government, Ministry of Education and Sports and supported by donors and development partners with technical assistance and resources.

There has been a significant achievement in terms of access to primary education. Government policy like fee free primary education, school in walking distance from home, incentives for children in disadvantaged places and from disadvantaged community are important program impetus for ensuring better access. Flexible schooling, alternative schooling for the children in rural areas and in difficult circumstances, and hostel, for girl students are some of the supplementary measures taken to address the children who could not be addressed by the regular formal schooling.

Some Significant Achievements:

- School enrolments have increased significantly (Primary NER from less than 80% before 2000 to 87.4% in 2006 and GER 126.7 to 138.8)
- Increased female teachers to 30% in 2006
- Licensing of teacher profession has been undertaken successfully
- ECD enrolments have increased (GER of about 10% in 2000 to 41.4% in 2006); the number of ECD centers has increased tremendously in this period at about 14,000
- At grade 1 students with ECD experiences increased from 8% in 2003 to 18% in 2006
- Gender parity at primary level NER increased to 0.96 in 2006.
- EMIS has progressed – regular bi-annual publications ensured in the form of Flash reports I and II
- School level education related data is placed on the Website: www.doe.gov.np

Revision of national curriculum and preparation of national framework to ensure flexibility and relevance at the local level, expansion of teacher training, free textbooks at the primary level, school room construction, piloting of continuous assessment are some of the important inputs for enhancing quality of education.

Decentralized management of schools, voluntary transfer of school management to local communities with management and resource autonomy are some of the important thrust towards better school management.

Recently, the policy thrusts – rights based basic and primary education and upgrading basic education to grade 8 levels from the current grade 5 levels—act as the major steps calling for overall reformulation of education structure and provisions.

Some successful programs/interventions

- Welcome to school program for reaching the disadvantaged children in the rural areas.
- Free textbooks to all public primary school children helped enrolment as well as learning
- School feeding program (day meal program) ensured not only enrolment of the children but also their retention in the school for the whole day and for the whole year
- Oil for mothers for daughter's enrolment and retention worked well in increasing girls' enrolment
- Grants to public lower secondary and secondary schools to provide free education to all dalit students helped increase their enrolment and retention
- Scholarship programs with particular focus on girls supported expansion of school access and retention in both primary and secondary education
- INGO partnership for school construction (Save the Children, Plan International, Room to Read, etc.)
- Community Owned Primary Education (COPE) supported schools worked well in generating community partnership for ensuring quality education
- Communities have been contributing for development and sustenance of school education in different forms such as land provision, donations, endowments, trusts, labor, monitoring. In view of such contributions government has made provisions for empowering communities for ownership and school management (Transfer of school management to community)
- NGO-INGO partnership in ECD program
- Contribution of private sector in terms of access to quality school education and ECD services
- Inclusive education concept piloted

A reflection on the development indicates that there are conceptual commitments and statutory provisions in place for effective implementation of the EFA activities. However, there are many challenges in operationalization of the provisions and effective undertaking of the tasks towards achieving the goals.

There are crucial policy gaps to fill, mechanisms to develop and ensure translation of the policies and strategies, and most importantly, there are needs to develop capacity of the institutions and people to operate as anticipated by the spirit, principles and concepts behind the policies and the programs. The following is a listing of theme-wise major findings and recommendations.

Theme 1: ECD***Major findings***

SBECD, PPC as well as CBECD modalities are in practice and expanding. School based ECD has advantage of school structure/infrastructure and therefore is more regular. However PPC has disadvantage of running ECD as a downward extension of primary school and therefore they could not follow the desirable ECD approach. Community based ECD centres are better in terms of child friendly environment and are more in line with the desirable ECD approach with flexible activities. However, such CBECDs are difficult to sustain for the lack of systemic support. CBECDs are successful when supported by proactive community and/or NGOs.

ECD still does not come under regular government structure in a formal way with adequate budget.

Some NGO/INGO initiated ECD programs have come up with comprehensive approach to community based ECD programs. Such programs included community awareness, parent education, formation of parent groups, and local support system. This modality is found highly effective and successful. Effective monitoring system was found playing a key role in the success of the programs being run by INGOs and NGOs.

Partnership with INGOs and NGOs has proved successful in effective implementation of ECD programs. The DOE has developed a partnership with SC/US, SC/Norway, Plan Nepal and UNICEF Nepal in some of the districts. This has helped to minimize the duplication of work, ensure effective monitoring of the programs and develop a strong feed back system, which are important for the effective and efficient implementation of the program. This has also contributed to the development of ownership feeling among the partner organizations.

The Education for All 2004-09 (EFA) program has set a target of 51% gross enrolment in pre-primary education by the year 2009. According to the flash report 2006/7, the country has achieved a 41.4% Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) with 40.9% for girls and 41.9% for boys.

The enrolment trend shows that there is slight difference in the access of ECD in terms of gender parity which is in favor of boys with the value over 0.9. The values of GPI among the *Dalits*, *Janajatis* and the others are also near or over 0.9, the values slightly being better among *Dalits* and *Janajatis*.

In terms of the three major ecological zones of the country –mountains, hills and Terai, the gross enrolment rates are 36.8%, 38.1 % and 36.3% respectively. The highest GER is observed in the Kathmandu Valley with 128%. Kathmandu Valley, being the capital area and also economically and socially advanced, has the most concentrated pre-primary education in the country. It was also noted that an overwhelming number of the institutional schools with pre-primary classes are located in the urban areas compared to rural areas.

Access of ECD services to the disadvantaged children still seems low compared to other children; of the total enrollment, the proportionate shares are 15% for *Dalits*, 41.1% for *Janajatis* and 43.9% for others. However, an analysis of the proportion of the ECD age group children from different sections of the population including the disadvantaged groups is needed to compare the proportionate status of their access to ECD services. There is also a need to have disaggregated data on the status of access to ECD services among the disadvantaged groups.

Recommendations

- *ECD provisions need to be systemic with active participation of community in its management. SBECD needs to ensure community participation in ECD management where as CBECD needs to come under a defined system. There is therefore a need to develop a national regulatory framework with policy and provisions.*
- *Expanding CBECD modality requires both human resources as well as fund that are often beyond the capacity of the local communities as well as the government provisions at that level. There is a need for expanding the resource base by developing collaboration among the communities, government and NGO/INGOs for resource management.*
- *There is however still a need for a clear cut policy to support the collaboration in a systemic way at the implementation level, for instance, the collaboration with major NGOs and INGOs could be undertaken for the ECD programs at the regional or district level.*

- *ECD enrollment is increasing significantly and likely to attain the targets of EFA. However, to maintain the growth rate there will be a need for persistent efforts of the government and the donors that have played key roles in the expansion of the enrolment.*
- *There is a need for rural focused ECD development program to reach the unreached. For this target settings with specific references to priority groups would be essential. Since there is still a lack of disaggregated information there will be a need to study and develop criteria at the district level to implement ECD program at the needy areas and communities.*
- *To undertake ECD center mapping is another important step.*
- *There is still lack of data regarding whether ECD is reaching the disadvantaged children, and those who are able to gain from the current provisions. There is a need to expand the scope of the current national education statistics system to include disaggregated data on ECD enrolment, completion, transition to school, budget, and quality of ECD provisions.*
- *Although ECD curriculum, conceptual framework of development of ECD centres and training package for preparing the resource persons have been developed, bringing these concepts to practice at the level of ECD centres still remains a challenge. There is a need to develop mechanism to institutionalize and operationalize these developments into practice.*
- *The first step towards this is to develop structural provision, recognizing ECD in the main education system structure and connecting this with the regular budgeted educational programs. There is also a need to develop institutional framework for training. The training of ECD workers before joining the job should be made mandatory.*
- *ECD development has so far been program based, systemic and structure based. An appropriate approach of its development is also important to ensure sustainability of ECD achievements and the programs.*
- *The need is there to develop national norms. Most importantly, it is important to develop norms to ensure that ECD provisions address the overall development needs of children; ensure safety of children so that children can enjoy the nature and charm that come with the stage; and ensure that the environment is child friendly.*

Theme 2: Compulsory Primary Education

Major findings

There has been a positive and significant development regarding student enrolment at primary level school. According to the flash report 2006/7, the NER for the year 2005/6 was 87.3%. The NER target set by the EFA NPA for 2005 is 88%; for 2007 the NER target is 90%. The flash report data based on the annual school survey shows that the achievements have almost met the target. The NER development trends show that it is not impossible to fully achieve the targets in the years to come- 95% by 2012 and 100% by 2015 as anticipated by NPA.

The data for the period 2000-2005 show that there has been steady increase in the GER, meaning that the enrolment of students is increasing in the school. The persistent high GER values indicate that in the classes the proportion of the overage children is high. This may be due to the fact that a large number of children who could not join the school at correct age have joined the school even at later age. The high GER may also be an indication of high grade repetition. The positive aspect of high GER is that schools have attracted the unschooled children irrespective of their age.

NLSS data for the year 2003/4 shows that almost 22% of the children between 5 (5-9 years: 5.4%) and 14 years (10-14: 16.6%) are engaged in work only; a large proportion (26.1%) of

the children between 5-9 years group (21.4%) and between 10-14 years group (4.7%) are not active, not engaged in any thing.

Central zone, Terai, particularly in the east, and the mountain areas are the places of low NER. The NLSS data also show that the economic quintiles give the most striking pattern of NER – richest first (87%) and poorest fifth (51%) with a sharp drop from the fourth (72%) to the fifth. Obviously the fifth quintile group is the sure group which corresponds to the most of the school non-enrolment. The data also show that this group also corresponds to the high repetition, high drop-out, and very low transition to secondary, almost no transition to higher secondary and tertiary levels. The gender parity is also very low for this group.

The policies of UPE include provisions of incentives for *Dalits*, disadvantaged *Janjatis* and girls. With this policy it is anticipated that there should be accelerated expansion of access reflected in terms of NER and GER. There is also an anticipation of better survival rate, lowered repetition and higher promotion. There is however no data to measure the NER and GER disaggregated by caste, ethnicity and mother tongue.

Conflict and Displaced Children

A decade long conflict has had a significant impact on the education of children in Nepal. Displacement has caused many children to suspend their education. Similarly, the unresolved issue of the refugees from Bhutan in Nepal has caused many refugee children to suffer. Besides, there are many disadvantaged migrants from the neighboring countries whose children are suffering because of the lack of documents to enroll their children in school. Recognizing this, the Ministry of Education and Sports has recently relaxed the rules on documentation and has instructed district education authorities to allow out-of-district children to be enrolled in school immediately rather than insisting on correct documentation.

In addition, the Ministry of Education and Sports is piloting a child-tracking system to facilitate tracking of children who have had to leave their home districts.

Addressing learning needs of conflict-affected students is another dimension of challenge for educational planning. Responding to the unforeseen situation of overcrowding classrooms, especially in the destined location of internally displaced students, shortage of teachers, learning materials and space is a catastrophic management approach. Since they are most dynamic and volatile in nature and are different in terms of ethnicity, culture, age, gender, and the levels of schooling, their learning needs are also different. This is a challenge too. Upon the settlement of the conflict, post conflict arrangements are indispensable.

Children with Disabilities

A recent international publication (Measuring Out-of-school Children: Exclusion in Primary Education, joint publication by UNESCO and UNICEF, 2006) revealed that only 2.7% of children with disabilities have access to primary education indicating an overwhelming mass of school-aged children in this group still out of school. Mainstreaming this group necessitates coordination of multi sectoral efforts, innovation of disability specific strategies along with instructional techniques and huge financial resources. Addressing this is a tough challenge.

System indicator based longitudinal study (CERID 2002-2006) shows that there are fluctuations in the enrolments in the school. This could be an outcome of the conflict situation in the country whereby children were temporarily forced to leave the school or even to migrate out from the village. There is also an indication of the presence of a large number of children belonging to seasonal migrant workers.

There are no clear indicators to describe quality of education. Nevertheless proxy indicators such as survival rate of the children in the primary cycle show a gradual improvement from 66% in 2000 to 78% in 2005. The GPI regarding the survival rates is near 1 (slightly more than 1) which means there is no gender based difference, and that girls tended to survive slightly better.

Grade repetition and drop out are still significantly high. High drop out and repetition rates are still persisting as major challenges.

A case study (CERID, 2003) indicates that early marriage is one of the issues related to non-enrolment and school dropout. The study further indicated that the issue is more visible among the *Dalits* and Muslim community in Terai.

The case study further shows that there are positive impacts regarding school enrolments of girls and *Dalits* in the areas of focused programs like Educational Incentive Program for Girls (EIPG) and *Dalits* Scholarship. The incentive programs also helped to retain the children in schools. However no specific correlation was observed between girl's enrolment and the general scholarship program for the girls.

The study also pointed out that there are many problems and flaws in the implementation of the scholarship programs at the grassroots level. The problems relate to non functional incentive management committee, the non observance of scholarship policy and ignoring the scholarship implementation guidelines and lack of monitoring system. Consequently, many needy children do not get the incentives in correct time and the amount as defined.

The case study on Situation Analysis of Special Needs Education for the Expansion of Inclusive Education (CERID, 2004) indicated that education of special needs children is still far from being effective; the provisions are still not sensitive, proactive and do not address the needs of special needs children. However it has raised the concerns and brought awareness among the teachers on the needs and issues of special needs children. Teachers are also aware of different disabilities that need to be categorized and addressed differently. The participation of the NGOs, CBOs and other local bodies is rather low in the case of inclusive education program.

Recommendations

- *There is a need for targeted policy to help the people in the poorest economic quintile groups.*
- *Incentives for school enrolment and retention need to be made more effective and continued particularly with a focus on the needy target groups.*
- *As a significant proportion of the children need to work that keep them from joining the school, there is a need for income scheme to support the families of such children.*
- *The system needs to be made more sensitive and responsive to ensure that the program reaches the targeted people as defined (time, support, amount and monitoring).*
- *There is a need for developing a policy on inclusion so that the rights of special needs children are ensured and they are brought in the main frame of the education system.*
- *In order to address the issues of persistent high drop out and repetition, there is a need to help the children at the risk of drop-out and failure. Resource class and remedial teaching for instance are to be emphasized. There is also a need for ensuring that the classes have inclusionary setting, child friendly environment and responsive/sensitive teachers. Training scheme and support programs should be in place for the resource persons, school supervisors and teachers.*
- *The issues of non enrolment, drop out and repetition are rather complex involving many aspects – social and economic constraints, language and culture, low participation of community and parents in*

school affairs etc. The recommendations listed above are generic. There is constitutional provision to provide primary education in mother tongue but whether that is appropriate in the school setting has to be sorted out with the community. Inclusion issues could be truly identified only with the community involvement. Incentives for the disadvantaged could be genuinely distributed and utilized only with community involvement. For these school-community interactions, activation of parent-teacher associations, use of school buildings and grounds for community activities, and other learning programs such as adult literacy programs should be operated.

- *Decentralization of educational administration and management is an important strategy for ensuring community participation. There will be a need to develop the capacity of both the community and the personnel involved in educational management to ensure a genuine and meaningful community participation.*
- *There is also a need to develop effective programs of alternative schooling to address the needs of out of school children, children of migrating workers, and the children who need to work along with their parents for subsistence. There is also a need for flexible schooling to address the different needs of different age group children not enrolled to a school. For example, there could be separate condensed course for over age children at the primary level.*
- *Although primary school education is free and there are supports in the form of free text books and in some cases, free dresses, most schools needed to raise some fund for general maintenance and basic operation. The fund is often raised in the form of compulsory donation from the parents. Such compulsory donations are hindrances to many disadvantaged children to join and retain them in the school. There should be clear instructions and provisions to ensure that the children do not have to stay away from school because of such compulsory donations. There should be alternative provisions to raise fund for maintaining and operating the schools.*
- *In order to ensure participation of all children in education, it is essential to involve local government in planning, management and monitoring of school education. For this there is a need for restructuring of the administration and management at the district and school levels with the provisions to involve local government.*
- *Innovative initiatives such as community school support project, community owned primary education, decentralized action for children and women, community-based primary education, action research program, community-based EMIS and child friendly school initiatives need to be expanded and institutionalized.*
- *The basic thrust of EFA program 2004-09 in Nepal has been to ensure educational access to disadvantaged groups including girls, dalits, and ethnic minorities. Disaggregated data specifically addressing these groups still needs to be developed. Without such data at the district and settlement levels, it would be rather very difficult to ensure that the programs have reached the unreached. For this school education data system need to be further enhanced with development of and linking with community-based EMIS, and by including disaggregated data in terms of disadvantaged groups, language (mother tongue), ethnicity, disabilities and quality indicators. Development of information with social mapping is important for establishing such information system.*
- *There has been consistent and significant increase in the access to primary education. With the consistent steady growth, it is likely to meet the goal of UPE by 2015, considering grade 5 as the terminating level of primary education. The challenge of access however remains when considering basic and primary education level enhanced to grade 8, as considered by the EFA NPA and SSR.*
- *Right based primary education is in place at the policy level, however legal framework and mechanism still need to be worked out and implementation procedure has to be set.*

- *Ultimately the goal of EFA is to ensure free and compulsory primary education for all school age children. In order to achieve this goal there is a need to take strategic steps such as piloting of free and compulsory education starting at grade one with gradual shift to higher grades based on the piloting experiences.*

Theme 3: Life skills Education

Major findings:

Providing life skill education as envisioned in EFA has drawn special attention of the concerned since EFA assessment 2000. There are spectra of skills identified as the parts of life skill education. The EFA national plan of action listed multi-pronged strategies to deliver life skill education – through schools, through NFE/literacy programs, through TEVT and through media, and social/community organizations.

Through schools:

Health and Population Education subjects in the revised curriculum contain life skills components. The new curriculum is being piloted in some schools. The teachers' manuals on life skills are provided to limited number of teachers who were oriented/trained in short duration training. However, the curriculum and textbooks are already in use at a national scale without support materials and teachers being oriented or trained. Lack of regular monitoring and correcting measures have created some confusion in teachers. The teaching methods suggested for life-skills based education are learning by doing, working in groups, brainstorming, role-playing, story telling, debating, and participating in discussions and group activities. Without training the teachers have found it difficult to deliver life skills education effectively.

There is provision in the national curriculum for the inclusion of 20 % contents from the local context in three subjects: social study, creative art and physical education at the primary level. This curriculum adopts a rights-based approach to education with emphasis on cognitive development and respect for diverse cultural values. However, without professional support the provision is used to deliver the contents as in other formal subjects like English.

Inclusive education is another approach for ensuring life skill education. Inclusive education intended to ensure that disadvantaged children including children with disabilities feel safe, encouraging and meaningful to learn in a school in a friendly and welcoming environment. Inclusive education was piloted in some schools in 2000. The approach of inclusive education is now being introduced through teacher training and school support. There is a 45-day teacher training package in inclusive approach to instruction for the teachers.

Primary education in mother tongue is one of the policy approaches taken by the government to ensure that the children of ethnic minorities and language group have basic and primary education in their mother tongue.

Through Technical Education and Vocational Training

There are several TEVT programs through CTEVT and through private training institutions and workshops. The provisions are however far short of the need. Besides, there is still a need for connecting such training provisions with market. There is a need for the government to prioritize TEVT and accordingly increase the dedicated programs and budget for its development.

Currently, NFE provisions include adult literacy programs, female literacy programs, post literacy programs and income generating programs. These programs could be consolidated as life skill education provisions by institutionalizing the provisions and making them address comprehensive needs of life skill education for the youths and adults. One approach to consolidate this is through development of CLCs. There is a need for expanding the current program of CLC development.

Special issues of life skill education

HIV/AIDS education

The current school curriculum provides basic information about HIV/AIDS and reproductive health but the adequacy of the information and delivery of it has often been of concern. Although lower secondary and secondary school curriculum includes content on HIV/AIDS, the information provided is not enough to make the children and young people aware of it. The subject matter like STD and HIV/AIDS is not regarded as a topic of open public debate. There is also a need for subject teacher training.

There are some major interventions by NGOs and INGOs targeting youth, which are expected to provide access to information, enhance their skills for reducing their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS and encourage the use of health services. Some of the most notable activities include youth friendly service centres, a life skills based media program called Saathi Sanga Mann Ka Kura (meaning 'chatting with my best friend'), life skills based education program through the education system and sexual and reproductive health related educational programs.

UNICEF has a cross-cutting approach to the HIV response for children and young people in and out of school. Over the last four years they have been working with the Ministry of Education and Sports to integrate life skills based education for HIV and drug prevention into the national health curriculum of school grades 1 to 10. The program is currently being piloted in 13 districts of Nepal.

Similarly, UNICEF and the UNFPA/Reproductive Health Initiative for Youth in Asia have a peer-based life skills programme aimed at reaching out-of-school children in more than 32 districts. This is taking place through their numerous support and implementation partners at international, national and district levels. These peer education programs were scaled up in 2005 under the Global Funds for AIDS, TB and Malaria (GFATM) program. By the end of 2005, the program reported reaching close to 50,500 in and out-of school young people.

Learning needs of ethnic minorities

People of diverse ethnic and tribal groups living together respecting each others' social hierarchy, cultural values and mother tongue is the uniqueness of Nepalese communities. In this situation the education system obliges to meet their differing learning needs facilitating preservation, promotion and transmission of cultural values to forthcoming generations and emphasizing on inculcation of mutual respect to each others' values towards peace. This has however been a challenge as this issue has not yet come into development discourse.

Education in situation of emergency and crisis/conflict

After the recent creation of a wider inclusive environment and an interface for the positive communication between the conflicting parties, there has been a concept of 4R - Reconciliation, Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Reunification approach in education

sector. This approach brings together those people who have been excluded from the benefit of mainstream education due to a decade long conflict. Ways and means to strengthen this approach still need be explored.

Recommendations

- *The curriculum should be reviewed periodically in view of life skill education component of the National Plan of Action to make them more coherent.*
- *Teacher training for life skills education should be improved ensuring that all health teachers receive pre-service training and orientation as well as regular refresher training so as to address life skill component in health education.*
- *Monitoring, supervision and professional support should be developed to ensure that life skill education addresses the different targeted groups.*
- *Life skill education be integrated as a core content for nonformal education provisions. Development of CLCs be considered as priority and accordingly provide dedicated program and budget for its development and sustenance. CLC development be focused to the areas according to the level of illiteracy and occurrences of poverty.*
- *TEVT should be expanded to address the needs of various sections – out of school youths and adults. The provisions should be made flexible and related to the market. There is a need for the government to prioritize TEVT and accordingly dedicate program and budget for its development.*
- *Life skills education program should be developed to meet the needs of all children, youth and adults including physically disabled groups, conflict victims, street children, HIV/AIDS victims and other disadvantaged groups as listed in the EFA NPA.*
- *Different stakeholders in the provision of life skill education seem to have different focus and interpretation regarding life skills education. The comprehensive approach to life skills as conceptualized in the EFA National Plan of Action Nepal needs to be considered as a national framework in which such various life skill education approaches could be fitted. The framework of life skill education should be disseminated and made important part of teacher training.*
- *In this regard, there is still a need to develop a national framework and coordinating system to ensure the implementation of life skill education at a national level. The coordination is necessary to ensure that the different aspects of life skill education are addressed in a proper proportion and way as demanded by the contexts.*
- *One of the major challenges regarding life skill education is building a comprehensive information system to list all the activities of life skill education taking place in Nepal through various channels including government line ministries and departments, NGOs, educational organizations, CBOs, private sectors and the traditional institutions. As per available information, the provisions of life skill education are insignificant compared to the magnitude of the needs. The other issue often pointed out by many concerned is that there is a need for a national level clarity and adoption of a comprehensive conceptual frame work where the different activities taking place could be linked/fitted. There is also a scope for identification and incorporation of life skill education across the other themes of EFA and beyond.*

Theme 4: Adult Literacy

Major findings

The EFA goal for adult literacy is to achieve 50% improvement in the level of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all

adults.

According to the census 2001 the percentage of adult literacy in the country was 48% (Male - 63%; female 35%). The literacy rate for 6+ age population was 54% and for the youths (15 to 24 years) it was 70%.

According to the NLSS survey 2003/4 the literacy rate remained challenging during the survey period. The survey data indicated that literacy was near 48%, which was same as reported by the census 2001. The national demographic health survey (NDHS) in 2006 did not give the literacy rate but indicated that the percentage of the people who reported ability to read is about 62%. These reports provided valuable information indicating where the problem lies.

According to the NLSS survey 2003/4, the problem of illiteracy was highest in the mountains followed by Terai and hill regions. By the development regions, the adult literacy rate was significantly higher (55.5) in the western region compared to the rest of the five development regions (between 43-48). The lowest literacy rate was in the far-western region, 43%.

The difference in the literacy rates was most pronounced between the urban and the rural – 72.8% for the urban compared to 42.7 for the rural. The literacy rate was highest in the Kathmandu valley, 79.1.

Gender parity regarding adult literacy in all the regions remained near 0.6 or less. It was higher in the urban region, around 0.72, highest in Kathmandu valley which was about 0.75. The gender gap in terms of the literacy rates for the 6+ age population and the youth (15-24 years) existed almost at the same level.

The most important aspect indicated by NLSS 2003/4 is that economy is the critical factor regarding almost every problem including illiteracy. The richest quintile had literacy rate of 72.3% compared to the poorest quintile which was 23.1%. There was a very high difference in terms of GPI values as well – about 0.7 for the richest and about 0.3 for the poorest.

The survey also pointed out big gaps in the literacy rates among different ethnic groups. The literacy rate of some groups like Marwadi, Kayastha, Brahmin, Thakali and Newar ranged from 60% to 88% whereas groups like Tamang, Magar and Tharu had literacy rate less than the national average, less than 48%. Poor and disadvantaged groups such as Chepang, Chamar and Musahar had very low literacy rates, less than 14.6%, as low as 7% in the case of Musahar. The average economic status of the high literacy group also happens to be significantly high compared to the others.

Each year various adult literacy programs in the country cover about 100,000 adult male and female illiterates; the female literacy program covers about 50,000. The provisions of various post literacy programs are follow-up provisions for about 50,000 neo-literates to engage them in post literacy activities. There are several other programs in the form of post literacy program, income generation program, and various programs run by NGOs. Similarly, there is program for the development of Community Learning Centre, Mobile library etc. However the magnitudes of these programs are very small, for example the total number of literates prepared by NGOs each year numbers roughly about 6000.

If presumed that the total number of about 150,000 adult illiterates who joined the literacy classes every year became literate, it would take about 32 years to make the standing illiterate population of 15 -45 years age group (about 4,800,000 people) literate. The actual number of people becoming literate through the existing provisions would be rather low when considering the lack of trained or qualified facilitators as well as basic facilities and environment in many literacy classes. The challenge would become tremendously high considering the population growth of about 2.2% per year; and a large section of out of

school youths (currently 13% of the school age children never join a school; and that more than 20% of the children who ever join a school dropout without completion).

Recommendations

- *Considering the magnitude of the problem, there is a need for a comprehensive approach to address the needs of illiterate adults. Firstly, there is a need for a drive for raising public awareness among stakeholders. Secondly there is a need for launching national literacy drives in the form of national campaign. The literacy campaign needs to be undertaken focusing on*
 - *Remoteness: The areas that are a long way from the road network or the airport and more specifically the far-western development region.*
 - *Dalit: The disadvantaged groups of people from among the Dalits who fall under the priority groups in the National Dalit Commission document, e.g., Musahar, Dushad, Badi.*
 - *Minority Ethnic Groups: Raute, Rajbansi, Dhimal, Chepang, or the groups that are in the priority list of the National Ethnic Upliftment Academy.*
 - *Women: Women in deprivation that is prioritized by the National Women's Commission.*
- *Although the government literacy classes are focused to illiterate women, particularly disadvantaged women, there is still a need to consolidate the program to meet the needs of the unreached. Focusing and consolidation is needed at the settlement level - at the ward level, at least at the VDC level. There is a need for literacy program that could be monitored to reach the unreached based on a Village Education Plan.*
- *There is a need to make the literacy program relevant to the illiterate adults for whom it is intended. That means there is a need to redesign the literacy classes based on the social, economic and geographical background of the community including indigenous vocation, local language, and other circumstances of the illiterate adults. Popular programs such as Gribini Shikshha need to be expanded.*
- *The most important aspect is the need of the poorest quintile. As indicated by the NLSS data it is obvious that poverty is most likely the critical indicator of illiteracy. Income generation is the most important factor to meet not only the need for poverty alleviation but also for reducing illiteracy.*
- *There is a need for expanding the provision of post-literacy programs and for establishing necessary coordination among the institutions that provide skill training and loan services.*
- *Literacy provision must have a national framework, an institutional basis, and a definite earmarked budget calculated on a realistic cost estimate based on the national plan of action.*
- *A national literacy framework has been recently adopted; however it needs to be reviewed in light of the EFA NPA. A working mechanism still needs to be developed for ensuring its effective implementation.*
- *Community Learning Centres (CLCs) are envisioned as a desired and also potential institutional basis for literacy provisions. However, there is still a need to develop effective strategies for the community centres for their establishment, operation and sustenance by the communities with their full ownership, and recognition, and support from the government. CLCs need to be expanded where it is needed most, i.e., in the areas marked by low literacy and poverty.*
- *Schools could also be mobilized as institutional basis for the literacy classes, particularly in view of the high potential of the teachers as the facilitators as well as the use of the school facilities before or after the regular school hour.*
- *There will be a need to consolidate the roles and responsibilities of the Nonformal Education Council to undertake the challenges with new strategies and development plan. Similarly, the Non-formal*

Education Centre should be developed as a national institution for execution of the policies by providing technical services, and conducting monitoring and evaluation of NFE activities.

- *There is also a need to develop comprehensive policy that recognizes the roles of non-governmental organizations and local bodies in the implementation of the literacy programs through collaborations and partnership. The policy should further clarify the roles and responsibilities of different organizations to help consolidate the NFE program.*
- *Currently, initiatives are taken to connect the literacy completers to income generation activities. For this purpose, it is crucial to make the provision of resource inputs for those in the process of being connected to income generation activities. Such support should not be the responsibility of the Ministry of Education alone; rather line ministries and various development agencies should be involved.*
- *Building complementary linkages between formal and non-formal education systems is imperative to make literacy program effective and meaningful from the perspective of continuing education. A system of awarding accreditation and equivalency to the completers of non-formal education at par with formal education system needs to be developed with detailed-out management and operational designs.*

Theme 5: Gender Equality

Major findings

Gender issues are gradually addressed at the school level particularly regarding enrollment. Both school census data as well as the NLSS data show remarkable positive changes taking place in terms of gender parity in school enrolment, adult literacy, school attendance and completion.

Currently, of the total enrolment in primary school, 48% are girls. The gender parities in ECD and primary level are 0.98 and 0.96 respectively. Regarding gender parity there is no visible differences among the *Dalits*, and *Janjatis* from the national average. The disparity is visible in terms of ecological belt: gender parity is less in Mountain (46% of total enrolment) and Terai (47%) compared to Hill (50%) and the Valley (51%). The composition of the girls in the school enrolment is steadily increasing since 2000 (44% to the current 48%).

Another important difference is related to student enrolment in institutional schools (private schools) where the girls constitute only 43% of the total enrolment as against 49% in the community. This verifies the general view that parents prefer to send their sons to private schools (institutional schools) considered better compared to the public schools (community schools).

Economic quintile is however a more visible factor in terms of gender difference regarding school enrolment: Primary school enrolment rate for the boys and girls among the poorest quintile group was 61-42, as against the richest quintile group which was 88-85 (NLSS 2003/4).

The positive changes in school enrolment and the increasing proportion of females in adult literacy or school attendance and completion do not however mean that gender goal has been achieved. In fact Nepal remains a country at risk of not achieving the EFA gender equality goal.

The problems of gender disparity exist in terms of literacy, particularly regarding adult literacy. Gender parity in adult literacy was about 0.6 in 2001. Gender disparities are however lowered more with the lower age. The GPI for the youths (15-24) was 0.75. This shows that schooling has contributed to achieving gender parity.

The problem of gender disparity also exists in terms of teacher population. Currently, about 30% of the total teachers at the primary level are female. The proportions are much smaller in the case of lower secondary and secondary school teachers. There are very few female head teachers, much smaller in proportion than the female teacher ratio. The proportion of female in the educational personnel is much smaller; it is insignificant among the decision makers. Gender parity is unlikely to be achieved among the teachers and the educational personnel because of the fact that those who are already in the posts are going to stay until the retirement age and that gender parity still does not exist at the intake.

Gender parity alone does not give clear situation regarding gender equality. There are still many other gender related issues that need to be addressed in Nepal. For example, there is a need to improve percentage of female personnel in the educational organizations including the ministry and departments particularly at the decision making level, which are still too small. Secondly, the environments in the schools and work places, both physical environment as well as interpersonal/social, need to be made gender friendly and sensitive to gender issues. There is also need to ensure that the curriculum and the classroom practices are made more gender sensitive. Most importantly, gender awareness and sensitivity need to be enhanced at the community level because the issues of gender disparities are imbedded in the social/cultural values and perceptions.

Recommendation

- *There is still a need for awareness program regarding the importance of gender balanced society. The system and the persons in key positions including the people in the decision making level, head teachers, SMC members, and teachers need to be gender sensitized.*
- *There is a need to continue the policy of supporting girls' enrolment, attendance and completion of school education, particularly in the Mountains and Terai. The support is most important in the case of poor; those in the fifth economic quintile absolutely need such support.*
- *There is a need to continue the policy of affirmative action in favor of females in recruitment of teachers, educational personnel and other important posts.*
- *There is a need for gender focus in the development of SIP, VEP and the other major programs.*
- *There is also a need for gender forum to bring the issues in gender discourses on a regular and continuous basis.*
- *Most importantly, there is a need for a comprehensive approach to gender issues to deconstruct the social discrimination while high lighting gender potentialities in creative and constructive ways.*

Theme 6: Quality of Education

Major Findings

Quality of education has been considered a focal issue of educational development in the recent time. The issue became more prominent because of the persistent problem of low school completion rate, high repetition and dropout rates. The repetition and drop out rates are highest at grade 1. The transition rates from primary to lower secondary and secondary are rather very low. The mean school years of those who ever attended a school is about 7 years (NLSS 2003/4). This is lowest among the poor (5.1 years) and highest among the rich (9.2 years) quintiles.

There is also an overarching concern now regarding the learning achieved by the children in terms of reading, writing and arithmetic as well as overall personal development including self esteem, attitude, discipline, social skill, and moral values. Similarly, parents and students are now much concerned regarding school environment, the infrastructure, instructional

materials and the classroom teaching and learning methods and practices. The concern is obvious from the way people prefer to send their children to the private schools which stake such provision with a fee charge. Most of the government supported community schools lack fund and initiatives to provide such facilities. Many rural schools, particularly in the Mountains and Terai, lack classrooms, appropriate furniture for the children, instructional materials as well as trained and qualified teachers.

Quality is of high concern now, but there is still a need for developing sets of verifiable indicators that can be used for effective and practical monitoring. Most quality related data such as completion rate, learning achievements or teacher training are proxy indicators. Whereas quality as it is desired/preferred lies in what is happening in the classroom, the teacher –student relations, the physical set up as is used by the students and teachers. There is a need to identify and set norms and standards for actualization of quality and a monitoring and support mechanism to ensure that education system is in place to enhance and sustain quality of education at a desired level.

Quality also refers to the inclusiveness of educational provision, how children of diverse needs and circumstances from physical, social, cultural and linguistic points of view are catered ensuring good learning. The concerns of inclusiveness are rather recent development in the country. Most of the provisions are rather new, inclusive classes with particular focus on physically challenged children such as visibly impaired and hearing difficulties are started on pilot basis in about 10 districts. The efforts are still not extensive and the coverage small. Concerns are also raised whether such inadequate approaches may not obscure the magnitude of the needs. For example the needs of hearing and /or visibly impaired can be addressed only through specially designed classroom provisions and trained teachers. The case of dyslexia is another issue that needs special care and teacher training.

Recommendations

- *There is a need to develop a set of indicators to monitor quality of education. For this there should be agreed norms and standards concerning school, classroom, teachers, student number etc.*
- *There is also a need for Quality forum to discuss the quality issues and to generate policy suggestions for professional support, monitoring and improvements.*
- *Statistics sometimes tend to obscure the actual quality situation in a class room. For example, the average student teacher ratio is about 1:45 which is not a very poor situation. However, the data obscures the fact that in some schools, the STR value is 1:80 (urban Terai) and in other the value is 1:10 (mountains). The situation exists in terms of teacher qualification, presence of female teachers, availability of text books and instructional materials. There should be provision to report the statistics with the schools as a unit, e.g., school that lacked teachers, schools that need special attention.*
- *Schools need to be child friendly and inclusive with sensitive and responsive teachers. Studies however show that in many schools such situations are rather lacking. Teacher training curriculum does have provision to prepare teachers to address such situation, however, the training skill is not being practiced by most of the teachers who are trainee; besides a large section of teachers are yet to be trained. There is a need for comprehensive teacher preparation that encompasses techniques on how to become responsive and sensitive in actual classroom. There is also a need for monitoring and teacher support system to ensure that the teachers are cared for and supported in such initiative.*

Theme 7: Basic and Primary Education in Mother Tongue

Major findings

Currently, the interim constitution of Nepal has guaranteed the rights of the people for basic and primary education in mother tongue. So far the government has helped prepare the text books in several major languages. Some schools have been established that deliver education in mother tongue, particularly in languages like Sherpa, Limbu, Newari, Maithili, and Bhojpuri. Such schools are established and operated by the respective communities, without much support from the government.

Some language groups could not yet develop text books or use the freedom to develop schools in mother tongue because of the disagreement among the local language stakeholders groups. The disagreement stems from the local differences in terms of dialects and the terminologies.

There is also a provision in the national curriculum for 20% local curriculum that the school can fix in consultation with the local community. This could be study of local language, customs, culture and/or the topics chosen by the local community.

However, in the recent time, population distribution has developed in such a way that the towns and villages are rather mixed in terms of different language groups. This has given rise to new issues -- how to designate or identify a school for education in mother tongue? How to deal the mostly prevailing bilingual and multilingual situation remains yet to be addressed. What supplementary materials in mother tongues would be needed?

There is now an on going study regarding the language issue under the national EFA program. The study is expected to bring out more clear view of the situation and generate important and practical suggestions for addressing the issue.

Language is altogether different issue that encompasses political, pedagogical as well as utility dimensions, all at the same time. The recent radical political changes also embody the issue of language recognition, freedom and development. Until the recent time, the issues of languages concerned pedagogical and utility aspects. Now the issue also relates to ensuring their right for development.

In the 1960s, there had been state approach to impose one language policy that had really angered the other language groups, particularly those groups who were at the prominence otherwise, such as Newari, Maithili, Bhojpuri, Tamang, Limbu, Gurung, Magar, Rai, Awadhi. Newari had in the distant past the status of state language of what was Nepal then. In the emergent development, most parents as well as children concerned rather prefer to study in the languages of greater use – English and national language. The concerns relate to utility and scope. However, there is also the reality that most children who repeat the classes or drop out without completing the primary cycle are from the groups whose mother tongue is different from the national language. The pedagogic concerns of early education in mother tongue have been given recognition recently. However, the initiatives and efforts are still left to the language groups or communities.

Recommendations:

- *There is now constitutional provision for ensuring education of the children in mother tongue; however there is still a need for government program and budget to implement this constitutional provision.*
- *There is a need for language forum to discuss the issues of the education of the children from different language groups and develop policy suggestions based on shared vision. Similarly, there is a need for professional forum that supports the government to address the educational needs of the children in a justifiable way.*

- *There should be a professional and institutional development to address the issues of primary education in mother tongue as well as the issues of children from different language groups in a class room.*

Overall suggestions

In line with the aspirations of the people, the interim constitution of Nepal has decreed that basic and primary education will be right based and free up to secondary level, grade 10. In line with the EFA NPA and also keeping up with the aspiration of people, the government of Nepal is undertaking preparatory work in the form of developing policy and program for upgrading primary level education from grade 5 to grade 8, and that the country is committed to the ultimate goal of EFA to ensure free and compulsory primary education for all school age children. However, the tasks that lie ahead are rather challenging. There will be a need for thorough assessments of what the present practices are and what will be needed to be developed. There will be a need for developing implementation system and mechanism, budgeted programs and most importantly, consolidated commitments of the national government as well as the donors. Also there is a need of national strategy for eventual implementation of compulsory basic and primary education.

The government should also address the emerging needs and the aspirations of the people in terms of increased budgetary allocation. At present, the budget allocation is about 3.8% of GDP and 16.8% of the total national budget. This is at the lower end of national commitment compared to the international trend of about 6 % of GDP and 20- 26% of national budget.

A comprehensive EMIS to support development of practical policies and plans that capture the contextual concerns is another important need. Such an EMIS system should create database to disaggregate data by ethnicity, language, socio-economic status and other important indicators that have direct implications for the education of the children, particularly those from the disadvantaged. Such data system should be built at the village level as well as district level in coordination with the units of other line ministries and agencies including the ministry of local development, ministry of women, children and social welfare, ministry of health, national planning commission, statistics divisions etc. There is a scope for utilizing the national census and surveys such as Population Census (conducted every 10 years), NDHS and NLSS (conducted between the censuses) to generate national data helpful for periodic assessment of EFA status of the country. For this, EFA core indicators need to be incorporated into these census and surveys. There is also a need for revisiting the EFA indicators to address the comprehensive needs regarding access, parity, quality, and consistency of the educational status, provisions, programs in the contexts of diversity in the country. Particularly, there is a need to address the quality and relevance, for this there is a need to develop a system of quality framework for quality assurance of the education system.

Improving quality and relevance of education is important to ensure that parents and children, particularly the disadvantaged, feel that the environment and the activities in schools are friendly and meaningful. Commitment and responsible participation of the local stakeholders including the school, community, parents and the government personnel is important for this. Preparation of DEP and VEP are important approaches for this. Such activities should be reinvigorated and set as regular program.

Since the status of achievement regarding EFA goals varies significantly by regions, districts, villages, social groups, and most importantly, by economic quintiles, there is a need for forming forums to take up the issues at those levels to ensure that their needs are addressed. In this direction, EFA forums should be formed at least at the district and VDC levels. Such forums should review the EFA status in the district and VDC and accordingly identify issues

and suggest strategies and policies needed to address the issues. Such forums should also formerly make the political bodies aware of the issues and solicit their support to address the issues. Most importantly, there is a need to form a body at the local level to take the ownership of the EFA status and is empowered to take initiatives for improvements. For this, there is an urgent need to activate and reinvigorate the locally elected bodies.

In developing future programs and strategies there is a need to focus on the people in the poorest quintiles, as it was demonstrated as the most telling indicator of disadvantages in all respect.

There is a need to undertake school mapping at the village level to ensure that schools are developed as per need and the demographic characteristics of the area. This should be linked with the EMIS system. The local bodies including VDCs and DDCs should be empowered to undertake this task as well as made responsible for ensuring that all the people in the area get equal opportunity for educational provisions as per the government policy and regulations. To empower the local bodies there is a need to develop EMIS system at the local level: RC, VDC and DDC level. Basing the national level EMIS on the local system will enhance the credibility of the data and strengthen the EMIS system.

There is still a need to focus school improvement at grade 1 as it is a critical juncture for high dropout, repetition, and is crucial for retention and future success of children.

There is a need to assess the existing provisions and systems of incentives for the unreached groups to make it more effective and efficient.

Also, there is a need for integrated approach of formal and nonformal provisions of education. The current provisions of literacy education, life skill education, and technical and vocational education need to be interlinked through a system and structured approach. The need is there to link educational activities, particularly adult literacy classes, life skill education, and technical and vocational education to poverty alleviation strategies.

Many issues and problems towards achieving EFA goals in Nepal are now identified. However estimation of their magnitude, the weighted efforts needed to address them and the programs and budget that will be needed to address them still needs to be worked out. There is therefore a high scope for assessment of policies, programs, budget currently available and the gaps that need to be fulfilled.

Most importantly, there is a need and scope for internalization of the EFA MDA information and experiences by the government and concerned stakeholders to utilize the knowledge and expertise for effectively reaching out the EFA goals as well as for strengthening the implementation system including the institutional capacity.

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Main References

The Seven EFA Mid-Decade Assessment Thematic Reports

1. Early Childhood Development (ECD)
2. Free and Compulsory Primary Education
3. Appropriate Learning and Life Skills
4. Adult Literacy and Continuing Education
5. Ensuring Social Equality and Gender Parity
6. Improving Quality of Basic and Primary Education
7. Indigenous People and Linguistic Minorities

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THEMATIC GROUPS

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8.	Representative, UNICEF	Member
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2. Free and Compulsory Primary Education

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4.	Mr. Kamal Karmachrya	Member
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3. Appropriate Learning and Life Skills

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