EDUCATION POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

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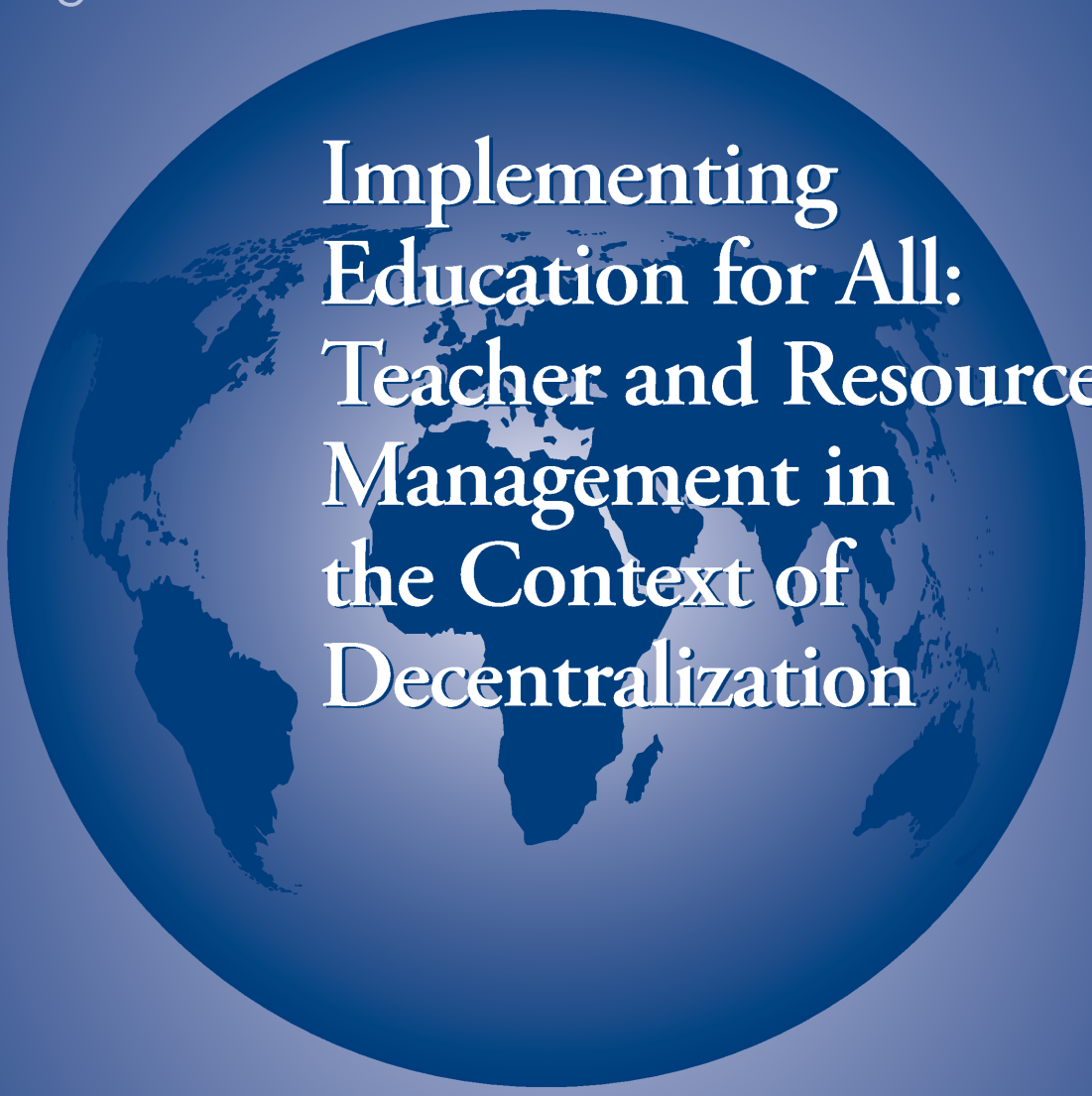

Implementing Education for All: Teacher and Resource Management in the Context of Decentralization

United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organization

Education Policies and Strategies 8

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Education Policies and Strategies 8

Implementing Education for All: Teacher and Resource Management in the Context of Decentralization

UNESCO

This compendium summarizes the presentations and debates of participants in an international seminar on *Implementing Education for All: Teacher and Resource Management in the Context of Decentralization*, held in Hyderabad (India) from 6 to 8 January 2005. Organized by UNESCO, with assistance from the Administrative Staff College of India, Hyderabad, and the National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi, the seminar was attended by over fifty participants, including two national representatives from each of the E-9 countries (Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria and Pakistan) as well as Mozambique.

The whole set of country papers can be accessed on the UNESCO website (http://www.unesco.org/education/eps under the heading 'Experience Sharing').

UNESCO expert, Abby Riddell, contributed to the planning and design of the seminar as well as the design and writing of this compendium volume.

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PREFACE

This is the eighth volume in the series *Education Policies and Strategies* launched by UNESCO's Division of Educational Policies and Strategies. Deliberately eschewing an excessive concern with theory, it seeks above all to be a collection of good practices. Through the choice of themes addressed, UNESCO aims to share its experience not only with education planners, but more broadly with all those interested in the elaboration and implementation of education policies and strategies.

This compendium summarizes the presentations and debates of participants in the international seminar on *Implementing Education for All: Teacher and Resource Management in the Context of Decentralization*, held in Hyderabad (India), 6–8 January 2005. Organized by UNESCO, with assistance from the Administrative Staff College of India, Hyderabad, and the National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi, the seminar was attended by over fifty participants, including two national representatives from each of the E-9[1] countries as well as Mozambique, which was included for the lessons that can be imparted by a successful Fast Track Initiative[2] country. Five of the ten national reports are included in this volume, together with one of the two thematic papers presented on alternative approaches to reaching marginalized populations in decentralized contexts. An introduction to the issues is followed by a synthesis paper across all the national reports, commissioned for the seminar, to highlight issues, lessons and remaining

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[1] The E-9 Initiative was launched in New Delhi (India), in 1993 on the occasion of the Education for All Summit of Nine High-Population Countries. Heads of state of Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria and Pakistan, the so-called E-9 countries ('E' for education, in nine countries) pledged to universalize primary education and significantly reduce illiteracy in their respective countries.

[2] The Education for All Fast Track Initiative (FTI) is a global partnership between donor and developing countries to ensure accelerated progress towards the Millennium Development Goal of universal primary education by 2015. All low-income countries that demonstrate serious commitment to this goal can receive support from the FTI.

challenges of the implementation of Education for All in the E-9 set of large, populous countries. The volume concludes with the proceedings of the seminar, the conclusions reached and the follow-up activities identified. The whole set of papers can be accessed on the UNESCO website (http://www.unesco.org/education/eps under the heading 'Experience Sharing'), and some of the individual national reports will be published separately. Annex 1 sets out the guidelines given for the preparation of the national reports and Annex 2 the seminar programme itself.

The national representatives who participated in the seminar include Akhtary Khanam and Abdus Sattar (Bangladesh); Oroslinda Maria Taranto Goulart and Maria Isabel Azevedo Noronha (Brazil); Wang Libing and Zhu Xudong (China); Hisham Abdel Muniem Al Sayed Al Sankari and Salah Eldin Mohamed Shater (Egypt); Smt. Prerna Gulati and K. K. Biswal (India); Jalal Fasli and Ella Yulaelawati (Indonesia); Jose Gutierrez Garcia and Leticia Gabriela Landeros Aguirre (Mexico); Paula Maria Guiao de Mendonca and Moises Celestino Matavele (Mozambique); Charles Maduegbuna Anikweze and E. O. Oga (Nigeria); T. M. Qureshi and Mohammad Saleem (Pakistan).

In addition, we were fortunate to have presentations from K. M. Acharya, Joint Secretary and Kumud Bansal, Secretary, Elementary Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development, New Delhi; Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy, Chief Minister, Mohan Kanda, Chief Secretary, and S. Chellappa, Principal Secretary (Education), State Government of Andhra Pradesh. Our thanks go to all, including the other report writers/presenters of the synthesis report and the two thematic reports: R. Govinda, National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration, I. Subba Rao, Principal Secretary (Health, formerly Education), and Zahid Ali Khan, *The Siasat Daily*. Finally, we must thank the Administrative Staff College of India, S. K. Rao and Gautam Pingle for their contributions, not least to the logistics of the seminar itself.

UNESCO expert, Abby Riddell, contributed to the planning and design of the seminar as well as the design and writing of this compendium volume.

The originality of the seminar, which gave rise to the present publication, lies in creating a stimulating and rich dialogue between planners and administrators. This dialogue, although taken for granted, usually constitutes a stumbling block at local level where education administrators or civil service

managers are the key coordinators of the implementation process. The latter are not always fully equipped to carry out this task effectively.

The collaboration between the two national institutes, namely NIEPA based in Delhi and ASCI based in Hyderabad, provided the seminar with a broad combination of education planning expertise as well as corporate management and public administration techniques. The participation of media involved in educational programmes added a third and rich dimension. Though the seminar addressed issues common to the E9 countries, the experience of Mozambique in donor mobilization and coordination was highly appreciated.

Through this publication, UNESCO hopes to disseminate more widely the lessons drawn from the experiences of the participating countries to specialists in other countries. The different contributions that we present here can play a part in nurturing useful reflection and debate to improve planning and implementation of education policies in other countries striving to overcome the challenge of attaining the goals of Education for All.

Mir Asghar Husain
Director
Division of Educational Policies and Strategies
UNESCO

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AIE and EGS	Alternative and Innovative Education and Education Guarantee Scheme
APPEP	Andhra Pradesh Primary Education Project
BEP	Bihar Education Project
BRC	Block Resource Centre
CCCPC	Central Committee of the Communist Party of China
CRC	Cluster Resource Centre
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DEEP	District Elementary Education Plan
DIET	District Institute of Education and Training
DISE	District Information System for Education
DPC	District Planning Committee
DPEP	District Primary Education Programme
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
EFA	Education for All
EMIS	Education Management Information System
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GNP	Gross National Product
GPI	Gender Parity Index
HDI	Human Development Index
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
INEP	National Institute for Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira
MEC	Ministry of Education, Brazil (Ministrio da Educação)
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource Development, New Delhi
NER	Net Enrolment Ratio
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIEPA	National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration
PMIS	Project Management and Information System
PTA	Parent-Teacher Association
SCERT	State Council of Educational Research and Training
SEP	Ministry of Public Education, Mexico (Secretaría de Educación Pública)
SMC	School Management Committee
SSA	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
TEP	Teacher Education Programme

UEE	Universal Elementary Education
ULB	Urban Local Bodies
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UPBEP	Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Programme
VEC	Village Education Committee

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The Dakar Framework for Action invited national governments to develop Plans of Action on Education for All (EFA) before the end of 2002. In response to this call, many countries have developed or strengthened existing sector plans for the achievement of EFA and have begun implementing them. However, experience has shown that at the time of developing their plans, some countries have had difficulties in defining workable strategies and translating them into clear-cut operational and reform actions. Delays have been due to lack of experience in the subject.

UNESCO supports the strengthening of national capacities not only by providing countries with expertise, but also by facilitating exchanges of national experience among countries from different regions of the world. The dissemination of experience and good practice is one of the means of transferring technical know-how and skills and can help national managers to identify practical solutions which best answer the problems arising from their own education systems.

The issue of governance and decentralization is one of the issues most frequently raised by country representatives and other stakeholders at various national and international events and is often referred to as one of the factors affecting the success of EFA implementation. This is particularly true in countries with federal systems and the E-9 countries, where governance is a major issue of concern within their decentralized administrative and institutional settings.

Organizing an international seminar for these countries on the pressing issue of governance promotes not only South-South cooperation, facilitating the sharing of their experiences and best practices, but it also helps them to design and implement their own country-specific strategies for accelerating the achievement of EFA.

Context

Decentralization has become a virtual mantra of development, emphasized increasingly as the market, as opposed to the state, has been allowed to exercise its influence on public policy. Taken to the extreme, this has entailed the privatization of formerly state-run activities such as health or education, but in between complete centralization and privatization are various types of decentralization. These have commonly and increasingly involved the use of performance assessment and results-based management as a means of exerting state influence while still allowing for multiple nodes of decision-making. Such assessment and management practices have thus become part of the panoply of tools that government uses to regulate an increasingly decentralized environment.

Many different arguments are used in support of educational decentralization, not least to ensure that decisions made closest to the educational beneficiaries result in policies tailored to their particular contexts and requirements. Other arguments in support of decentralization stem from a desire to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of educational management. Large, cumbersome, centralized bureaucracies can be slow and unresponsive. Further arguments for decentralization are based on political expediency, to transfer the responsibility for educational decisions – and commonly, the accompanying finance – away from the national government. Thus, decentralization can be used as a means of supplementing inadequate national resources.

Whatever the reasons behind educational decentralization, it is also important to distinguish between different types of decentralization. There are many patterns. Some involve merely a deconcentration of tasks, creating a regional office that mirrors the national ministry. Some involve the delegation of responsibility, where decisions taken at the centre are carried out by those delegated authority at a lower level. And other types of decentralization involve outright devolution, in which the responsibility for decision-making is transferred to a lower level. In addition, some educational decentralization involves all educational management and administration, while others focus on particular sections, allocating responsibility for different tasks to different levels of the administration. For example, teacher deployment and finance may remain at the centre while textbook ordering and distribution may be the responsibility of a local office.

Two key areas of educational decentralization that have extensive ramifications for the achievement of EFA are teacher management and deployment; and financial resource generation and management. How decisions are reached on the allocation of human and financial resources across the various levels of decentralization in different countries will have a major impact on the provision and quality of educational services. Whether district or regional education officers are empowered and enabled to make decisions concerning the targeting of key educational resources will contribute to the responsiveness of the education system to local conditions and needs and will influence the provision of quality education for all.

Different countries have worked out different arrangements across the levels of responsibility for educational administration and management to deal with governance in these key areas. Some of the actual arrangements are highly dependent on particular contexts and inappropriate for replication elsewhere. For this reason, the seminar focused on governance and not merely on decentralization. The issues of common interest, whatever the nature of decentralization, concern how decisions are reached, based on what information, with what accountability, in turn based on what information. Analysis of the effectiveness of systems of governance is also of common interest: how are they judged to be effective? Does the system deliver on its promises and achieve its targets? And, finally, how have the capacities been developed of those staff given decentralized, governance responsibilities over teacher deployment and management and resource mobilization and management?

An outline of the questions to be answered in each national report was distributed and formed the basis for the countries' submissions (Annex 1).

Common issues raised

Four common issues can be identified across the reports prepared for the seminar:

- weak fiscal decentralization;
- compensatory role of central government;
- rationalization of allocation and deployment of teachers;
- school-based management.

Weak fiscal decentralization

The national reports describe various forms and contexts of decentralization – to states, to districts, to municipalities, and to local communities and school committees. Responsibilities and authority for delivering educational services at all these different levels vary considerably. However, an underlying issue concerns the sourcing of funds for any such services and the accompanying management of service delivery. The Indian national report states succinctly:

> *When decentralization in education takes the form of deconcentration, it is very difficult to ensure accountability of local administrative units and support structures.*

Issues of control versus legitimacy are raised. If teachers' salaries are paid by the state and not the local authorities, and if resource allocation decisions are made in the state capital, for example through conditional grants, how is the necessary accountability to the beneficiaries of the education provided at decentralized levels to be developed?

The national reports also cover many different types of fiscal decentralization. Some countries use block grants; others, such as Bangladesh,[3] earmark funds; some set financial norms for the percentage of fiscal revenue to go to education, and so on. Indeed, the Pakistan national report[4] points out how incomplete decentralization to the district level, entailing mainly earmarked finance, has created too few delegated powers regarding resource allocation decision-making. The national report of Brazil also elaborates this point:

> *Unsuccessful results have involved the transfer of responsibilities without any guarantee of the necessary reallocation of financial resources. Such situations have reinforced proposals such as FUNDEB and its important redistributive characteristic, i.e. guaranteeing the transfer of financial resources, the key to reducing education inequalities in the country.*

This leads to a second issue raised in the national reports.

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[3] www.unesco.org/education/eps under the heading 'Experience Sharing'

[4] Op. cit.

Compensatory role of central government

The national reports describe various mechanisms used for equalizing resources in areas having weak fiscal capacities, for example financial transfers, which, like the block or conditional grants generally used, commonly take the form of transfers to regions according to specified minimum standards.

The Chinese national report well illustrates the different roles taken by central and state governments. Initially the policy shift to a socialist market economy resulted in a heavy burden on peasants who had to pay educational surtaxes as part of a drive for the diversification and mobilization of resources. The shift in responsibilities for resource mobilization to the counties re-established the compensatory role of central and state government, which subsidized poorer counties.

In addition, several of the national reports describe the financial targeting as well as the differentiation of educational services of particular, marginalized groups. One of the implicit questions raised is what should be the role of the state – at whatever level – in subsidizing marginalized groups or regions, when such subsidies are by their nature economically inefficient and unlikely to be self-sustaining.

Rationalization of allocation and deployment of teachers

Without exception, all the national reports focused on the challenges that decentralization posed for rationalizing the allocation and deployment of teachers. This issue is closely related to teachers' qualifications, status, support and professional development, and their integration within local communities. Notwithstanding the fact that bringing teacher management closer to the schools typically results in fewer delays in salary payments and the potential for enhanced local supervision and support, decentralization, in some countries, has created artificial barriers between states or districts, making it difficult if not impossible for states experiencing teacher shortages to draw on surplus teachers from other states. Additionally, as described in the

Nigerian national report,[5] the decentralization of teacher management has been clouded by 'parochial and ethnic sentiments', as well as poor supervision due to greater familiarity.

The inability of many countries to afford the necessary complement of fully qualified teachers has led some, such as Indonesia,[6] to implement zero-growth policies, while allowing the relaxation of qualifications and the hiring of contract teachers. This phenomenon appears as community or private provision such as PTA teachers in Nigeria, para-teachers in India, minban teachers in China, temporary teachers in Egypt,[7] etc., and has wrought havoc with wage negotiations with teachers' unions, given the different conditions of employment applied to such contracted, temporary teachers outside the civil service.

Mexico's decentralization has afforded a different pathway: it has included an element of state-level wage negotiation under more general, national agreements, together with a complex system of financial incentives for teachers that are tied to school progress as well as school performance factors. Particularly under wages and conditions of service that are insufficient for raising a family, teacher absenteeism, unsurprisingly, is another common issue discussed in many of the national reports, a partial answer to which leads to another common, important issue raised in most of the national reports: school-based management.

School-based management

School-based management – within many different decentralized state structures – is featured as a promising pathway exemplified by both state initiatives and pilot programmes of external development partners. In some countries direct resource allocations are made to schools (e.g. in Mexico, and in Mozambique,[8] under the auspices of a World Bank project). In others, such as Indonesia, such resource transfers are envisaged in the long term.

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[5] Op. cit.

[6] Op. cit.

[7] Op. cit.

[8] Op. cit.

Community involvement of a different sort, that of tailoring curriculum, language development and specific courses to marginalized groups, is the focus of the two thematic reports prepared for the seminar. Chapter 7 of this volume details how the educational needs of Scheduled Castes and Tribes of Andhra Pradesh (India) are met, and *The Siasat Daily*[9] reports on its initiative to improve the literacy and related skills of Muslim women in Hyderabad, whose literacy rate is estimated at 11%, an affront to the real meaning of Education for All.

Overview

Chapter 1 provides a synthesis of the ten national reports and raises some important themes concerning the experiences of the ten countries concerning EFA implementation under decentralized resource and teacher management. Chapter 2 distils the proceedings of the seminar.

Chapters 3–6 reproduce four of the national reports prepared for the seminar, chosen because of their clear portrayal of some of the different approaches to issues of teacher and resource management in decentralized, E-9 countries. Brazil's report highlights the complex, redistributive role of the Union (central government) in reducing regional socio-economic inequalities as well as the concerted drive towards the increasing democratization of educational management. China's report portrays the interesting policy changes away from resource mobilization via an education surtax and the change from free to fee-paying teacher education. India's report portrays the policy choices surrounding the use of para-teachers, the necessary capacity building for the increased democratization of education management, and generally the dilemma of deconcentrated, rather than devolved, education decentralization. Mexico's report deals with national compensatory programmes, increased state government responsibilities in teacher union negotiations and the introduction of financial, teachers' performance incentives.

Chapter 7 takes on a very different strand of the seminar, how the educational needs of marginalized populations are met in decentralized contexts. It portrays an Indian state's successful effort to involve communities and contextualize the curriculum for the education of children of Scheduled Castes

[9] http://www.siasat.com/

and Tribes. Finally, the conclusions and potential follow-up ideas suggested in the seminar's closing sessions are presented.

PART 1:

EFA IMPLEMENTATION AND DECENTRALIZATION OF EDUCATIONAL GOVERNANCE: TEACHER DEPLOYMENT AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN E-9 COUNTRIES - OVERVIEW

Chapter 1:
Synthesis Report [10]

1. Introduction

Governance reform has emerged in recent years as a key concept shaping all debates and discourses on development, leading to far-reaching changes in the dynamics of policy-making as well as implementation of development programmes. Of these changes, moving the decision-making process away from central authorities to organizational units and individuals operating nearer to the grass roots, is a significant one. Having supported the emergence of a strong centre for several decades, reformers are turning to decentralization as an antidote to ills as varied as governmental corruption, autocracy and repression, and public sector inefficiency. Patterns and distribution of power and influence are changing rapidly. Authority and control are ebbing from national governments to global and transnational institutions on the one hand, and to provincial and municipal governments on the other. These trends can be observed everywhere – in liberal democracies to totalitarian regimes, unitary central governments to federal arrangements, developing economies and countries in transition to industrialized countries. Educational decentralization, which is currently engaging the minds of planners and policy-makers, should be viewed as part of this larger phenomenon of reforming governance structures and processes.

Decentralization is being particularly recommended as an important means of achieving progress in mass education – ensuring that all countries of the world reach the goals of Education for All as endorsed by the Dakar Declaration. In fact, the Dakar Framework of Action explicitly calls for developing responsive, participatory and accountable systems of educational governance and management: 'The experience of the past decade has underscored the need for better governance of education systems in terms of efficiency, accountability, transparency and flexibility so that they can respond more effectively to the diverse and continuously changing needs of learners.

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[10] Prepared by R. Govinda, National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi (India).

Reform of educational management is urgently needed — to move from highly centralized, standardized and command-driven forms of management to more decentralized and participatory decision-making, implementation and monitoring at lower levels of accountability. These processes must be buttressed by a management information system that benefits from both new technologies and community participation to produce timely, relevant and accurate information' (UNESCO, 2000, para. 55).

1.1 EFA in E-9 countries and decentralization of education

Educational opportunities are distributed very unequally throughout the world. Most industrialized countries solved their problems of illiteracy and access to basic education in the nineteenth century, and, for the new millennium, are moving towards universalization of lifelong and tertiary education. Outside the industrialized world, a large share of those without access to education is concentrated in a few large countries, which are the subject of this report – *Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, and Pakistan.* Together, they encompass 3.2 billion persons, more than half of the world's population. About one-fourth of their population aged 15 and over are still illiterate. Because of their particular demographic situation, it should be expected that making a dent in the educational situations in these countries would constitute a quantum leap in reaching the global aim of Education for All. It is in recognition of this that the leaders of the nine countries came together in 1993 to form the E-9 group.

During their summit meeting in December 1993, leaders of the nine high-population countries adopted the Delhi Declaration and Framework for Action. They highlighted access to basic education, both for children and adults, gender equity, and quality of education, focusing on relevant learning achievements, as key issues in the area of Education for All (EFA). In order to attend to these issues, 'all possible resources require to be mobilized and society, at different levels of decentralization, needs to get involved in the organization and management of the educational endeavour' (Delhi Declaration, 1993). Thus the need for reforming educational governance and focusing on decentralization was well recognized by the leadership from the beginning. Reaffirming this policy perspective, the joint communiqué issued by the E-9 Ministerial Review Meeting in Islamabad (Pakistan) in 1997 reiterated the need for 'strengthening our efforts towards decentralization in order to better integrate civil society at the local level and giving an effective role in EFA programmes to all those who can contribute; the partnerships to

be built or strengthened should include, in particular, the NGO community, the private sector, parents and local communities, as well as the learners themselves who should be encouraged to clearly articulate their learning needs' (UNESCO, 2003). The current analysis of decentralization of education in the E-9 countries needs to be viewed in the context of this long-standing commitment to reforming educational governance and bringing decision-making closer to the grass roots.

Decentralization is not a new proposition in any country. To a lesser or greater extent, policies of power sharing between central authorities and peripheral units of management operate in every country. Debates, however, continue as to how much and in what aspects there should be power sharing. There is obviously no perfect formula that can be prescribed externally. Rather, decentralization needs to evolve in every country through processes of participation and negotiation among stakeholders at different levels of the governance system. Nor is there any consensus on what functions and authorities should be decentralized. In fact, two areas of educational governance that demand critical examination in this regard are teachers and resources. These are the main focus of analysis in this paper. An attempt is made to depict the broad trends that relate to these areas within the overall context of implementing programmes of Education for All. The countries under consideration are the nine countries in the E-9 group, together with Mozambique. The basis of observations, unless otherwise specified, is mainly the country case studies specially prepared on the theme, al of which are available on the following website: www.unesco.org/education/eps.

This paper begins with a short overview of the progress made in the ten countries under study with respect to various EFA goals. Section 3 is a brief review of recent governance reforms in the education sectors, with a particular focus on decentralization. The next two sections attempt to draw an overall picture of the situation with regard to the two main themes, teacher management and management of resources, with respect to EFA implementation. The concluding section reflects on critical issues involved in decentralizing educational governance.

2. EFA in the ten countries under study

Undoubtedly, the leadership in all ten countries under study is fully committed to the goal of education development in general and EFA in

particular. Although all the countries in the group have enhanced their efforts and reiterated their commitment to reach the target of EFA by 2015, facts and figures presented in the *EFA Global Monitoring Reports* highlight the enormous magnitude of the task involved in reaching the goals by 2015. Assessments also highlight the continuing challenges faced by the countries in terms of gender disparity and the quality of education provided. More than half the world's population live in these countries and carry the burden of 68% of the world's illiterates.

In fact, it is paradoxical that while certain countries and selected regions within most countries, despite their high populations, are emerging as leaders in economic growth and becoming international hubs for creating a knowledge society, certain other sections of the same populations continue to be deprived of even a basic education. Indeed, in pursuing the EFA goals, not all the countries of the E-9 group are in the same league. The variety is too wide to allow any generalizations to be drawn. The two American countries, Brazil and Mexico, have made remarkable progress in education, practically eradicating illiteracy and achieving near universal participation of children in primary education. Several other countries have also made considerable improvements in recent years. Beyond their size, the countries have little in common, being of different regions, cultures and levels of economic development. 'Overall, *Mexico*, *Indonesia*, *Brazil*, *China* and *Egypt* are approaching universal basic education, their main problems being how to reach out to those who have been left out of school in the past, and to ensure that the education they are providing to the young is meaningful for their lives. The problems of *Pakistan*, *Nigeria*, *India* and *Bangladesh* are more daunting. They have much less resources, large segments of their young are still with no access to schools of any kind, and millions have already passed their youth without any kind of formal learning' (UNESCO, 2000a). The warnings contained in recent assessments are unambiguous – several countries in the group have not done enough. What can these countries do to progress faster in order to meet the 2015 EFA deadline? This is the question that links EFA progress with reforming educational governance and making it more decentralized. There follows a brief overview of the EFA situation in different countries of the E-9 group and Mozambique.

At the policy level all E-9 countries accept the responsibility of the state to provide free and compulsory education at the first stage, to all children. The Indian Constitution makes elementary education a fundamental right. Articles 15 and 17 of the Bangladesh Constitution commit the government to construct

a universal system of education and eradicate illiteracy altogether. Apart from these constitutional declarations, all the countries have produced wide-ranging policy statements on providing free primary education to all children, although the duration of such free education provision varies considerably from 5 to 9 years (see Table 1.1 for current status of legislative protection for free education). The policy pronouncements in all the countries also recognize the educational backwardness of certain regions and population groups, specifically as regards the education of girls, and propose special policy measures to meet their educational needs. The most important contribution of the EFA movement has been the explicit nature of the commitments made by individual countries to achieving targets within a time frame concerning the overall goal of Education for All.

Table 1.1. Legal guarantee of free education

Countries	Compulsory education (age group)	Legal guarantee of free education
Bangladesh	6–10	Yes
Brazil	7–14	Yes
China	6–14	Yes
Egypt	6–13	Yes
India	6–14	Yes
Indonesia	7–15	No
Mexico	6–15	Yes
Mozambique	6–12	No
Nigeria	6–11	Yes
Pakistan	5–9	No

2.1 Literacy goals

The E-9 countries together carry the burden of around 68% of all non-literates in the world (Table 1.2). Some countries have still a long way to go to reach the Dakar benchmark. Increasing populations and the continuing non-participation of children in primary schools, particularly from marginalized groups, has meant that the Dakar literacy goal is ever receding.

Table 1.2. Adult and youth literacy

Countries	Adult literacy rate, 15 and over (%)						Adult illiterates, 15 and over			
	1990			2000–04			1990		2000–04	
	MF	M	F	MF	M	F	MF	%F	MF	%F
Bangladesh	34.2	44.3	23.7	41.1	50.3	31.4	41 606	56	52 209	57
Brazil	82.0	82.9	81.2	88.2	88.0	88.3	17 336	53	14 958	51
China	78.3	87.2	68.9	90.9	95.1	86.5	181 331	70	89 788	73
Egypt	47.1	60.4	33.6	55.6	67.2	43.6	17 432	63	20 468	64
India	49.3	61.9	35.9	61.3	–	–	272 279	61	270 466	–
Indonesia	79.5	86.7	72.5	87.9	92.5	83.4	23 800	68	18 432	69
Mexico	87.3	90.6	84.3	90.5	92.6	88.7	6 471	64	6 471	62
Mozambique	33.5	49.3	18.4	46.5	62.3	31.4	4 867	65	5 638	68
Nigeria	48.7	59.4	38.4	66.8	74.4	59.4	23 678	61	22 168	61
Pakistan	35.4	49.3	20.1	41.5	53.4	28.5	41 368	60	51 536	60

Source: UNESCO (2004).

From the figures presented, the three countries of South Asia face the greatest challenge. Gender disparity seems to be a particularly problem in several countries of the group, as indicated in Table 1.2. With the exception of Brazil, China, Indonesia and Mexico, all the countries show very poor progress in bridging gender disparities in literacy. Egypt shows the highest disparity of nearly 25 percentage points in literacy rates. It is with this in view that the Dakar Framework emphatically calls for focusing on the educational needs of youth and adults. The task is difficult, but certainly not unachievable.

2.2 Primary education scene

The last decade has witnessed unprecedented levels of activity in the field of basic education in all countries of the world. Much of the focus of this action has been to get more children into school by opening more schools and creating more educational infrastructure. To what extent have we succeeded in bringing more children to school and what strategies have worked? To what extent are the marginalized and the poor benefiting from this expansion? If they are not, what are the issues involved? How do we tackle these issues?

Figure 1.1 gives an indication of the extent of the problem in respect of out-of-school children. Of a total of around 103 million children of school age who are out of school, E-9 countries account for more than 40% (Nigeria not included in the calculation; Mozambique included). The figures presented here highlight the intercountry disparities and the overall magnitude of the challenge for the E-9 group as a whole in ensuring the provision and

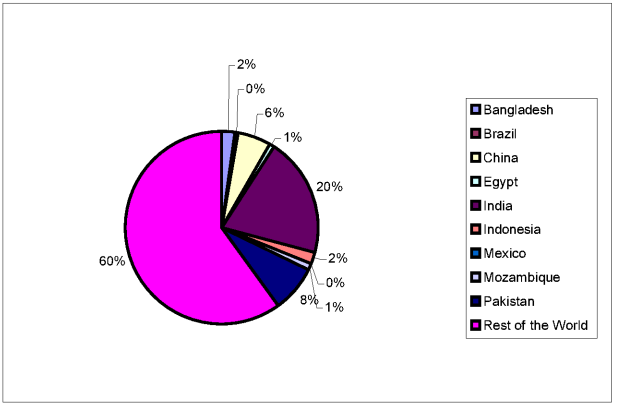
participation of children in primary schooling, which is also one of the Millennium Development Goals (United Nations, 2000).

Table 1.3. Classification of E-9 countries based on school participation

Category A high GER, high NER, high survival rate **Brazil, China, Egypt, Indonesia, Mexico** GER > 95; NER > 90 survival rate > 85	***Category B*** high GER, medium NER, low survival rate **Bangladesh, India** GER > 95; 70 < NER < 90 survival rate < 65
Category C low GER, low NER, high survival rate GER < 95; NER < 90 survival rate > 85	***Category D*** low GER, low NER, low survival rate **Mozambique, Pakistan** GER < 80; NER < 70 survival rate < 65

Sources: UNESCO (2004), National Plan of Action for EFA in the case of Pakistan.

Figure 1.1. Out-of-school children



Source: UNESCO (2004).

2.3 Early childhood education

Early childhood education should not be viewed as merely giving a head start for better achievement in formal primary schooling through preparatory classes or as a luxury affordable only by rich families. Rather, it should be embedded in a larger perspective of human development and viewed as an integral part of basic education programmes. Viewed from this perspective,

some of the countries are operating massive programmes of childhood care and nutritional support. Yet recent assessments show that around 800 million people are undernourished – the E-9 countries, and in particular, the South Asia region, houses the largest number of poor and undernourished people. Studies have also revealed unambiguously that early childhood care and support has a positive and long-lasting effect on the life of the growing child in general, and on his or her learning capabilities, in particular.

Unfortunately, early childhood care and education (ECCE) has yet to effectively catch the attention of the planners and policy-makers in many countries. Among the E-9 countries, with the exception of Brazil and Mexico, ECCE is available to a small section of the population. Concerted attention urgently needs to be paid to ECCE, which is the first EFA goal in the Dakar Framework of Action. Although we cannot expect public funds to be invested in creating ECCE programmes on a universal basis, it is essential that national governments draw up clearly defined policies on the provision of ECCE and that they actively promote and support good ECCE programmes, with flexible organizational arrangements.

2.4 Overcoming gender disparities

Many observers consider that the real indicator of EFA progress should be progress in girls' education, as even now, two-thirds of children deprived of basic education are girls. The EFA *Global Monitoring Report 2003/4* (GMR) presents a mixed picture of girls' education (UNESCO, 2003). While some countries seem to be making consistent progress, an alarming situation seems to continue in others. As described in the GMR, achieving gender parity in participation is only the first step. The real test is to move from parity to equality as specified in the Dakar Goals, as well as the Millennium Development Goals. How do we achieve the goal which, in fact, is central to all EFA goals?

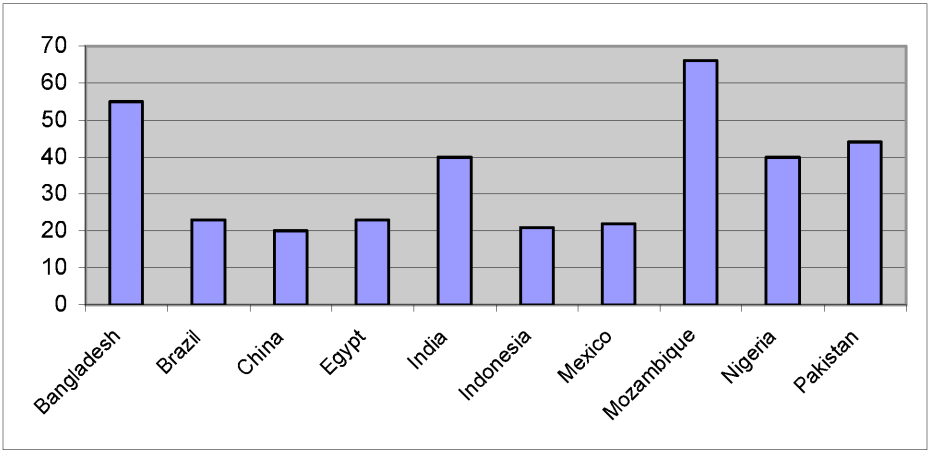
There are a number of lessons available from different countries within the E-9 group, such as conducting residential learning camps for girls, emphasizing recruitment of women teachers, providing basic infrastructure facilities in schools, or making school life more secure for girls to attend. While these efforts within the confines of the education sector have resulted in considerable success, overcoming gender disparities cannot be treated only as a technical problem internal to the education sector. The reasons for gender inequality are deeply entrenched in socio-cultural and economic factors

characterizing a society in general, and inadequate appreciation and understanding of the contribution of women to overall social progress, in particular. Tackling this needs more sustained efforts that go beyond the confines of primary schooling. It has obvious and close links with the social and economic status of women and the programmes of adult education specifically focused on women's empowerment. Again, the growing movements of women's self-help groups and leadership training among young women have demonstrated tremendous potential to achieve success in a relatively short period of time. How do we take such efforts to scale and sustain them over a longer period of time so that the change is permanent and pervasive?

2.5 Meeting quality concerns

Having achieved a reasonable level of success in enrolling all children in schools, planners have begun to focus more and more on the quality of schooling. A clear indication of this is the emergence of decentralized teacher support mechanisms in many countries and the move to adopt school-based management frameworks which, again, brings teachers to the centre stage. These are major steps as the quality of education imparted in schools and other institutions depends essentially on the capacity of teachers. The establishment of teachers' resource centres, cluster resource centres and district resource centres, as well as the massive investment made in recent years in in-service teachers' education, are illustrative of such efforts. Concern for quality improvement has also manifested itself in terms of achievement surveys to measure the outcomes of schooling. Despite such efforts, studies clearly indicate that the struggle to provide quality education for all has only begun.

Figure 1.2. Pupil/teacher ratios in E-9 countries



Several factors need careful consideration. First and foremost is the supply of qualified teachers and maintaining reasonable pupil/teacher ratios. In several countries, as shown in Figure 1.2, the pupil/teacher ratios are far beyond acceptable limits and threaten to undo the gains made in enrolling more children, as ineffective teaching and inadequate attention to children can result in the teaching/learning process becoming uninteresting to the children, and eventually leading to their dropping out of school. The situation has also become quite complex, as the number of para-teachers or contract teachers has been rising, many of whom do not possess minimum academic qualifications and are made to work under less than optimal service conditions. The availability of adequate teaching/learning materials, including textbooks, also leaves much to be desired. However, there are several innovative attempts to design new programmes of teacher capacity building and to prepare and produce low-cost teaching/learning material that is child friendly and relevant to local contexts. There are also several experiments in introducing effective multigrade teaching, so that children studying in small, and often one- or two-teacher schools, do not suffer. Unfortunately, most of the investment in basic education is consumed by salaries, leaving very little for developmental actions to improve quality. In several countries of the group, external financing has become a major source of support for quality improvement activities, thus raising the question of sustainability in the long term. It is clear that quality is the biggest challenge, both in terms of mobilizing financial resources and ensuring the supply of good-quality human resources.

The nature of the provision being made for primary schooling also needs careful consideration. Studies have pointed out that, with the exception of some NGO-managed systems, alternative modes are invariably small, single-teacher schools, with very little academic infrastructure. Such schools often employ locally available instructors who may be underqualified and even underpaid. In an insightful analysis in India, Ramachandran (2003) found that a virtual *hierarchy of access* is emerging, the nature of school provision corresponding to the status of the children, marginalized at the bottom. In fact, children of the poor, by definition, are disadvantaged by poor levels of endowment in their homes. Fairness of provision demands that the poor have access, at the very least, to equally endowed schools as provided for the not-so-poor, and perhaps are given even better provisions in order to compensate for poor endowments at home. Second, it is important that investments are made in a more focused manner, benefiting the poor, instead of spending being focused on generic programmes which spread the resources thinly and fail to reflect cumulatively any substantial improvement in the situation of the poor. Constraints on educational finance are likely to continue in most of the developing countries. However, governments often treat fiscal constraints as temporary crises and adopt short-term, ad hoc measures that increase the eventual costs of adjustment, undermine educational outcomes and fairness, and only mask fiscal shortfalls. It is clear that improvement of basic education provision requires policy-makers to evolve a more focused, long-term vision that meets both quality and equity requirements.

3. Decentralization of education in E-9 countries: current policies and practices

The nine countries in the E-9 group present a spectacle of similarities and contrasts. Apart from being large in terms of population, almost all the countries in the group share a history of colonial subjugation, directly or indirectly, from which they became independent around fifty years ago. However, viewed from a different angle, diversities and complexities in their ethnic and religious composition, political-administrative framework and economic development policies, as well as the size and nature of their geographical terrain, present these countries in a vastly contrasting framework.

A predominant view emerging in recent years is that centralized, state control is responsible for the poor state of education, and it is essential to bring in

decentralization and local community participation to remedy the situation. As in many other developing countries, three arguments underscore this line of thinking: (a) because central governments are increasingly unable to direct and administer all aspects of mass education, decentralization of planning and programming will result in improved service delivery by enabling local authorities to perform tasks for which they are better equipped; (b) because mass education has placed an inordinate strain on state resources, decentralization will improve economies of scale and will lead to more appropriate responsiveness to the particular needs and situations of different regions and groups; and (c) by engaging the active involvement of community and private sector groups in local schooling, decentralization will generate more representativeness and equity in educational decision-making, and thus foster greater local commitment to public education (Maclure, 1993). Along similar lines, the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) Committee on decentralization in India argued, quoting international trends:

> *It is increasingly becoming evident that the bureaucratic systems are not able to manage the challenges in the field of educational development and people's participation is seen the world over as an essential prerequisite for achieving the goal of education for all. It is in this context that the Committee perceives the entrustment of educational programmes to institutions of local self-government as a step in the right direction.*

China presents a similar case:

> *In the 1990s, with the deepening of reform of the market-oriented economic system, a policy of step-by-step promotion is to be adopted in the reform of the education system. And it will also be necessary to accelerate steps to reform the highly centralized system, set up preliminarily a new education system which is suitable to the market-oriented economy, strengthen the vitality of adaptation of the education sector to outside economic and social development, and to develop new ways for educational development, so as to lay a foundation to create the new education system with Chinese characteristics. This new Outline for Reform and Development of Education in China is also a national policy on educational reform for the future.*

Thus despite some contextual variation, most countries seem to be currently endorsing decentralization essentially for its instrumental role, heavily

underlining the efficiency argument. In general, the current educational decentralization strategy is being shaped to respond to a free-market economy; decentralization is endorsed from the utilitarian perspective of efficient service provisioning. The question frequently posed is whether decentralization helps or hampers efficiency in service provisioning (Seppala, 2000).

3.1 Differing approaches to decentralizing educational governance

All the countries in the group show commitment at the policy level to decentralize educational governance. In practice, however, the reality on the ground is very uneven. Many factors seem to influence the situation – the politico-administrative framework characterizing the country, for example, whether or not it is a federation, its geographical expanse, its linguistic and ethnic divisions, and so on. It is also possibly influenced by the motives behind decentralization and the policy preferences of international aid agencies operating in the country. Based on these considerations, countries have chosen to adopt different approaches and different paces for implementing their decentralization policies.

Some countries have gone for a measured process of legislative devolution, which may be called a *gradualist approach*. Countries such as Brazil, India and Nigeria, which have federal frameworks, seem to have favoured such an approach. As in these countries the final responsibility for education lies with states/provinces, considerable unevenness can be found. The final goal is to transfer powers to locally elected bodies with the full legislative back-up of the state/provincial governments. This makes it difficult for the centre to reverse any decisions unilaterally. These countries' decentralization policies, nevertheless, will have to evolve through democratic consensus building that invariably involves political posturing by leadership at different levels, making governance reforms an excruciatingly slow and complex process. As the Brazil report highlights:

> *... effective decentralization is a great challenge because of the consolidation of the move towards federalism in the Brazilian state and the democratization of power and decision-making processes in its different organizational structures. The law declares that the Union, states, Federal District and municipalities must organize their education systems in cooperation with each other, which implies the*

> *establishment of general directives, definitions of competencies, financial policies, etc.*

Although Mexico is moving towards a federal framework, the devolution process has taken a very different route. The country began with the decentralization of powers directly from national to local level through what could be called a 'municipalization' process. It is only more recently that a programme of strengthening the federal framework has been launched, bringing the state authorities to centre stage along with the national level.

> *As of 1992 and following the commitments derived from ANMEB, most of the states created decentralized bodies for the handing over of both real estate and functions and the staff (more than 700,000 teaching and administrative personnel). In this way, at the beginning a direct transfer was not made to the state governments, but rather to such decentralized bodies, with the intention of gradually creating the political and legal conditions for the formation of the state education systems and for the incorporation of new staff and material resources. To date, and although the states now possess their own education systems that have assumed the commitments derived from ANMEB, the rate of transfer of labour-related and professional teacher development responsibilities has varied. ... The process of educational federalization has not been simple. Although it constituted an important step, placing education on the political agenda of the states and increasing their decision-making powers, it also imposed the challenge of forming and consolidating local subsystems and integrating them in a new National Education System, in the framework of very different contexts. Educational decision-making was handed over to states with very unequal levels of economic development and, therefore, with differing possibilities of attending to educational needs.*

The approach adopted by China, Egypt and Bangladesh could also be described as gradualist. But the political-administrative framework in these countries is largely unitary, even though there have been recent attempts in China to empower the provinces and, similarly, the governorates in Egypt. Thus whatever gets decentralized to local levels comes as part of a centralist agenda of legislation and decree. Probably the approach could be called '*controlled decentralization*'. Decentralization, in these cases, essentially consists of deconcentration measures and delegation of authority to lower

levels in a selective fashion. Bangladesh seems to be too slow and sceptical of adopting decentralization measures, as the report points out:

> *Management of primary education remains centralized ... Decentralization of Directorate of Primary Education, devolving authority to the division, district and upazilla offices and empowering the School Management Committees may have a positive impact on improving the management and quality of primary education. Some of these proposals were included in the National Plan of Action for EFA but have not made much progress.*

In contrast to the gradualist approach, there is an emerging trend to adopt a *'big bang' approach* (World Bank, 2000) in which a package of reforms is adopted through central legislation more or less suddenly. It is likely that the developments in Indonesia following the 1999 decree or the Devolution Plan (2001) of Pakistan would fall into such a category. In Indonesia, two new decentralization laws were adopted in 1999 covering all major aspects of fiscal and administrative decentralization. Under these laws, all public service delivery functions except defence, foreign affairs, monetary and trade policy, and legal systems were decentralized to subnational governments. Most public services, including education, health and infrastructure, were to be delivered by districts and cities, with provinces performing only the role of coordinator. But it does not seem that the 'big bang' approach has solved all the accompanying problems encountered at the field level. The absence of institutional arrangements and people with the requisite capacities to implement such an agenda in Indonesia is pointed out as a serious hindrance, which the policy package alone cannot solve.[11] Similarly, lack of commitment to a centrally prescribed agenda on the part of the implementing bureaucracy, who belong to the provincial cadre, is an important issue in Pakistan. Further, Pakistan's recent devolution plans seem to vest all powers at district level, leaving very little freedom of decision-making at lower levels although elected bodies are created at least two subdistrict levels (World Bank, 2004). Yet setting up School Management Committees and involving them in day-to-day management of schools could make a big difference. As the report points out:

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[11] See Shah and Thompson (2004) for an evaluation of the big bang approach in Indonesia.

> *An encouraging and bright aspect of the new system is that the budgets, after approval by the District Assembly, are transparent, and made available to Parent Teacher Associations/School Management Committees/Citizenry.*

3.2 Community involvement in educational governance

A common problem with large countries is that decentralization often leads to the creation of a multi-level hierarchy and a corresponding increase in the weight of the administrative bureaucracy. Consequently, people's participation, which is one of the stated goals of decentralization in all countries, takes a back seat. There is probably no single formula to overcome this problem. A strategy that some of the E-9 countries are embracing, however, is to considerably disempower the intermediary levels and give greater autonomy to school-based management structures. This is illustrated by the 'Direct Funding to Schools' adopted in several countries, such as Brazil, Mexico, Mozambique and Indonesia. The purpose of this strategy is not only to strengthen school autonomy, but also to usher in a new framework of accountability. The Mozambique report describes the purpose as follows:

> *Direct Support to School, a programme which has been in place since 2003, contributes to the provision of basic materials in schools and is encouraging capacity building at school level through the improvement of school conditions, in-service professional training on resource management and monitoring of allocations and expenditures. In addition, the programme is contributing significantly to the increase in community participation in school management, as it demands that the school council, or at least the parents' association, administers the funds received.*

The Mozambique report further elaborates the purpose of setting up such committees at the school level:

> *School Councils aim at expanding, improving and making more efficient the important work that has already been done in schools, by Parents' Commissions and by School-Community Commissions, to guarantee the participation of all in school life. There exists an increasing awareness that the quality of education depends essentially on processes that occur in school and that a good school cannot be managed from the outside. Indeed, it is emphasized that schools should*

> *be managed by all who are integral to the institutions. Participation in school management is considered an indispensable condition to ensure the school's autonomy and the quality and efficiency of education.*

What is expected of such a strategy is also elaborated in the Brazil report, although the emphasis is on democratic participation, in addition to improving efficiency and accountability:

> *In order to reinforce democratic actions in schools, the Ministry of Education has developed certain actions and policies, among which are the creation and consolidation of school committees as a way of ensuring greater participation on the part of those involved in the educational process (parents, pupils, teachers, support staff and the local community); the transfer of funds directly to schools as a way of guaranteeing the better operation of the school, not only in terms of consumables and the maintenance of infrastructure, but also of financing actions that improve teaching processes and instil progressive degrees of autonomy within the school; support for democratizing procedures for choosing the head teacher as a way of encouraging the participation of the school community in school life and, above all, closer cooperation between education systems and educational institutions.*

The strategy presupposes the existence of elected bodies at grass-roots level, which are seen to possess legitimacy in terms of people's representation. Could such a situation be assumed to exist in all countries? Probably not. But the absence of such institutional arrangements is likely to hamper the process of decentralizing educational governance, as the Egypt report points out:

> *While some progress has been made in decentralizing the management of public education, the system still needs local governments, communities and civil society to become more involved. Furthermore, incentives need to be provided for good, innovative management, and proper authority (including budgetary and expenditure decisions) needs to be delegated to good managers at decentralized levels.*

A second strategy adopted for bringing about community participation and accountability is to empower local self-governments to manage all affairs relating to basic education. This, in fact, is the direction in which Indian states are moving. The underlying assumption of such a move is that when

democratic decentralization works well, people at the lower levels of government acquire a sense of ownership of development projects. Elected authorities are able to make decisions that address local needs long overlooked by development programmes designed in capital cities. As local residents come to identify with local development projects, they tend to maintain, repair and renew them more assiduously. Such enhanced maintenance makes development more sustainable (Crook and Manor, 2000). However, critics argue that local politics is still politics and is not, inevitably, a paradise of representation and participation. Politics in decentralized units of government may be more closed than national politics and more susceptible to domination by small and unrepresentative factions; local politicians may be responsive to the local needs of their defined constituency rather than to the broader community; accountability may be attenuated if local elections are not viewed as important and produce low turn-outs if local elections are contested on non-local issues or are seen essentially as referendums on the performance of the national government (Wolman, 1990). Owing to their socialization, poor people may refrain from pushing through their interests. The Nigerian report illustrates how such problems could lead to distortion at the implementation level:

> *Due to the political nature of the decisions that determine investment in decentralized education management, targets are often thwarted by what is described as 'ethnicity (entrenched in the concept of educationally disadvantaged regions), nepotism and opportunity for embezzlement'. As a result, 'only World Bank credit supported projects are being implemented', as the release of locally sourced budgets for education depend on what the key players at state and local governments consider politically expedient.*

Another strategy adopted for the institutionalization of participatory processes is to create semi-autonomous or quasi-legal bodies to plan and oversee programmes of basic education. Committees with public representation are set up at local levels to make plans and processes reflect local concerns and aspirations. Generally, such bodies are set up through central decrees or executive orders, and they enjoy delegated power in performing their tasks. The decentralization argument, in such cases, rests on the assumption that local cadres will be sufficiently independent and motivated to take responsibility for risky undertakings. Many countries with unitary political frameworks tend to adopt the approach followed by Bangladesh, although the experience does not seem fully satisfactory:

> *With a view to decentralizing primary education, management, financial and organizational responsibilities have been vested at division, district, upazilla and other appropriate grass-roots levels. To this end Upazilla Education Committees and School Management Committees have been empowered and strengthened. ... [But] committees set up at different levels of the administrative structure do not yet function at the desired level of efficiency. School Management Committees (SMC) are working well in many places in local level planning for improving the operational aspects of the school; but in most cases participation of members remains limited to attending meetings only. The accountability of the Government Primary School teachers, being state employees, remains limited to the Director of Primary Education; SMC and the community have no say in their performance.*

Even though some problems continue to arise in operating through relatively weak organizations, such committees can be found operating in almost all countries as the means of incorporating people's voices.

4. Teacher management

Teachers are at the centre of all EFA implementation efforts. It is teachers who have to internalize the goals of EFA and ensure that all children participate in the learning process. If the focus is not just on enrolling more children in schools but on providing them with quality education, it is imperative that the system of teacher recruitment, deployment, professional development and performance accountability is carefully designed and implemented with utmost efficiency. Who can ensure this? Should these areas of action be handled by authorities at the national level or should they be left to local authorities? It is with such perspectives that this section examines some critical questions concerning teachers, such as how are they recruited and what qualifications they should possess; how their service conditions are decided; what kinds of professional support they receive on the job; and how their performance is supervised.

4.1 Teacher qualification, recruitment and service conditions

As the major provider of education, the central government has traditionally been the organ managing issues relating to recruitment and posting of

personnel in the education sector. In fact, appointment and posting of personnel in general, and of teachers in particular, remains a thorny question, whether decentralization is adopted or not. However, with decentralization, the contenders for performing this crucial function multiply, giving rise to many issues. A review of the situation in different countries reveals that, by and large, central government has maintained the prerogative of appointing teachers, although over a period of time, lower level units, such as district authorities in many countries, are given some role to play in this process.

Who sets the qualification requirements and how are suitable persons identified and recruited? In general, standards of academic and training requirements to become a teacher are determined at national level. But in large countries, developing professional consensus on teacher qualification requirements and ensuring that the prescriptions arrived at are followed in practice is not easy. For example, in India, the National Council of Teacher Education functions as a regulatory body setting the basic norms for teacher preparation and qualification requirements for school teachers at different levels. The state governments, which are normally the recruiting bodies for primary teachers, are expected to stick to these norms. The Teacher Registration Council in Nigeria works along somewhat similar lines, setting professional standards and accrediting teachers. Whether such regulatory bodies are established or not, all the country reports highlight the central role played by national authorities in this regard. For example, the Egypt report points out:

> *The Central Personnel Directorate at the Ministry of Education is responsible for identifying the qualifications and skills that are needed for filling certain positions in the ministry. At present the ministry is requiring College Degrees for personnel involved in the teaching profession.*

Similarly, in China, the requirements are prescribed at national level:

> *Under the Teacher Qualification Regulations (MOE, 1995), the three requirements for a teaching qualification are Mandarin level; basic quality and competence in teaching; and knowledge of pedagogy and psychology.*

Such prescriptions or regulations should not be viewed as a means of increasing central control or as a guarantee for maintaining the high quality of teachers throughout the country. Rather, they only represent national norms

on the qualifications of those aspiring to become teachers in primary schools. In fact, the reality indicates considerable unevenness in the qualifications possessed by teachers. Interestingly, this seems to be the product of decentralized recruitment procedures that are being adopted in many countries. The study from China states:

> *We are facing another major problem with regard to the quality of teachers or the capacity building and professional development required for teachers in rural schools for quality EFA. The percentage of qualified teachers in rural schools in poor areas has remained lower than the percentage in both economically advanced rural schools and city schools. Schools in advanced rural areas require qualified primary-school teachers with a two-year teachers' college education, while schools in poor rural areas still set the standards for qualified teachers as being only senior secondary teacher education level. ... At the same time, because of limited educational resources, some counties with less financial income would rather select more unregistered teachers than recruit qualified teachers graduating from teacher education institutions, because the salaries of the former will be less than the latter. Allowing unregistered teachers to teach slows the rate of improvement of qualified teachers in rural areas for EFA implementation.*

This is not unique to China, as several other countries in the group report similar situations. In fact, a closer look points to the emergence of two categories of teachers and dual control mechanisms corresponding to the two categories in many developing countries. The Nigerian report states:

> *A peculiar development is the existence of a category of poorly paid teachers employed on a temporary basis by Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) representing the communities in which schools are located, their stakeholders and students. The presence of 'PTA teachers' in schools has come about as an intervention by sympathetic stakeholders, to fill the gaps occasioned not by shortages in teacher supply, but rather financial inadequacies in budgeting for education. It makes headline news when a state governor approves the employment of 1,500 teachers in the face of teacher requirements up to 10,000+.*

The approach and rationale are not very different in other countries that have begun to create a dual-track system of teachers – one track with teachers

appointed by the central authorities with full salary scales, based on proper academic and training qualifications, and the other track consisting of teachers who are employed on short-term contracts, often without full qualifications according to the prescribed national norms. Several states in India fall into this category. That this is not viewed as a temporary local arrangement, but the official policy of the government, is clear from a recent Indian national report, which states the rationale for adopting the route of para-teachers for filling teacher vacancies: 'The state governments have resorted to this means largely for meeting the demand for teachers in a manner that the state can afford. Appointment of pay scale teachers to fill up all teacher vacancies as per teacher-pupil norms would require resources that state governments are finding increasingly difficult to find. The economic argument for para-teachers is that provision of teachers as per requirement is possible within the financial resources available with the states.'[12]

> *It is ironic that such appointments of less qualified teachers on short-term contracts, which is antithetical to the development of a strong professional cadre of teachers, is being showcased as the product of decentralization and the empowerment of local communities in decision-making. What is the impact on the quality of education, of such multiple layers of teachers with varying qualifications? This is a serious issue, as overcoming unevenness at the field level is important for meeting the goals not only of quality EFA, but also of meeting equity concerns. One of the major problems confronting large countries is that of high levels of inequity within the country. While the rich are able to pay for schooling of their choice, through private means, poorer sections of the society depend exclusively on public provision. Under such circumstances, the creation of schools with different kinds of teachers is likely to aggravate further problems of internal inequity; it is invariably the poorer regions and poorer sections of the population who will be saddled with teachers of poorer qualification and/or unacceptable service conditions. Unfortunately, decentralization and empowerment of the local bodies to appoint teachers seems to be contributing to the confusion at the field level with respect to the*

[12] Government of India (1999, pp. 22–23). For a fuller discussion of the issue in India see Govinda and Josephine (2004).

> *structure and management of teachers and their service conditions (Government of India, 1999).*

As noted above, the structure of the teacher cadre is gradually changing in many countries, although school teachers, by and large, are employees of the government – at the national or state level. In Bangladesh:

> *... teacher recruitment and selection is conducted by MOPME. DPE is the appointing authority for primary teachers. MOPME also has the authority to transfer any primary teacher anywhere in the country, while inter-divisional, inter-district and inter-upazilla transfers of primary teachers are under the purview of DPE, Deputy Director's office and District Primary Education Office, respectively. Transfers within upazillas are dealt with by Upazilla Education Offices. MOPME is responsible for fixing the pay scales and for primary teacher promotions.*

The number of government-employed teachers is gradually shrinking. Multiple authorities with multiple categories of teachers seem to be emerging – some with lesser qualifications, some with only short-term contracts, some with only a fraction of the salary paid to a regular teacher, and so on. For example, in Bangladesh, the government stopped opening new schools more than a decade ago. Instead, it allowed private schools to emerge under the banner of Registered Non-Government Primary Schools (RNGPS). Although the number in the latter category has increased, the pressure on government schools for admission continues to rise, resulting in highly adverse pupil/teacher ratios. As pointed out in the country report:

> *RNGPS, a poor second-best to GPS, receive government support for the construction of physical facilities, 90% of teachers' salaries, free textbooks, government supervision and training of their teachers at PTIs. Non-registered schools hardly receive any support; ebtadayee madrasahs get free textbooks, much community support and have greater endowments, but they have a different style of management, one that emphasizes austerity. English-medium schools are well equipped and managed, but expensive.*

Should the emerging practice of involving the community in identifying and employing local teachers be abandoned? This, again, is a difficult question to answer categorically. Experience is mixed. Some South American countries

have shown the value of such procedures, but in other countries this is proving to be counter-productive. The Nigerian report states:

> *One way in which decentralized teacher management has militated against full implementation of EFA is by the injection of parochial and ethnic sentiments into the recruitment of primary-school teachers, however. In consequence, qualified teachers may not be employed because they hail from outside the LGA in question. Another drawback identified with the decentralized teacher management policy is poor supervision of instruction due to the high degree of familiarity that often exists among teachers and their head teachers. The ultimate end result is poor efficiency of teachers and poor quality basic education.*

What will be the impact of such developments on the provision of quality EFA? This would require more detailed and in-depth analysis. Transparency of action is critical if decentralization is to succeed. Further, as the Mexico report states, one of the challenges that still remains in the field of teacher management is:

> *[t]he articulation of efforts that allow the expression of both national needs (derived from common difficulties, historical shortfalls, inequalities) and state needs in professional teacher management policies, which respond to the characteristics of each context. In the case of Mexico (and given its wide cultural, economic and political diversity), attention to local needs arises as an urgent requirement and imposes the need for conciliation between common national goals and the specific emphasis derived from local problems.*

The variations are too many to allow for any generalization. Even what is local and what is provincial or state level is difficult to compare across countries. For example, districts in Bangladesh are much smaller than those in India, although they carry the same nomenclature. Solutions for such problems have to be found from within the context; extraneous formulae will only add to the complexity.

How do stakeholders view this situation? Teachers have been quite apprehensive of the move to establish local governance systems. This is for a variety of reasons. One of them is that such a move will bring local parochial factors into play. But teachers are also wary of the move, as it may result in their deprofessionalization through fragmentation into different categories

under the control of different authorities. Further, this could impact on the position of resources and facilities in the school as an empirical study mentioned in the China report showed:

> *Regarding the recruitment of teachers, more than 35% of those surveyed thought that it was better for principals to have the responsibility of recruiting teachers, and about 20% thought that county-level educational authorities should have that responsibility. While this may represent positive attitudes towards greater decentralization and school-based management, it could also be a reflection of not wanting poorly resourced county-level educational authorities to have such responsibilities.*

Consequently, considering the high political stakes involved, there is a tendency to treat teachers as state employees even though they serve under local bodies. However, there is a distinct trend to transfer the power to appoint personnel to local units, but accompanied by the responsibility to locate finance, at least partially. Giving freedom to local units to recruit teachers can have far-reaching implications for the quality of the teaching force in the country. Teachers' reservations need careful consideration. Proper service rules should be drawn up so that local bodies do not create increased labour litigation and political chaos.

4.2 Teacher supervision and accountability

An effective supervision system holds the key not only to improving quality but also to building a system of accountability. Who is responsible for the supervision of teachers' work? Many countries have shifted responsibility for school supervision to lower levels. For example, in India:

> *Many states have transferred some responsibility to VECs, SMCs and Gram Panchayats for monitoring school functioning and teacher attendance. However, the village and school level committees do not enjoy any statutory or administrative powers to regulate teacher behaviour. ... Lack of administrative power of VECs, SMCs, PTAs, CRCs and BRCs makes it difficult to ensure local accountability of permanent full-time teachers. Therefore, such local level institutions are less effective in monitoring attendance of permanent full-time teachers. Moreover, the local self-governments, VECs, CRCs, BRCs, etc. do not have the required capacity and matching administrative*

> *power to ensure teacher accountability. Head teachers of primary and upper primary schools generally have little authority and training to act as managers and leaders. Lack of effective enforcement of teachers' codes of practice also contributes low level of teacher accountability.*

Although much hype is created about the value of community involvement and ownership, the quality of what happens inside the classroom cannot be easily brought under the control of lay people from the community. Thus, a strong professional orientation to supervision is critical. The traditional mode of supervision focused on individual teachers, considering the task to be essentially a means of controlling teachers and disciplining them if necessary. As a World Bank report on Egypt highlights, 'A major obstacle to improving teaching in the classroom is the poor system of support, feedback, and learning for teachers. The inspection system does not provide support to teachers. Anecdotal evidence suggests that inspectors evaluate teachers on the basis of their own concept of good teaching, which emphasizes rote memorization over active learning. Such an approach frequently prevents teachers from implementing the new pedagogy learned from training workshops. Given this situation, *the inspectorate system needs to be updated and modernized to become a valuable learning tool for the teachers* in order to improve teaching and learning in the classroom (World Bank, 2002).

An issue closely linked to personnel management is that of the *accountability* of personnel in a decentralized system. In such contexts, not only the readiness to devolve authority down the line must be examined, but also the existence of institutions and their sensitivity and capacity to deal with personnel problems and concerns in an effective manner. This is of critical importance for the success of decentralization in any country, although in most countries it does not receive due attention.

One of the major problems with the supervision system in many countries, even when decentralized, is the existence of a steep hierarchy of administrative control that prevents the initiation of actions by professional inspectors or by local community members, based on observations during school visits; the head teacher of a school also often remains quite ineffective as an academic guide and supervisor to the teachers. Some examples from several of the country reports are illustrated below.

Bangladesh

The accountability of the GPS teachers, being state employees, remains limited to DPE; SMC and the community have no say in their performance. ... Ideally, the Head Teacher (HT) should provide regular academic supervision to teachers, individually, and through periodic collective review mechanisms. With the AUEOs assigned to do the job, including supervision of the HT, the supervisory role of the HT is reduced or made non-existent. As head of the institution, the HT is expected to provide leadership. A study found that 92% of HTs 'simply follow the tradition, they have no dreams or plans for improving the conditions of their schools'.

India

Many states have transferred some responsibility to VECs, SMCs and Gram Panchayats for monitoring school functioning and teacher attendance. However, the village and school level committees do not enjoy any statutory or administrative powers to regulate teacher behaviour.

Nigeria

The UBE management framework allows for decentralization and devolution of powers down to the grass-roots level, but limited autonomy could be exercised at the lower levels, and bottlenecks appeared. For instance, the Local Government Education Authorities were supposed, in principle, to be responsible for the recruitment and posting of primary school teachers but they are unable to do this without the approval of the State Primary Education Board which, itself, cannot execute the policies of the UBE programme without the approval of the State Ministry of Education.

The consequences of such hierarchical systems is a lack of clarity concerning the roles and functions of authorities at different levels. The transfer of powers over teacher-related issues, to local levels, should also lead to a reduction in powers held by the higher authorities. Without this, there is likely to be a clash of interests in the centralized set-up; accountability is somewhat anonymous, and often the accountability of grass-roots institutions, such as schools or local offices, and the people working in them, remain unattended, the central offices taking shelter under limited human resources and outreach. Consequently, when authority is decentralized, the efficiency and

effectiveness of the school and local offices come under closer scrutiny and this tests the capacities of the decentralized units to meet the demands of the community, by ensuring acceptable levels of performance. The danger is that if local institutions fail to deal sensitively with accountability questions from both the political and technical points of view – which very often happens – they come into disrepute and may even lead to a recentralization of roles and responsibilities.

4.3 Professional development of teachers

Policy documents in almost all countries highlight the importance of ensuring continued professional development of teachers after their recruitment to schools. But who should be responsible for supporting and implementing such professional development activities? Different approaches have been adopted. A common feature that is gradually emerging in many countries is to set up decentralized support systems requiring that academic inputs reach the teachers as close as possible to the site of their work. For example, in India, considering that the size and spread of schools does not allow national and state-level institutions to perform the task adequately, a three-tier support system was created in the form of a District Institute of Education and Training in each district, a Block Resource Centre in each block consisting of around 200 schools, and a large number of Cluster Resource Centres. each catering for around fifteen to twenty-five schools. Even if such a decentralized system is not set up, almost all countries have moved to establish teacher centres at the local level for providing academic guidance and support to primary-school teachers. Some other countries, such as China, have attempted to make effective use of existing teacher educational institutions with clearly defined responsibilities for in-service training and teachers' professional development.

Framework for professional development of teachers in Mexico

The main tool for the professional development of basic education teachers is the National Program for the Permanent Updating of Serving Basic Education Teachers (Pronap).

Based on this, the federal body assumes the commitment to:

- Promote the development and consolidation of regulatory, technical, financial and material conditions that ensure the provision of the services.
- Prevent the dispersal of ongoing training options, which, while extensive, at the same time, is unarticulated and frequently distant from planning processes and not linked to priority needs.
- Ensure equality, so that indigenous education teachers, multigrade groups, and people who act as teachers without any specialized studies, have access to ongoing training options.
- Promote certification of the updating of knowledge of serving teachers.

For their part, the states' responsibilities include:

- Strengthening and articulating the state training system in order to provide teachers with suitable services.
- Preparing a Guiding Program for the Ongoing Training of Serving Basic Education Teachers, which contains the rules, policies, goals and procedures for the implementation of Pronap in each state.
- Designating an area which is responsible for directing and coordinating the actions derived from this Guiding Program.
- Signing an agreement with the Ministry of Education that establishes the rights and obligations of both authorities.
- Administering the resources provided by the Ministry of Education for the implementation of actions aimed at strengthening consulting services, the professionalization of the personnel responsible for operating training services, promoting the development of pilot projects in the field of ongoing teacher-training, attending to teachers' groups from teachers' centres and acquiring the necessary materials to meet teachers' needs.

The support provided to teachers in the E-9 countries cannot be said to be fully adequate. The magnitude of the task is such that most countries are unable to find adequate resources. A second issue is the need for better coordination between field administration and teacher training institutions, in ensuring the professional development of teachers. Some of the reports clearly indicate that this is a serious problem. A third issue to be addressed is that of the clarity of people's roles and responsibilities at different levels. Mexico has

given a clear specification on this, treating the professional development of teachers as a shared responsibility of the national and state agencies (see text box). Generally, however, this is a weak area. Governments tend to be vague on such matters. A related question is the link between career growth patterns and the professional development of teachers. Again, this is a matter that has to be settled through careful negotiation with all stakeholders. Mere prescriptions from the centre, and even providing resources for training and quality improvement, will not do. In particular, this has to be seen as a shared responsibility of educational authorities at all levels. The case of Brazil illustrates this point effectively:

> *In Brazil, it is the responsibility of states, Federal District and municipalities, together with the respective education systems, to ensure the approval of statutes and career plans for teachers in the public sector ... it is the duty of the education systems to enhance the value of professional educational staff, guaranteeing them entry exclusively by public examination and proof of qualifications; continuing professional training; a professional salary base and a career path based on qualifications for training or on the evaluation of performance, time reserved for study, planning and evaluation included in the working week and satisfactory working conditions. ... The cooperation between the Union, states and municipalities – formalized by a Participation Agreement – has succeeded in creating a system which is both decentralized and articulated and which makes it possible to optimize the public funds that have been allocated to the programme.*

In conclusion, in what ways does decentralization help to strengthen the process of EFA implementation, particularly with reference to teacher management? How do we make the process more effective and meaningful? The foregoing analysis clearly points out that decentralization has had a mixed impact on EFA implementation in different E-9 countries. But lessons from different countries also highlight the potential that decentralization holds for transforming the system of teacher management in a positive direction.

Whether decision-making effectively has gone to the local level or not, moves towards decentralization have brought into the limelight micro-level concerns involved in implementing EFA. There is a critical need for reconciling national norms with local requirements. For example, indicators, such as the pupil/teacher ratio, have to be viewed in a contextual manner – the qualifications and capabilities of the teacher employed, the social and cultural

contexts in which the school functions, and so on. Linking teacher career plan to actual performance in schools, and making schools the focus of quality improvement through school-based management, instead of focusing only on individual teachers, is another issue that needs careful consideration.

An important requirement for the successful use of decentralization for improving EFA delivery is the creation of a reliable and transparent teacher database. In general, teacher databases in many countries are quite weak. Invariably, efforts have focused on the creation of mega-bases useful for decision-making at the national level. But with decentralization, data requirements also change. Information on teachers at the local level will be qualitatively different and more comprehensive. It is worth investing in such databases, which will also facilitate the horizontal flow of information on teachers to local stakeholders. In fact, several countries in the E-9 group are already working on this, and it would be useful to examine their experiences and share them among professionals from different countries.

Finally, it should be recognized that teachers are at the core of any education system. The quality of the system cannot transcend its teacher cadre. Therefore, all decentralization measures should keep this in mind when dealing with the overall focus on quality and equity. Empowering local units of governance and the local community is valuable only to the extent that it enhances the quality and performance of EFA processes. This is critical, because it is the poor and the marginalized who have remained outside the framework of schooling in all the large countries, and they continue to depend on state school provision for educating their children. It is therefore necessary to ensure that educational decentralization measures are proactive in protecting the interests of marginalized people and are not adopted as mere tools for improving cost and managerial efficiency.

5. Resource management

Financing is perhaps the most contentious aspect of how decentralization is effected. There are two aspects to this. One is the extent of the transfer of financial decision-making powers to local units and schools. The complaint is often made that in many countries, while administrative responsibilities are transferred to local units, the corresponding financial powers remain at the central level, making the whole process farcical. However, the second aspect of the purpose of decentralization, as some would argue, is that decentralization is desirable because it should, and indeed, in practice will,

maximize the growth of local revenue resources. Others argue that in most developing countries the majority of funding for decentralized bodies will inevitably come from central government. The main argument for maximizing local revenues is that it puts the responsibility for costs, tax levels and expenditures on the shoulders of local beneficiaries and local decision-makers. It therefore maximizes the accountability of government to taxpayers, and underpins genuine local, political and managerial autonomy. Nevertheless, given the general inadequacy of local revenue bases and the control of governments over financial transfers, it is unlikely that decentralization will lead to fiscal indiscipline.

Different types of funding seem to be in vogue for financial operations at decentralized levels. These are block grants from a guaranteed share of national public revenue, funds earmarked for specific delegated functions or programmes, and incentive or matching funds that aim to respond to local proposals. Different kinds of central funding transfers have different implications for the effectiveness and probity of public financial management and for the effects of decentralization in such areas as transparency, accountability, social equity, and human development (Crook and Manor, 2000).

Specifically, decentralization of financial controls is expected to increase accountability of operations at the field level for managing public finances, but it requires a system that can sustain effective mechanisms of institutional and public accountability. Whether decentralized government can provide this depends on the political context. It matters little whether a decentralized system is funded mainly by local revenues or by central transfers if accountability mechanisms are ineffective and local political authorities are simply extensions of centrally run patronage networks (Crook and Manor, 2000). It is within this broader global understanding of the link between decentralization and resource management that the situation of financing EFA activities at local level in the E-9 countries has been examined.

5.1 Mobilizing and allocating resources for basic education

All the countries in the group have adopted the principle of free and compulsory education for all children. Theoretically, therefore, financing of basic education is essentially the responsibility of the national government. But how fully do the national governments bear all the expenditure involved? How are additional resources raised and allocated? Do the local units play any

role in decision-making with respect to allocations within the basic education sector? Who specifies the norms for spending? How are they made sensitive to local needs? Answers to these questions vary across countries, but it is likely that no government in the group can claim that its system is fully free and provided by the national government. The difference seems to lie in whether additional resources are raised at the local level from the community or are to be borne privately by families. This difference can prove critical in many ways. For example, the pattern of financing of basic education adopted in China from 1986 to 2000 required raising funds from local community members:

> *The diversified system of resource mobilization has been developed with government financial investment as the main part, supplemented by tuition and fees, the educational surtax and extra money collection. Under this decentralization of responsibilities of the educational administration, government at the township level and residents in rural areas, where EFA implementation is serious, are expected to shoulder about 60% of all educational expenditure. The educational surtax has become an important channel for mobilizing resources to support compulsory education and EFA in rural areas.*

In contrast, Bangladesh decided to supplement government resources with private expenditure. This, as pointed out earlier, led to a virtual moratorium on establishing government schools, making people dependent on private schooling. Consequently, for the last fifteen years, while the number of government schools has remained static, private schooling, with partial funding from the government, has accounted for around 40% of all primary schools in the country. The implications of these two contrasting approaches are easy to see. In China, the public education system became stronger, gradually giving greater voice to the local community in decisions on expenditure. In Bangladesh, however, the Registered Non-Government Primary Schools have come to claim substantial amounts of assistance from public resources while giving practically no voice to the local community in decision-making, and even less accountability. Of course, both approaches may be considered unacceptable when viewed from the perspective of the increasing inequity brought about. It was from such a perspective that China dispensed with this approach:

> *According to this new administrative system, county governments now have the main responsibility for resource mobilization for rural*

> *compulsory education, and governments at provincial and national levels offer financial support to poor counties through special educational grants and indirect support through general financial payment transfers. Compared to the former system of administration, which was more decentralized, this new system looks less diversified in terms of resource mobilization, because the educational surtax and extra money collection from peasants has been prohibited.*

Another question examined by the country reports is the approach for transferring funds to local units. What is the basis for allocation of funds to local units? Does it depend on an articulation of the needs and demands of local authorities, or are transfers made unilaterally by central authorities? In general, allocations are made by central authorities based on macro-level data on enrolments, teachers' salaries, and funding of additional infrastructure, depending on the availability of resources. Some countries have arrived at fairly sophisticated formulae for allocating resources to different local units. For example, Brazil presents a unique approach to funding, based on a minimum pupil/year amount, additional funds being distributed to schools based on a pupil/year value.

> *Based on the amount of the fund's [FUNDEF] resources in each state, a pupil/year value is calculated and money is passed on to state and municipal education systems according to the number of enrolments registered. Exclusively local taxes are not included in FUNDEF, but states and municipalities are obliged to devote to education 25% of their revenues, of which each must contribute 60% to primary education. This approach, in addition to ensuring a better distribution of resources in each state, also works towards reducing regional inequalities based on a minimum pupil/year amount. In those states where pupil/year expenditure does not reach the minimum amount laid down, the Federal Government guarantees to top up the resources. ... [This] has brought substantial benefits to the poorest areas of the country, which have the greatest number of children outside school and show the worst quality indicators in primary education.*

In India, in order to bring about greater responsiveness to local needs, each district is required to prepare a District Elementary Education Plan and present a budget, annual as well as long term. Central Funds are allocated, based on the demands placed by different districts in the plan proposals. How

responsive they are to local needs, of course, would depend on the process through which the plans are prepared and on how they are finally implemented.

5.2 Empowering local units with financial powers

In most countries, while implementation and general management powers are transferred to local units, devolution of financial powers is slow to come. In large countries with several layers of public administration between the national authorities and the school, financial decision-making becomes more and more complex. Decentralization of financial powers demands greater levels of transparency and more effective control mechanisms at all levels. It is often because of apprehensions of misuse and wasteful, unaccounted expenditure that central authorities hesitate to empower local units with respect to finance. This also calls for proper institutional arrangements to handle financial resources at the local level, independently, along with appropriate accountability mechanisms. It is probably for this reason that the recent Devolution Plan in Pakistan gives such a narrow financial role to subdistrict units:

> *The responsibility for all those schools that had been under the town/municipal authorities has been given to the district government. The same is the case with regard to the Union Councils. Consequently the responsibilities of the district government have increased tremendously, for which additional resources are required, and the capacity of district governments for managing the requirements of financial devolution is critical to its success.*

Brazil set up representative committees to ensure effective use of public funds at the local level:

> *The creation of FUNDEF helped to reduce problems in terms of the application of resources. With the new definition of what may be considered as educational expenditure, sums distributed by the fund are deposited in a special account, which has noticeably improved public control of the use of resources. To this end, the Constitutional Amendment that created FUNDEF also requires the setting up of councils composed of representatives of civil society and the various levels of government, to regulate expenditure.*

It is important to recognize that institutional mechanisms as well as the decentralization process have to evolve over a period of time. A fail-safe blueprint for decentralization cannot be expected. This is clearly the experience of most countries, which are particularly cautious with respect to financial decentralization. However, decentralization carries very little meaning for local stakeholders if responsibilities are not accompanied by resources and some freedom to utilize funds.

> *It is important to draw attention to the complexity of the Brazilian reality, which has involved successful as well as unsuccessful experiences in the municipalization of education. Unsuccessful results have involved the transfer of responsibilities without any guarantee of the necessary reallocation of financial resources. Such situations have reinforced proposals such as FUNDEB and its important redistributive characteristic, i.e. guaranteeing the transfer of financial resources, the key to reducing education inequalities in the country.*

In most countries, however, not much freedom is given to local units for raising revenues or reallocating funds according to local requirements. As stated in the India report:

> *Local governments have not been provided with revenue-raising, spending and regulatory authority commensurate with their responsibility. The local self-governments depend mainly on central and state funding for their activities. In other words, fiscal decentralization is weak in almost all states. ... In most cases, funds to local governments flow as conditional transfers and grants often earmarked by functions of specific development schemes, thereby leaving little scope to make decisions on the reallocation of such funds depending on local needs. In such situations, local governments act as mere spending agents of the higher-level governments/state government. In this sense, there is deconcentration rather than decentralization of fiscal management in almost all states. State and district authorities continue to retain most of the decision-making powers relating to expenditure by local governments.*

As mentioned in the Brazilian report, increasing inequality is another fear that holds back the decentralization of financial powers. It is essential that the arrangement ensures better distribution, keeping equity concerns in central focus. There is no commonly applicable approach for ensuring equity and

appropriate distribution. While most countries keep sight of the problem of inequity in formulating allocation and expenditure norms, some of them have also launched special programmes to address problems of existing inequality in educational development.

> *As a follow-up to the Action Outline of EFA in China issued in 1993, a 'Project of Compulsory Education in National Poor Areas' was launched from 1995, lasting until 2000. Between 1996 and 2000, the central government provided 3.9 billion yuan as a special grant to those poor areas and governments at both provincial and district levels provided more than 6 billion yuan. ... This project covered poor districts within twenty-one provinces, improving their educational conditions, such as rebuilding school buildings, buying teaching equipment, books and teaching materials and desks and chairs, and training teachers and principals.*

It should be recognized that most countries in the E-9 group have also been recipients of substantial amounts of external assistance. Such external funding, as is well known, brings with it norms for funding, on the one hand, and particular interpretations of decentralization, on the other. The merits and demerits of placing such extraneous conditions on norms and patterns of funding could be debated, but it is also important to note that such extrabudgetary funding sources have invariably offered greater freedom to experiment and to explore various mechanisms of fund flow and utilization. Indeed, routine funds from within government allocations are slow to reach the peripheral units, as they are subjected to high levels of bureaucratic control. It is with this in view that some countries have created special institutional arrangements, as reported by both Brazil and India, to facilitate the easy and timely transfer of funds to local units.

Overall, it may be concluded that decentralization of resource management is minimal. Wherever freedom is given to local units with respect to the use of funds, it has come with a requirement that resources be raised locally. It appears that a dual set of norms is emerging for the use of funds – one set for resources mobilized locally, and another for resources allocated by the state. Similarly, different norms are followed if the funds are from projects (extrabudgetary) or from the state budget. Should this be a cause for concern? In fact, such diversity, in the normal course of events, should be welcomed. However, we should guard against the emergence of a hierarchy of provision and programmes in a way that further aggravates the problem of inequity.

The reports present a variety of strategies that are being adopted in financing basic education activities at local level, but they also illustrate the fact that no arrangement could be termed final, as most countries are still struggling to establish an inclusive and equitable system of providing quality school education for all. Whatever the approach adopted, it is essential that finance issues be closely examined before embarking on decentralization. Furtado illustrates this point, taking the cases of Indonesia and the Philippines. 'There is an interesting contrast to be drawn here between the experiences of the Philippines and of Indonesia. The Philippines took considerable time enacting its decentralization legislation, writing up the local government code and implementing decentralization. This included considerable attention to resource requirements and to enabling regulations. While there have been problems, a great deal was done right in contrast to Indonesia, which is currently attempting the 'big bang' approach of moving from legislation to implementation' (Furtado, 2001).

6. Decentralization and EFA implementation

Decentralization is recommended as a remedy for many problems faced by public service provision in general, and of the education sector in particular. Decentralization is also recommended specifically as a strategy for the effective implementation of EFA. Earlier sections of this chapter examined the status of EFA in the E-9 countries as well as the steps taken in these countries to decentralize educational governance. This section presents an overview of the possible links between progress in EFA and decentralization, as observed in the ten countries under review. It also highlights some critical issues relating to the decentralization debate that directly impinge on governance reforms in the education sector. It would be dangerous to draw any generalizations, either on EFA or on decentralization, with respect to the ten countries under consideration, as they present a wide range of contexts and conditions. However, the large size of these countries presents common challenges, both for EFA implementation and the decentralization process. Their experiences in tackling the challenges should therefore hold important lessons for all.

Major observations emerging from the case studies

1. A brief review of the progress made in implementing EFA brings out a mixed picture. While the two American countries, Brazil and Mexico, have

made outstanding progress in ensuring almost universal participation of children in basic education, the situation seems to be most serious in the South Asian subcontinent. It should be noted that demographic considerations make it even more difficult for some of these countries to progress faster. Although China presents high levels of literacy and participation, the backlog in absolute numbers is still substantial. As large countries, two common problems are faced by all of them. One is that of internal disparities, especially affecting the education of marginalized groups and in underdeveloped geographical pockets. The second common problem is that of quality. Many countries struggling to reach full enrolment have been adopting practices such as the employment of underqualified, contract teachers and creating poorly equipped alternatives to schools, making the situation even more complex to tackle within the period of the next ten years, by 2015, to fulfil the commitments of the Dakar Framework.

2. Which countries have made better progress in reforming their governance towards decentralization? This is a complex question closely linked to the nature of the political-administrative framework. All countries have been striving to find the right balance between central control and the empowerment of peripheral units of administration. Moreover, governance reforms are never an 'open and shut' phenomenon. Most countries, generally, have adopted a cautious, gradualist approach. This is true of countries operating under federal as well as unitary frameworks. However, there are also some examples of what is called a 'big bang' approach of rewriting the rulebook and empowering local units through central decrees, as illustrated by recent developments in Indonesia and Pakistan. It is difficult to judge the appropriateness of either approach. However, whether the approach is externally designed, particularly by international donor agencies, or internally generated, through processes of consultation and consensus-building among stakeholders, both require careful examination from the perspective of the sustainability of the reforms. Going by what is presented in the reports, Brazil stands out as having made substantial progress in the decentralization of educational governance – not just delegation to local units through central decrees, but with appropriate legislation.

3. Differing political-administrative contexts in the countries under consideration is a significant factor promoting or hindering educational decentralization. It is unlikely that islands of democratic participation can be nurtured within larger political environments and public governance systems characterized by authoritarianism. This is probably the reason why, despite

enormous inputs and capacity building efforts in which national governments and the donor community have invested, there has not been much institutionalization of decentralized governance in many countries. Perhaps it would not be wrong to say that a vibrant democratic polity is necessary for decentralization processes to take shape and for local self-governance to be sustained as a way of life.

4. Decentralization measures with respect to teacher management are engaging the minds of policy-makers and administrators in all the countries. They have all effected some degree of deconcentration in this respect, but the situation varies widely across the ten countries.

(a) Determining qualification requirements and recruiting teachers is generally controlled by national/state governments. But, due to the inability to find qualified personnel, in some cases, and more often as a cost-saving measure, governments have allowed local bodies to perform these tasks in a selective fashion. We find the emergence of a dual-track approach to addressing these tasks. While recruitment to the mainstream teacher cadre, according to nationally prescribed qualification norms, is retained by central authorities, local bodies are being given the freedom to recruit teachers on short-term contracts from their local areas, who often do not possess the specified qualifications, according to the national norms, and who invariably receive only a fraction of a regular teacher's salary.

(b) There is much greater clarity on teacher deployment and control mechanisms. In fact, considerable decentralization has been effected in almost all countries in this regard. Once appointed by the government, teachers are posted to work within a specified local, geographical unit. Most of the teacher management issues at district level are handled by local self-government and the district education officer. There is also a move in some countries to empower committees at school and village levels to monitor teachers' work, particularly regarding regularity of attendance and other behavioural aspects. Although doubts are expressed about the effectiveness of such committees without adequate legislative back-up, experiences from the field indicate that they contribute significantly to improving the efficiency of the system.

(c) Teacher supervision and support, on the whole, is a weak area. Some countries have moved to establish teacher support centres to provide on-site help and guidance to teachers, but quite often the roles and

functions of these units remain vague. Further, coordination between these academic units and administrative wings within the education department leaves much to be desired. A second observation concerning teacher supervision is that, typically, it works through a steep hierarchy beginning with the head teacher and running to the departmental authorities and specialists working at state and national levels. Consequently, recommendations based on field observations do not easily translate into actions for improving the work of teachers or for taking any remedial action in schools.

(d) Some countries are attempting to establish a system of school-based management, which gives greater autonomy and latitude for local managers to impact on the work of teachers. Such management systems have also introduced collective accountability at school level, instead of traditional supervision, which is characterized by finding fault with individual teachers. However, school-based management is just in the early stages, even in these two or three countries, and cannot be judged either on its impact or in terms of its reception by the teaching community.

5. Decentralization of the management of financial resources is moving very slowly in most countries. This should not surprise anyone. Decentralization demands new institutional arrangements and new skills for handling the tasks at local levels. In general, authorities are apprehensive about the capacity of the incumbents of local offices to deal with financial issues. Further, if such powers are devolved to lower levels through legislation, it entails the disempowerment of the central authorities, and in many cases the empowering of elected representatives at the local levels. It is not easy for the political elites, nor for powerful bureaucrats at the central level, to digest such changes. However, the reports point to some emerging trends in many countries of the group.

(a) Mobilization of financial resources by local authorities to supplement central funding is still seen as a major function of decentralization. This is evident from the freedom granted to local authorities with respect to teacher recruitment and the creation of additional infrastructure in a selective fashion, only when such actions at the local level reduce the financial burden on the state. Some countries are trying to move away from this perception and practice, realizing the negative impact it has on equity, particularly as most countries in the group are already saddled with high levels of regional education

disparities. However, several other countries are just beginning to embrace this approach. It is indeed ironic that such reforms are introduced essentially under the banner of decentralization.

(b) In terms of decentralizing powers to local bodies for using resources, there is not much movement in most countries. In most cases norms are nationally prescribed, even when block grants are transferred to local units or district-level budgets are drawn up. There is a pervasive feeling that truly empowering local authorities in resource utilization would create serious issues of financial accountability and leave open discrediting audit trails. Again, it would seem that school-based management, which includes budget-making responsibility at school level, is the only approach that is finding favour with policy-makers as a means of decentralization, offering some voice for local authorities in school development.

(c) Externally funded projects, no doubt, are playing a major role in reconfiguring many aspects of financial management in many countries' education sectors. In most cases, this includes decentralizing decision-making to local units. Such externally funded projects, in particular, are also influencing the nature of decentralization in many countries. For example, such approaches as formula funding or direct grants to schools and teachers are finding their way into planning parlance in many countries through the offices of international aid agencies.

(d) National authorities view the absence of dependable institutional structures with established capabilities as a barrier to the decentralization of financial powers to local units. This, of course, is a 'chicken and egg' dilemma. Having been subjected to highly centralized arrangements in which peripheral units were only to implement prescriptions from above, it takes time to learn many tasks through practice.

7. Conclusions

Whether under the influence of international agencies or because of internally generated policy, it is clear that more and more countries are working out modalities to decentralize education. The trend is likely to increase in years to come, demanding a better understanding of the value of decentralization and developing a sound theoretical basis from which to interpret the outcomes of the processes involved. It is, therefore, worthwhile to make a periodic overview of the accumulated experiences and examine the critical issues

involved in the process of decentralization. Further, we can easily recognize that the decentralization process in education is still in a fluid state. What shape it will take depends on the way policy-makers conceive of the nature of a decentralized framework for education planning and management.

Decentralization is not new to any of the countries under review. While the countries have continued their policy commitment to decentralization in educational governance, the motive for endorsing decentralization measures seems to have undergone sharp changes. In the early stages of nation building, 'power to the people' and 'grass-roots participation' were basic credos to be valued and implemented in their own right. The legitimacy of such propositions never came up for critical examination. Why should a change in the motives underlying decentralization be a matter of concern? A closer examination of the issue raises several questions of significance to all the countries. First, it is clear that in many cases, the re-emergence of interest in decentralization has been directly prompted by pressures and conditionalities placed by international donor agencies. What is the value and long-term impact of such enforcement by external agencies? The implantation of extraneous ideas and mechanisms can prove to be counter-productive, if they are not congruent with the local culture and ethos. Second, it is important to recognize that changing social organizational patterns in any country is an arduous, time-consuming task, which demands patience and understanding on the part of the agencies involved, national and international agencies alike. Unfortunately, more often than not, the agents of change and development, operating under tight schedules of implementation and evaluation of impact, fail to appreciate this basic fact. Also, increasingly, in official discourse, one can detect traces, of ideological 'leadership', an attempt to hegemonize a certain reading of decentralization, to deploy it as a watchword, to utilize it in the creation of consent around privatization and deregulation (George, 1988). The effect of such policies is quite easily discernible in Pakistan and Bangladesh, long-standing recipients of international aid for basic education. As mentioned above, Bangladesh stopped opening government primary schools almost fifteen years ago. The task of providing education for all was to be borne by private fee-charging schools,[13] which received subventions

[13] The space vacated by the government under international donor pressure is being filled by traditional 'venture schools' (officially known as Registered Non-Government Primary Schools), often opened by enterprising families as a source of income-cum-social-service. The quality of many of these schools is dismal.

from the government towards teachers' salaries and were not obliged to follow government norms for teachers' qualifications, salaries and service conditions. Again, with the aggressive policies for privatization introduced since the 1990s, the proportion of private institutions in education in Pakistan has quickly risen; overall the private sector accounts for around 30% of all educational institutions. It is not that the poor in these countries have become much richer; economic growth indicators do not point to any such dramatic upturn of fortune. Rather, people are being pushed into desperate situations as they try to educate their children by whatever means available. The developments are quite intriguing, given the international movement for 'education for all', supposedly premised on the principle of free and compulsory education for all children.

7.1 Does decentralization really ensure community empowerment and civil society participation?

Decentralization is built on the core premise that people have the right to make decisions for themselves. Therefore, their participation is critical for development. Even if the motive is utilitarian, the involvement of the community is seen as a basic prerequisite to creating a sense of ownership and thereby improving the efficiency of the system. Is this evident from the experiences portrayed in the country reports? Evidence from different countries is mixed. At the formal level, all countries have initiated specific measures to bring the school and the community closer. Strengthening of parent-teacher associations and the creation of empowered village education committees and school management committees in several countries are a clear illustration of this move. The formation of such grass-roots mechanisms marks the first necessary step towards community involvement, but may not prove sufficient to ensure their role in educational governance. Reports from Bangladesh and India reveal that even though school-level committees were considered important, they were not active in many places. The situation is

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Furthermore, even though they account for around 40% of all primary schools in Bangladesh, the enrolment they cater for is not proportional. Government schools are becoming more and more crowded, with a teacher/pupil ratio of around 1:66. Private schools have an average teacher/pupil ratio of around 1:55. The private sector is not expanding, and privatization has not reduced the pressure on government schools. A new breed of unregistered non-government primary school is fast expanding.

similar in most other countries. This may also depend, however, on what roles are assigned to such grass-roots committees. For example, in Bangladesh, 'such committees are mainly confined to the preparation and updating of the list of eligible students for enrolment, motivating the parents, and supervising the attendance of learners' (Rahman, 1997). By themselves, these tasks may not be sufficiently attractive to mobilize the participation of the community in school management.

In order to ensure effective community participation in educational governance, it is necessary to begin with a realistic understanding of the community characteristics in different countries. This is essential because, 'ideologues of education decentralization frequently assume a dichotomy between a socially organic local community and the nation state, and the local community tends to be defined in ideal terms corresponding, for instance, to an Athenian conception of participatory democracy' (Lauglo and McLean, 1985). Such assumptions may not be relevant in many countries. The contention that rural communities are composite and cohesive is not valid. Studies of villages have indicated group formations, not only on the basis of economic and political interests, but more often on the basis of caste, religion and ethnic composition. Therefore, we should not approach local self-government institutions from a romantic view of communities, but from the point of view of endemic and continuous conflicts of group and individual interests and constantly shifting alignments and loyalties. Education policy-makers and administrators are ill-equipped to live and deal with situations of conflict (Dhar, 1997). It should be recognized that communities in a village or a small geographical unit carry multiple identities – depending on what is at stake. Can we assume that education decision-making is such an area of activity that it cuts across the interests of the whole village or the city? (Vinay et al., 2001).

In fact, such observations are not new. One of the major apprehensions of most observers of decentralization in general is that of 'elite capture'. There is always the fear of grass-roots institutions being captured by the local elites for their own benefits and with the resultant perpetuation of existing inequalities. Interestingly, this is very similar to the observations made many decades ago on the issue.[14]

[14] Elaborating on this issue in the context of India, Myrdal (1968) writes, 'Another hope inspired and initiated from the centre is that a system of locally elected bodies, the *panchayat raj*, better known under the label 'democratic decentralisation' or 'democratic planning', will encourage the masses to participate in the management of local affairs and

But the problem may not be insurmountable. Learning from past experience, the Indian Constitution was recently amended to ensure that membership of such local self-governing bodies becomes more inclusive, with adequate representation of marginalized groups and women. The Devolution Plan of 2001 in Pakistan also attempted to introduce such protective measures to combat elite capture. Generally, community participation is best served when people join hands on a voluntary basis, not through a fiat of the state, even if it involves open elections. It is here that the value would be appreciated of treating the governance transformation process as not just a technical but a socio-political process; of 'building from below', which essentially begins by galvanizing and organizing the society in an inclusive manner for common goals around educational issues.

7.2 Is absence of a capacity for self-governance a real barrier to decentralization?

Changed institutional arrangements and empowered local bodies naturally usher new actors into various positions and demand new knowledge and skill orientations from the incumbents. Traditionally, such requirements have been highlighted for local actors. In fact, capacity building for local governance has attracted tremendous attention from all quarters in recent years. It is not unusual to find top-level leaders arguing for withholding powers to local functionaries on the pretext that they do not possess the necessary capacities. A classic example is that of Bangladesh, where the debate does not seem to have moved forward at all.[15] This is not unique to Bangladesh as the theme has been recurring in the literature ever since decentralization became fashionable, at least from the mid-1980s, when international donor agencies began advocating capacity building of decentralized units as a basic prerequisite in all educational development projects. A pertinent question very

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thereby weaken the power of the local political bosses. … the most conspicuous immediate effect of such efforts has been to strengthen the grip of the rural elite, the self-elected boss class, over the masses. Whenever locally elected bodies are given powers worth scrambling for, they are almost invariably run in the interests of the dominant caste in land and wealth. The system of *panchayat raj*, like the basic democracies in Pakistan, has not, in general, thrown up any new leadership in rural areas.'

[15] Both Rahman in 1997 and Khanam and Sattar in 2004 (Bangladesh study) refer to the same issue as hindering decentralization.

rarely raised, though, in this context is: 'who needs capacity building for local governance?' Is it only the local level officials and community members?

Traditional strategies and programmes for capacity building have focused almost exclusively on launching training programmes, especially for community leaders and grass-roots functionaries. It is necessary to look beyond this narrow framework. Developing capacities also means that people (often working in groups, organizations and systems) have to change the way they do things and interact. Over time, incremental capacities are built through on-the-job learning and skills development, improved access to information and formal and informal training. The right policy, cultural, organizational and incentive mix must allow this to continue over time. But the critical issue is that much of the capacity building activities in decentralization, whether in E-9 countries or elsewhere, are dependent on major education development projects that are time-bound. How do we sustain capacity-building activities beyond such projects?

A final issue to be addressed is: 'Should the practice of local governance wait for capacity building?' It is ironic that the argument for decentralization often begins by highlighting how it would help to bring more people into the fold of education and thereby improve the overall educational status of the community. However, when actual empowerment of the local community is to happen, the very same argument is turned around; low educational development of the local population is put forward as the main obstacle. The real challenge is how to break this vicious cycle. It is obvious that taking cover under lack of capacity as the basis for refusing to decentralize is self-defeating and likely to become a self-fulfilling prophecy. How can people acquire capabilities if they have no opportunity to practise them? It is important to recognize that decentralization represents a way of living and not just a technical strategy (Govinda, 2001). Also, when there is citizen participation and transparency in decision-making, limited budgeting, auditing and accounting systems at the subnational level should not be considered a barrier to decentralization. These technical capabilities can be borrowed from higher levels of government (Shah, 1998). It is desirable that any move towards decentralization is accompanied by a long-term strategy that allows local officials and community members to develop, through experiential learning, the capabilities necessary for decentralization to succeed as a regular part of their daily life. There is no quick way to build capacities and deploy trained people to implement decentralization measures. Inevitably, it is a gradual process of transformation. At the heart of this process is the attitudinal

reorientation of all concerned for rebuilding faith in the imperative of allowing people at the periphery to manage their own affairs, more significantly, with a minimum of central diktat. If establishing a democratic lifestyle in educational governance is the final goal, people learn through practice/experience; training alone will not do. Mistakes are part of the learning process; we cannot have a perfect launch and implementation of decentralization.

Finally, decentralization is bound to bring with it some degree of uncertainty, if not chaos, unleashing a new social dynamic at grass-roots level and demanding redefinition of the political roles of national leadership, as well as restructuring of the power equations among actors at all levels. Feelings of loss, powerlessness and frustration will naturally accompany the process. This applies not only to political actors, but also to members of the bureaucracy, and even to teachers, especially in their collective manifestation through associations and unions. Preparing for tackling this ensuing uncertainty, dissatisfaction and temporary confusion is critical. Without such preparation, the situation may be reversed quickly, quoting the difficulties involved and the failure of the new arrangements. Often such difficulties become self-fulfilling prophecies for the powerful leadership, which initiates the process as a top-down transformation. Therefore, it is essential to have patience and to consistently adopt the new arrangements, for a reasonably long period of time, in order that convergence between the long-term vision and short-term actions be achieved. Only then will decentralization measures succeed and become an integral part of the education system in any country.

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Chapter 2:
Main Issues Discussed

The seminar agenda is reproduced in Annex 2. Following the opening speeches, discussion focused on a number of issues surrounding the presentations and working groups.

1. Discussion of Synthesis Paper (Chapter 1)

Firstly, whether decentralization promotes efficiency was queried. Because of the need for decentralized capacity building, it was put forward that efficiency outcomes could be contentious. However, this was followed up by the question of the relationship between decentralization and the geographically large, populous E-9 countries. Decentralization was seen to be necessary for reasons of legitimacy in such countries.

Another question, focused on 'big bang' decentralization in Indonesia, put forward the dilemma of accountability: how, for instance, block grants to district government can be channelled into formula-based funding for schools, given the typically greater power of local planning offices as compared with district-level education offices. Three further, related questions followed:

- What kind of capacity building is needed at the community level?
- What can be done to counter the problem of frequent transfers of educational professionals?
- What kind of policy should be introduced to increase flexibility in the use of funding by schools and increasing accountability at the same time?

Fund management, it was recognized, is a problem everywhere. However, the transition from the District Primary Education Program in India to Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan merits attention for the lessons that can be derived with regard to institutional capacity building. Formula funding or direct support to schools often leads to defunct administration, necessitating a redefinition of the district. There was some reflection on the Brazilian educational

decentralization: municipalization was not able to build managerial systems, so fragmentation occurred.

A participant alleged that EFA was only for developing countries and that decentralization, as carried out frequently was a means of mobilizing additional school finance. Did this mean that in effect, there would then be a dual system, one for the poor and one for the developed sections of society? Also, it was stated that decentralization generally implies: think globally, plan nationally and implement locally. In China there are several levels, so it was asked to which levels should decentralization be applied? The notion of EFA being only for developing countries was refuted, as was the implicit idea that there was a formula for the appropriate level of decentralization. The Bangladesh experience was put forward as an example of a predominantly government primary subsector alongside a predominantly non-governmental secondary subsector.

The point was raised that it was important to see educational decentralization against the wider spectrum of public sector decentralization more generally, and that one would need to include in that spectrum the private sector, NGOs, and, indeed, religious schools, such as the *madrasas*. One could not have islands of democratic management in a decentralized education system that itself was in a sea of centralization. Of concern was what protection of minorities would be in-built to such systemic decentralization if the decisions were being made by the majorities. Power-sharing of this sort, it was stated, takes a long time; diversity can still be retained. However, patience for consultation is required, and where the driving force behind decentralization is international finance, international finance is seldom patient.

The difficulty of getting reliable data in large, decentralized countries was discussed, data on teachers, for instance, due to community involvement in appointments in some countries, together with the rising phenomenon of contract teachers.

2. State-level presentations and discussion

Four different notions of decentralized teacher and resource management were presented in this session. In the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, decentralized technological resource support was described, whereby a cluster put in charge of a group of schools would visit the schools in order to give model demonstrations and to evaluate student performance. Such

decentralized support had had a positive impact on teachers' attendance and teaching quality. Additionally, focusing on those blocks with very low girls' literacy enabled planners to develop context-specific strategies to get girls into school. Further, teacher deployment to remote areas was handled differently from urban areas, employing local people and giving them intensive 60-day training courses. This resulted in increased enrolments in such areas normally hard to reach with qualified teachers. The lesson presented is that teacher deployment needs to be context-specific. In the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh, the construction of better resourced residential schools having lower pupil-teacher ratios, higher teacher salaries and more nutritious food was described as a highly successful means of ensuring access for marginalized girls, in contrast with the alternative, and also successful application of contextualized curriculum and maternal language described in Chapter 7.

Comments on the two state-level presentations included the following ideas. The Pakistani experience of empowering school management councils was related. In addition, it was explained that compensation is given to teachers who teach 22 working days. Both factors have contributed to a reduction in teacher absenteeism. Further, the mid-day meals given to girls living in surrounding areas has been a successful means of attracting them to schools.

3. Discussion: reaching marginalized population groups

Discussion of the two Indian papers presented at the seminar on the education of marginalized population groups included the exchange of many different ideas and experiences. One of the issues of concern was how the standard of textbooks is ensured when multiple texts are produced to meet the needs of marginalized groups, both with respect to content and language. It was explained that the production of textbooks for 'tribal' groups was a collaborative effort between the State Centre for Educational Research and Training and the Tribal Cultural Resource Institute. It was also explained that the process of material development, which involved locals and the learners themselves, took over a year. In response to a question concerning the need to allocate sufficient resources to what are likely to be relatively small scale, and therefore costly production of individualized texts, it was explained that the credibility of the programme ensured that resources were not a constraint, and further, that the cost of the 'tribal' texts was not exorbitant, only 25% more than the cost of the standard state texts.

The motives for tribal groups accepting an educational programme written by non-tribals were queried. It was explained that although the Tribal Cultural Resource Institute took a lead role, it involved the target group, and overcoming the language barrier with the use of a tribal language bridged the gap between home and school. The content of the curriculum developed out of dialogue with the tribal groups and the teachers, and this has contributed not only to the preservation of their languages, but also to the self-worth of the tribal groups.

The report of *The Siasat Daily* Urdu-medium newspaper on its contributions to providing education to girls and women from the minority Muslim community in the city of Hyderabad led to a rich discussion beginning with the question of whether linking a particular language (Urdu) with a particular religion (Islam) might not lead to further social fragmentation. It was also queried whether a programme that relies solely on philanthropic contributions can be sustainable. SIASAT is filling gaps in the state literacy programmes, and has attracted interest even from Union ministers who have looked at its programmes for possible transfer to other minority population groups. It was explained that the limited government funding that had been made available for some of its projects initially, was thought to prejudice its broader development work, so the position was taken that the government could either fully support its programmes or not at all. Through SIASAT's initiatives preparing people for moving into the job market, the transition from Education for All, to Education for Employment has been captured. The importance of dialogue between NGOs and government was underlined, to build more effective partnerships between government and civil society in improving educational services. There was some discussion of Koranic literacy programmes, such as those in Pakistan, in which great strides are made in only a few months. The interesting example of grandchildren teaching their grandmothers, supported by SIASAT, was also described.

4. Working Groups

Three working groups convened to discuss in greater detail the specific issues raised both in the national reports and the seminar presentations. These groups comprised: teacher deployment and rationalization and school-based management; EFA and marginalized groups; and resource mobilization and management.

4.1 Teacher deployment and rationalization

The summary points presented by the teacher deployment and rationalization group included the following list of ideas:

- Additional legislative measures
- Disaggregated database
- Following national norms while recruiting teachers at local level
- Appointment to the school
- Introducing teacher appraisal system
- Linking teacher performance with career progression – creating fast-track promotional avenue based on performance and accountability
- Review of recruitment policy of additional teachers
- Introducing professional development programmes for teachers, accessible at the lowest unit of decentralization
- Learning from each other, that is, creating a teachers' forum or any other arrangement to facilitate peer learning
- Teacher utilization: strengthening monitoring at community level; better transport facilities; incentives; residential facilities in remote areas; improve working conditions in schools; making teachers accountable to immediate user groups
- Building managerial capacities of head teacher
- Strengthening the system of teacher grievance redressal
- Networking with NGOs, CSOs and private sector for capacity building of teachers
- Promoting, documenting, disseminating, teacher-led innovations and best practices

4.2 School-based management

And equally, on school-based management:

- Structure and policy reforms
- School improvement plan and plan for supervision and assessment
- Devolve/delegate administrative power to school-level bodies
- Provide skill and managerial training to members of school level bodies
- Making these bodies accountable to district/county/ provincial/ local government
- Creating school forum

- Creating school-level data base for planning and management

The plenary discussion around school-based management noted that in many countries it comprises predominantly externally-funded pilot schemes, not brought to scale, and thus that had not gone through the necessary political process of endorsement. Further, there was some controversy over the use of formula funding versus devolving more resource allocation decision-making powers to the school level. Some felt that what is needed is not direction from on high, but rather, increased facilitation at the school level. The use of formula funding where capacities are weak can serve to alienate the school improvement planning process. Instead of its serving a development purpose, it often becomes focused primarily on fund-raising.

4.3 EFA and marginalized groups

The EFA and marginalization group began by asking, 'What is a marginalized group? They came up with the following points:

- inability to access formal basic education
- less attention given to certain groups of people
- denied opportunities
- neglected sections of society with regard to basic learning needs
- isolation

They moved on to discuss 'Why consider marginalized groups?' and noted the following reasons:

- EFA is about equity, which will be lost if any groups are marginalized
- EFA cannot be achieved without providing access to all populations
- EFA cannot be achieved if certain groups are excluded from quality education

The marginalized groups were then categorized. The term was seen to be wide in scope and dynamic, being affected by:

- geographic location
- socio-cultural conditions
- socio-economic conditions
- religious groups

The following groups were then identified:

- gender – women
- religious groups
- ethnic and linguistic minorities
- populations in poverty – child labourers
- migrants
- disabled
- HIV/AIDS affected
- single-parent families
- caste system (India)
- highland dwellers (India, Nigeria, China)
- rural settlements
- minority language groups in multilingual countries (India, Nigeria, China, Bangladesh)
- scheduled tribes (India)

Beginning with what has been done (below), the list continued as to what more could be done for such groups:

- diversified strategies needed, depending on countries, time and circumstances
- legislative guarantees
- mainstreaming
- separate provision (languages, curriculum)
- community involvement (self-help projects in India and Nigeria)
- civil society organization interventions (NGOs, private sector, philanthropists, etc.)
- targeted projects by central governments (scholarships, establishment of schools in marginalized areas – nomadic education in Nigeria)
- external support (development partners)

What more can be done?

- political and social reforms
- intensified and practical government commitment
- defined responsibilities under decentralized systems

- better coordination and collaboration between various stakeholders to achieve synergy
- improved transparency and accountability in resource management at all levels
- improved data collection and data management
- improved partnership between researchers, policy-makers and practitioners
- capacity building
- enabling EFA implementers at different levels to perform their new roles and functions
- increased financial and technical support from international development partners
- more attention given to sustainability aspect of programmes

Discussion of the marginalized group presentation focused on a number of different issues: the need for political commitment to ensure that the needs of the marginalized are a political priority; inclusion into non-formal education, and not just formal education; adding to marginalized groups detainees, and servants; and finally, the important issue of education being part of a wider agenda of social protection, and not just one of education alone.

4.4 Resource mobilization and management

The presentation of the group on resource mobilization and management, instead of encompassing the diverse views of its members, became a platform for one approach, presented here. Dissenting views were expressed in the plenary discussion.

Three issues were identified:

- low education allocations;
- lack of timely availability of funds;
- lack of full and optimal utilization of funds.

It was explained that the low allocations were due to the following factors: lack of norms and standards; low priority given to education; and lack of political will compared with other sectors. Three solutions were put forward: school-based budgeting and planning; application of norms and standardized

allocations; and equalization of budgetary deficits through central government or external finance.

The lack of timely availability of funds was explained by the following factors: that instalment releases were inadequate for needs; procedural delays; lack of effective planning; and low utilization of funds in the previous quarter. The suggested solutions included: whole fund release at the beginning of the year or in two instalments; the improvement of financial procedures including their simplification and being made more user-friendly.

The lack of full and optimal utilization of funds was explained in the following way: as due to too rigid financial accountability rules and regulations; a lack of absorptive capacity; and the interdependence of development programmes (e.g. matching grants). The solutions put forward included: improved absorptive capacity; the introduction of decentralized management and implementation; the simplification of financial rules and regulations; and the institutionalized training imposed by a monitoring system.

Dissenting views expressed the lack of representation of the problems of their systems in the above description, given the importance placed here on central allocations. For instance resource mobilization is not dealt with, e.g. from the communities, nor in the above description is there any mention made of corruption or lack of transparency, a problem experienced by many in the decentralization of resource management. The resultant inequities caused by an over-reliance on community mobilization, however, were noted, as was the awkward situation created when central government attempts to penalize those districts, which do not make good use of central allocations: this can lead to a vicious circle for disadvantaged regions.

PART 2:

NATIONAL REPORTS

Chapter 3:
Democratizing the Policies and Management of Brazilian Education: Structure, Finance, Evaluation and Teacher Training[16]

1. Introduction

From the point of view of organization and management, the present system of education in Brazil is the result of profound changes in the process of reforming the state, and the fruit of changes introduced in 1988 with the introduction of the Constitution of the Federative Republic of Brazil and, in 1996, with the passing of the law of Guidelines and Foundations of National Education (LDB - *Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional* – Law No. 9,394/96). In addition, mention must be made of the approval of the National Plan for Education (PNE – Plano Nacional de Educação)[17] in 2001.

These laws were passed in Brazil in order to guarantee guidelines and foundations for the country's education and thus establish norms for the organization and management of the different levels and types of national education, as well as actions and policies to be implemented to guarantee school access, school retention, and democratic management, as well as quality of education. It is particularly worth noting the linkage of these actions to efforts to fulfil the collective promises made by Brazil in the World Forum on Education (Dakar, April 2000) concerning the guarantee of education for all and the six Dakar goals. With this commitment in mind, in the case of Brazil, the coordination of these actions and policies to guarantee education as

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[17] The National Plan for Education (Plano Nacional de Educação – PNE) was approved by Law No. 10,172 (9 January 2001), valid from 2001 to 2010. This state plan was approved by the legislative power (chamber of deputies and federal senate), and is the result of a constitutional and legal mandate encompassing the different levels and types of national education. The formulation of corresponding ten-year plans by the state, Federal District and municipalities has been decided by the law instituting the PNE.

a social right of the citizen, is the role of the Union acting through the Ministry of Education[18] (MEC) in conjunction with state and municipal governments. According to the 1988 Federal Constitution of Brazil, education is a social right. According to Article 205 of the Federal Constitution, education involves the complete development of the person, his or her training to exercise citizenship and his or her qualification for work. The 1988 Constitution therefore lays down the basis of the country's educational organization, sets out rights and duties, demarcates competencies and attributions, regulates financing and defines the principles of: pluralism, freedom and democratic management.

The Federal Government has adopted as a priority in its policies and management the guarantee of involvement and participation of civil society in the formulation and implementation of actions and programmes working to improve education at different levels and of different types. To this end, various meetings, seminars, talks and other forms of participation and democratic action have been carried out to create channels for collective discussion to put forward propositions, strategies and solutions to guarantee education for all in accordance with legal requirements and especially within the aims of the National Plan for Education.

2. Brazilian Education System

The Brazilian education system, as described in the Federal Constitution and as it has developed historically, is characterized by the division of responsibilities between federal, state and municipal powers in terms of the definition of competencies, attributes and financing of the different levels and types of national education. Nevertheless, this structure does not necessarily mean that the system is fully decentralized. The decentralization process is quite complex, involving different areas and systems of education and schools, together with all the supporting and financial and redistributive

[18] The Ministry of Education consists of the following secretariats: Basic Education Secretariat (SEB), Vocational and Technological Secretariat (Setec), Higher Education Secretariat (Sesu), Distance Learning Secretariat (Seed), Special Education Secretariat (Seesp), Secretariat for Continuing Education, Literacy and Diversity (Secad) and also the Co-ordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (Capes), the Anísio Teixeira National Institute for Educational Studies and Research (INEP) and the National Educational Development Fund (FNDE).

actions and programmes. The effectiveness of some of these decentralized programmes should be emphasized, for example: (1) the aim of the Money Direct to the School Programmes is to improve teaching and the physical infrastructure in schools by passing funds directly to public schools in state and municipal primary school systems. This programme endeavours to guarantee, in a supplementary manner, the maintenance of the school in order that it may better attend to the needs of its work, with the involvement of the school community; (2) the Upkeep of School Buildings Programmes aims to ensure, by providing money, the achievement of minimum standards of functioning in public schools as a basic precondition for teaching and learning to take place properly; (3) the National School Book Programmes coordinates the inscription, evaluation, choice, acquisition, production, distribution and monitoring of textbooks for pupils in public primary schools throughout the country; (4) the aim of the National School Meals Programmes (Programa Nacional de Alimentação Escolar – PNAE) is to provide school meals in the public system by means of automatic transfer of funds to all municipalities. The decentralization of the programmes in some states and municipalities has reached school level.

In the case of Brazil, effective decentralization is a great challenge because of the consolidation of the move towards federalism in the Brazilian state[19] and the democratization of power and decision-making processes in its different organizational structures. The law declares that the Union, states, Federal District and municipalities must organize their education systems in cooperation with each other, which implies the establishment of general directives, definitions of competencies, financial policies, etc.

In this regard, taking into account current legislation, it is the responsibility of the Union to coordinate national education policy linked to the different levels and systems, and to perform a normative, redistributive and supplementary function in relation to other areas of education. Within this scenario, municipal government must provide early childhood education in crèches and pre-school institutions, and, as a priority, primary education. It falls to individual state governments to provide primary education and, as a priority, secondary education. The Union (Federal Government), as the coordinator of national education policy, must among other functions give specialist and

[19] Brazil is a Federal Republic made up of twenty-six states, the Federal District and more than 5,500 municipalities.

financial assistance to the states, Federal District and municipalities for the development of their education systems and priority provision of compulsory schooling, by carrying out its redistributive and supplementary function and also establishing, by means of collaborative activity, competencies and directives for early childhood, primary and secondary education which will direct curricula in order to guarantee basic common training.

The private sector offers education at different levels and of different kinds, in accordance with national educational legislation and the laws concerning the respective education systems. The role of the Union is fundamental in the processes of regulating and evaluating private and basic and higher education. In this respect, it is the responsibility of the federal system to provide the norms for federal and private higher education and of states and municipalities to regulate directives for basic education.

Changes however, are being made within basic and higher education, especially in terms of patterns of organization and management, of financing, of the dynamic of the curriculum, the implementation of procedures of participation and democratic management in public schools, which will provide less centralized management structures. In this respect, it is worth emphasizing the manner in which the Union has returned to playing a role in a more collaborative coordination of the process of defining national education policies and directives, with the participation of states and municipalities; the establishment of partnerships between different spheres of government, especially of the Ministry of Education with civil society; the redistribution of financial resources in order to guarantee equality in education; the monitoring, control and evaluation of the performance of the education system; the adoption of decentralizing measures aimed at creating universal basic education, especially at primary level; specialist help for education systems by means of programmes and projects and by disseminating information concerning successful experiments at different levels and in different types of school, etc.

This process has been the result of policies already established or is under development in different areas, levels and types of the national school system. In this context, current policies adopted by the Federal Government are working through the Ministry of Education and in accordance with the Federal Constitution, the LDB and PNE and in collaboration with municipal and state governments to achieve, among other objectives: the implementation of efforts towards guaranteeing the offer of early childhood education to children from the ages 0 to 6, breaking up with the predominant character of

assistance existing in that education level; making primary education universal and progressively expanding secondary and higher education; prioritizing provision for those with special educational needs in mainstream education and challenging the tendency towards segregation in the area of a special education; guaranteeing the participation of indigenous communities in the definition of their schooling, at the same time as seeking to satisfy the demand for bilingual, specific, differentiated and intercultural education; implementing training methods for young people and adults in order to bridge the social divide within the country in terms of those who have not had access to or continuity in their studies at the appropriate age, while at the same time guaranteeing access to different levels of education with a social quality. Thus, Brazil is implementing policies and actions that attempt to guarantee the expansion of education at all levels and all types, while it has almost achieved universal access to primary education.

In terms of organization, therefore, the Brazilian education system is structured on two levels: basic education and higher education (Table 3.1). Basic education consists of three stages: (1) early childhood education, which includes provision for children from 0 to 3 years (crèches) and from 4 to 6 (pre-school); (2) primary education from 7 to 14 years, with a minimum duration of 8 years which is compulsory and free in public schools; (3) secondary education, the final stage of basic education, with a minimum of three years' attendance, from 15 to 17 years. The various types of education include the schooling of young people and adults who have not had access to or have not been able to continue their primary and secondary education at the appropriate age; vocational education; distance education; special education preferably provided in mainstream classes for those with special needs, and indigenous education dictated by constitutional guarantees to indigenous societies of a differentiated, intercultural and bilingual school education.

When it defined the legal norms and principles for the organization of basic education, the Ministry of Education laid down the general directives for formal and non-formal education to be regulated by the respective education systems. It is important to point out that several non-formal educational experiments have been instituted in Brazil by the most diverse bodies, among them schools, adult education organizations, training centres, teachers and trainers, cultural groups, associations, non-government organizations and youth organizations. These formative procedures are characterized by a view of education in its widest sense, involving processes in the areas of cognition, culture, gender and ethnicity, and socialization.

Higher education in Brazil, especially in the last ten years, has been restructured by means of policies of diversification and institutional differentiation,[20] which have created a growing rate of expansion, mainly in the private sector.

Table 3.1. Structure of the Brazilian education system (1996)

Levels and subdivisions			Duration (years)	Age range
Basic education	Early childhood education	Crèche	4	0–3
		Pre-school	3	4–6
	Primary education (compulsory)		8	7–14
	Secondary education		3	15–17
Higher education	Courses and programmes (undergraduate, postgraduate) by area		Variable	17+

Source: Government of Brazil, Law No. 9,394, 20 December 1996.

3. Educational indicators

The Brazilian education system is predominantly public in the primary and secondary education levels. Enrolments in Brazilian basic education (which includes early childhood, primary and secondary education), in 2003, were 55,265,848: 14.3% in the rural area. The municipal system accounts for 50% of enrolments, more than three-quarters of which is urban (see Table 3.2).

[20] This process of diversification and differentiation in education has its basis in various legal instruments. The most important of these is Decree No. 3,860 (9 July 2001), which changed the rules for organizing and evaluating higher education courses and institutions. These measures reshaped the competences of the Ministry of Education, the National Council for Education (CNE) and the National Institute for Educational Studies and Research (INEP/MEC) in this area. In relation to the academic organization of higher education, the decree classifies higher education institutions belonging to the federal education system as: I – universities; II – university centres; III – integrated faculties, faculties, institutes or higher-level schools.

Table 3.2. Percentage enrolment in all types of basic education* by locality, administrative authority and geographical region, as at 26 March 2003

Geographical region	Total enrolment in basic education (%)									
	Total (urban + rural)					Rural				
	Total ('000)	Federal	State	Muni-cipal	Private	Total ('000)	Federal	State	Muni-cipal	Private
Brazil	55 265	0.2	42.5	44.7	12.5	7 927	0.2	11 6	86.9	1.3
North	5 199	0.3	43.6	50.1	6.0	1 310	0.0	14 4	84.9	0.6
Northeast	18 499	0.1	31.7	57.2	10.9	4 859	0.1	4 4	94.1	1.4
Southeast	20 758	0.2	47.2	37.0	15.6	940	0.3	27 9	69.6	2.2
South	6 969	0.2	50.6	37.1	12.0	565	0.6	34 8	63.7	0.9
Mid-West	3 838	0.2	53.5	32.5	13.8	251	0.4	23 2	75.1	1.3

*Figures include pupils in crèches, pre-school, literacy classes, mainstream primary school, mainstream secondary school, special education, adult education in classroom-based, assessed courses.
Source: MEC–INEP.

The state system is responsible for 42.5% of enrolments of which 96% are enrolled in urban areas. Private schools account for only 12.5% of total enrolments in basic education, almost entirely in urban areas. The federal system is responsible for a mere 0.2% of enrolments in basic education. Technical and financial assistance to the state Federal District and to municipal systems is prioritized (Table 3.2). The Brazilian Government strives to guarantee primary education for all, especially in the first four years of basic education (Table 3.3).

Table 3.3. Percentage enrolment in 1st to 4th grades of primary education, by locality, administrative authority and geographical region, as at 26 March 2003

Geographical region	Total enrolment in primary education (%)									
	Total (urban + rural)					Rural				
	Total ('000)	Federal	State	Muni-cipal	Private	Total ('000)	Federal	State	Muni-cipal	Private
Brazil	34 438	0.08	38.54	51.87	9.51	6 177	0.01	11.45	87.89	0.66
North	3 316	0.15	38.10	57.31	4.43	1 042	0.00	13.23	86.41	0.36
Northeast	11 890	0.03	25.01	66.78	8.18	3 668	0.01	3.76	95.58	0.65
Southeast	12 392	0.10	46.11	41.30	12.48	769	0.00	28.61	70.09	1.30
South	4 347	0.05	47.23	44.80	7.92	479	0.00	34.43	65.27	0.30
Mid-West	2 491	0.10	50.85	38.39	10.66	216	0.00	21.17	78.05	0.78

Source: MEC–INEP.

Enrolments in literacy classes have been declining in recent years. In 2003, there were a total of 598,589 enrolments, with the largest number found in the municipal and private sectors (Table 3.4)

Table 3.4. Percentage enrolment in literacy classes, by locality, administrative authority and geographical region, as at 26 March 2003

Geographical region	Enrolment in literacy classes (%)									
	Total (urban + rural)					Rural				
	Total	Federal	State	Municipal	Private	Total	Federal	State	Municipal	Private
Brazil	598 589	0.1	1.7	58.0	40.2	130 349	0.0	2.0	94.8	3.2
North	79 416	0.2	1.3	74.7	23.8	15 092	–	3.4	94.1	2.6
Northeast	386 271	0.0	1.5	62.6	36.0	110 927	0.0	1.7	95.5	2.7
Southeast	73 250	0.7	2.0	6.3	91.0	953	–	6.0	10.2	83.8
South	3 746	–	0.4	45.8	53.8	94	–	–	100.0	–
Mid-West	55 906	–	3.5	71.1	25.4	3 283	–	2.8	96.5	0.7

Source: MEC–INEP.

Early childhood education, composed of crèches and pre-school institutions, has been the subject of government actions aimed at fulfilling promises to increase provision at this level of education. Early childhood education in Brazil accounts for 6,393,234 enrolments showing the great challenge the Union, states, Federal District, municipalities and the private sector have to face in increasing the provision of early childhood education (Tables 3.5 and 3.6).

Table 3.5. Percentage enrolment in crèches, by locality, administrative authority and geographical region, as at 26 March 2003

Geographical region	Enrolment in crèches (%)									
	Total (urban + rural)					Rural				
	Total	Federal	State	Municipal	Private	Total	Federal	State	Municipal	Private
Brazil	1 237 558	0.1	1.5	60.5	38.0	100.722	–	1.0	84.5	14.5
North	60 431	0.1	4.7	78.9	16.3	10.336	–	5.2	90.8	3.9
Northeast	310 645	0.0	2.9	70.9	26.2	75.733	–	0.5	83.8	15.7
Southeast	571 351	0.0	0.2	50.7	49.0	8.842	–	0.6	83.0	16.4
South	221 922	0.1	0.7	67.2	32.0	4.968	–	0.2	87.1	12.6
Mid-West	73 209	0.1	4.9	57.3	37.7	843	–	–	70.9	29.1

Source: MEC–NEP.

Table 3.6. Percentage enrolment in pre-school by locality, administrative authority and geographical region, as at 26 March 2003

Geographical region	Enrolment in pre-school (%)									
	Total (urban + rural)					Rural				
	Total	Federal	State	Municipal	Private	Total	Federal	State	Municipal	Private
Brazil	5 155 676	0.0	5.9	68.5	25.6	675.708	0.0	4.0	91.5	4.6
North	404 299	0.1	9.0	74.2	16.7	96.577	–	9.1	89.2	1.7
Northeast	1 521 141	0.0	4.5	65.9	29.6	423.889	0.0	1.3	92.8	5.9
Southeast	2 326 865	0.0	2.7	73.5	23.8	94.014	–	3.5	93.3	3.2
South	617 018	0.1	13.5	62.2	24.3	47.001	–	14.9	83.4	1.7
Mid-West	286 353	0.0	18.1	48.0	33.9	14.227	–	15.9	81.4	2.7

Source: MEC–INEP.

Secondary education is mainly offered by the state systems and comprises 84.5% of enrolments at this level (Table 3.7).

Table 3.7. Percentage enrolment in secondary education by locality, administrative authority and geographical region, as at 26 March 2003

Geographical region	Enrolment in secondary education (%)									
	Total (urban + rural)					Rural				
	Total	Federal	State	Municipal	Private	Total	Federal	State	Municipal	Private
Brazil	9 072 942	0.8	84.5	2.2	12.4	167.495	7.4	69.2	17.9	5.6
North	706 843	1.1	91.5	0.6	6.9	25.080	2.5	81.5	9.8	6.2
Northeast	2 515 854	0.9	82.3	5.0	11.8	69.915	6.6	56.5	34.2	2.7
Southeast	3 970 810	0.7	84.0	1.6	13.7	36.864	8.4	75.8	5.0	10.7
South	1 250 037	1.0	86.1	0.6	12.3	24.082	12.4	81.3	1.7	4.7
Mid-West	629 398	0.8	85.4	0.4	13.4	11.554	8.7	72.7	11.4	7.2

Source: MEC–INEP.

The percentage of pupils enrolled in basic education in public schools has grown continuously during the last ten years, in contrast to what has happened in the private sector, where the decline in enrolments has left only higher education unaffected.

An examination of Table 3.8 shows that, with the exception of primary education, the remaining levels of education showed an increase in enrolments between 2000 and 2003. The fall in primary school enrolments

may be seen as the result of education policies aimed at improving the rate at which pupils pass through school. Thus, there is a tendency for the number of primary school enrolments to fall and for those in secondary school to rise. Nevertheless we find that there is an increase in primary school enrolments in municipal systems, which reflects the movement towards the municipalization of education, in other words, pupils who were previously in the state system have moved into the municipal one. This transfer of pupils is much clearer at 5th to 8th grade in primary education, which was traditionally offered by the state system. It is important to draw attention to the complexity of the Brazilian reality, which has involved successful as well as unsuccessful experiences in the municipalization of education. Unsuccessful results have involved the transfer of responsibilities without any guarantee of the necessary reallocation of financial resources. Such situations have reinforced proposals such as FUNDEB and its important redistributive characteristic, i.e. guaranteeing the transfer of financial resources, the key to reducing education inequalities in the country.

Table 3.8. Enrolment by level/type of school and administrative authority, Brazil (2000–03)

Level/type of school	Year	Administrative authority				
		Total	Federal	State	Municipal	Private
Crèche	2000	916 864	495	16 373	565 370	334 626
	2003	1 237 558	671	18 127	748 707	470 053
Pre-school	2000	4 421 332	1 247	335 682	2 995 244	1 089 159
	2003	5 155 676	1 787	302 336	3 532 969	1 318 584
Primary education	2000	35 717 948	27 810	15 806 726	16 694 171	3 189 241
	2003	34 438 749	25 997	13 272 739	17 863 888	3 276 125
1st–4th grades	2000	20 211 506	7 800	6 072 882	12 472 314	1 658 510
	2003	18 919 122	7 008	4 759 823	12 426 793	1 725 498
5th–8th grades	2000	15 506 442	20 010	9 733 844	4 221 857	1 530 731
	2003	15 519 627	18 989	8 512 916	5 437 095	1 550 627
Secondary education	2000	8 192 948	112 343	6 662 727	264 459	1 153 419
	2003	9 072 942	74 344	7 667 713	203 368	1 127 517
Adult education	2000	3 410 830	11 573	2 018 504	1 005 218	375 535
	2003	4 403 436	1 284	2 166 915	1 953 280	281 957
Special education[1]	2000	300 520	815	79 633	51 515	168 557
	2003	358 898	721	76 013	62 341	219 823

*Enrolment of pupils with special educational needs, in entirely specialized schools or in special classes in mainstream schools.

Source: MEC–INEP.

That process began in 1996, when the LDB (Law 9.394) was published, redefining the organization of national education, as well as the responsibilities of each administrative entity of the Federation regarding education levels and modalities (also encouraged by Constitutional Amendment No. 14, issued in the same year). Under the LDB, school education in Brazil was organized on two levels: basic education and higher education. Basic education includes early childhood (0–6 years), primary education (1st to 8th grades), which is the responsibility of the municipal districts, and secondary education (1st to 3rd grades), that should be offered by the states. Between 2000 and 2003, the transfer of responsibility for primary education from the state to the municipal system can be observed in the changed enrolments, as can the state's assumption of the responsibility for secondary education.

The participation of the federal and private systems is decreasing in the provision of adult education and increasing mainly in the municipal system, which shows a process of municipalization in this area of education. The same thing is happening in special education.

In terms of the analysis of educational performance, Brazil has some indicators that are important for directing policies, among them, the average number of pupils per school shift, the rate of age-to-grade distortion, percentages of teachers by level of training and finally, the results of the national system for evaluating basic education (SAEB)[21] in the Portuguese language and mathematics.

The average number of pupils per school period is decreasing at all levels of education because even with an increase in enrolments, there has been an increase in the number of teaching establishments, which has brought about a better distribution in the size of school numbers, thus helping to improve the quality of teaching. The use of education figures has been a practice aiming at improving the performance of education systems and, at the same time, at

[21] The National System for Evaluation of Basic Education (Sistema Nacional de Avaliação da Educação Básica – SAEB) operates every two years by sampling 4th–8th grades in primary schools and 3rd grade of secondary school, checking pupil performance in mathematics and the Portuguese language. It includes a socio-economic questionnaire which provides a comparison between pupil performance and various other factors, such as income, parental levels of education and reading books. Results are compared between states in relation to previous years.

solving issues and problematic situations within the systems. In that direction, some education systems have established a maximum number of students per class, have made efforts to improve the flow in classes, among other pedagogic actions seeking to optimize the teaching-learning process and at improving the indexes of student performance in schools.

The rate of age-to-grade distortion, which measures the correspondence between the appropriate age of the pupil to be studying in a certain grade, and the grade in which he or she is actually studying, also reflects the results of improving the rate of flow through school, as a significant fall in this rate may be seen at all levels of teaching. These observations show the success of policies that have been adopted in order to support new forms of organizing school management, the policy of continued training, the production of teaching materials, etc.

Various policies have been implemented to improve national education. These include, among others: building the National Network of Continuing Training for Teachers in Basic Education, the Active School (an attempt to improve the quality of teaching in rural schools), the Management of Learning in School (Gestar I and Gestar II), the In-service Teacher Training Programme (*Proformação*), the National Information Technology Programme in Education (*Proinfo*), the TV School (a satellite channel that provides educational programmes for teachers, primary and secondary pupils and school communities), the Inclusive Education Programme (training in the area of special education), Support Programme for pupils with hearing and visual disabilities, the Literate Brazil Programme (aimed at adult education to reinforce policies to encourage staying on at school and re-entering the education system.

4. Financing of basic education in Brazil

Strengthening a policy of financing national education has become a constant challenge involving the Union, states, Federal District and municipalities, involving the linking to education to funds guaranteed by the Constitution and also actions to increase the funding for education.

According to the Federal Constitution (Article 212) the Union must give annually more than 18% of tax revenue to education, and the states, Federal District and municipalities at least 25%. Brazil, therefore, has a legal system to ensure a regular flow of public resources to education.

Primary education also benefits from the resources of the Education-Salary (*Salário-Educação*), a social contribution equivalent to 2.5% of company wage bills. These funds go to the Union in the form of a Federal Quota, and to the states, Federal District and municipalities in the form of a State and Municipal Quota in the proportions of one-third and two-thirds, respectively.

The Federal Quota funds from the Education-Salary are managed by the FNDE and used to finance programmes and projects for making primary education universal in order to reduce socio-economic inequalities between the regions of Brazil. These funds are channelled to the states, the Federal District and municipalities by voluntary and automatic transfer. Federal Quota money also goes to states and municipalities which receive a top-up to FUNDEF from the Union, amounting to 20% of the total annual top-up.

Money from the State and Municipal Quota and the Education-Salary goes towards actions in mainstream public primary education, special education and adult education, financing programmes such as school transport and the building, repair and adaptation of school buildings, the purchase of teaching and learning materials and school equipment, as well as teacher training, etc., with the provision that such monies cannot be used to pay staff working for the state, the Federal District or the municipality.

Bearing these indicators in mind, actions and measures have been implemented to ensure objective conditions for achieving universal primary education, a commitment the Brazilian state has made principally in: Constitutional Amendment No. 14 (12 September 1996) which changed the form of linking taxes to education and making further links of resources for this area, and the passing of Law No. 9,424 (24 December 1996), which instituted in each state and the Federal District, the Fund for Maintenance and Development of Basic Education and Valorization of the Teaching Profession (Fundo de Manutenção e Desenvolvimento do Ensino Fundamental e de Valorização do Magistério – FUNDEF) which established subordinate funding links.

Until the 1996 Constitutional Amendment that created FUNDEF (which began to function in 1998) the distribution of tax revenue between states and municipalities bore no relation to the division of educational responsibilities between state and municipal education networks. This greatly increased regional disparities. In the same way, before the Law of Guidelines and Foundations of National Education (also in 1996) there was not even any

specification of what could be considered as educational expenditure – an omission which permitted all kinds of diversion of grants for other purposes. The creation of FUNDEF helped to reduce problems in terms of the application of resources. With the new definition of what may be considered as educational expenditure, sums distributed by the fund are deposited in a special account, which has noticeably improved public control of the use of resources. To this end, the Constitutional Amendment that created FUNDEF also requires the setting up of councils composed of representatives of civil society and the various levels of government, to regulate expenditure.

FUNDEF, an initiative aimed at a new focus of public policies for education, operates exclusively within the area of compulsory primary education. In each state, money from this fund comes from 15% of all taxes and is shared between state and municipal governments. In 1999, FUNDEF resources reached a total of R$15.2 billion and in 2003, R$25.2 billion.

Based on the amount of the fund's resources in each state, a pupil/year value is calculated and money is passed on to state and municipal education systems according to the number of enrolments registered (Table 3.9). Exclusively local taxes are not included in FUNDEF, but states and municipalities are obliged to devote to education 25% of their revenues, of which each must contribute 60% to primary education.

This approach, in addition to ensuring a better distribution of resources in each state, also works towards reducing regional inequalities based on a minimum pupil/year amount. In those states where pupil/year expenditure does not reach the minimum amount laid down, the Federal Government guarantees to top up the resources.

The minimum national value per pupil/year in 1998 was R$315.00.

The redistributive impact of FUNDEF has been most effective in municipalities in the north and northeast regions, where there is the greatest concentration of deficiency in education. A significant shift of resources has also been experienced in favour of the group of municipalities of eight metropolitan regions in Brazil, excluding state capitals, where provision is offered by the respective state systems of education. This reform therefore has brought substantial benefits to the poorest areas of the country, which have the greatest number of children outside school and show the worst quality indicators in primary education.

Table 3.9. Financial effects of FUNDEF in municipalities with pupil/year values lower than R$350,00, Brazil (2000)

Value per pupil/year (R$1,00)*	Municipalities		Pupils/1999		Value per pupil/year (R$)		Gross additional revenue (R$ millions)	Variation (R$)	
	Total	%	Total	%	Without FUNDEF (A)	With FUNDEF (B)		Value per pupil (B – A)	B/A (%)
Up to 100	477	8.7	3 253 351	20.1	78.1	341.1	862.1	263.0	336.7
>100<= 150	680	12.4	2 793 728	17.2	123.7	350.2	644.8	226.5	183.1
>150<= 200	445	8.1	2 147 289	13.3	173.0	376.9	618.5	203.9	117.9
>200<= 250	330	6.0	1 212 123	7.5	223.4	401.8	243.2	178.4	79.9
>250<= 350	632	11.5	2 059 099	12.7	301.6	442.7	324.6	141.1	46.8
Subtotal	2 564	46.6	11 465 590	70.8	180.0	382.5	2,693.3	202.6	112.6
Other municipalities	2 942	53.4	4 731 037	29.2					
Overall total	5 506	100	16 196 627	100					

Sources: Ministry of Education/Seade; Municipalities: IBGE; Pupils: Censo Escolar, 2003

*Exchange rate: US$1 = R$2.8892.

The Union has played a part in setting up FUNDEF. In this context it is very important to point out that the participation of the Union between 1998 and 2002 showed a tendency to reduce expenditure on primary education. The FUNDEF Working Group (2003, p. 9) states that 'when the Federal Government interpreted the criterion laid down in Article 6 of Law No. 9,424/96, it fixed the minimum value at R$315.00 for 1998 and 1999, and from 2000, differentiated the values for 1st to 4th grades and 5th to 8th grades and special education so that they came to R$418,00 and R$438.90 respectively. These figures meant that top up from the Union to the Fund was necessary in seven states in 1998, eight states in 1999, dropping to five states in 2000 and four in 2001 and 2002 (an average of 5.6 states during the whole period). In addition, there was a reduction of 4.5% on the part of the Union's participation in financing primary education by means of FUNDEF, dropping from R$ 580 million in 1999 to R$ 496,2 million in 2002. The amount of Union top-up money in 1998 was about 23.6% of the amount transferred if the average national value is taken. This percentage was reduced during subsequent years, falling to 11.2% in 2001 and 12.7% in 2002. Between 1998 and 2002, the Union provided about 15.6% of top-up funds calculated on the basis of the national pupil/year value. Simulations concerning the national minimum value, calculated on the basis of this national average value, show that the Union top-up was in the order of R$ 2 billion in 1998, increasing progressively to a total of about R$3.9 billion in 2002, assuming the adoption of this criterion for fixing the minimum value. These sums represented the transfer of federal funds to 17 states in 1998, about 15 between 1999 and 2001

and 12 in 2002 (an average of 14.6 dates during this time). The difference between top-up calculated on the basis of average value and what was actually provided, came to about R$12.7 billion between 1998 and 2002. These figures show the importance of the more active participation on the part of the Union as well as the need for broadening the scope of the fund to reach basic education as a whole.

In spite of these figures, it is worth noting the positive impact of FUNDEF in the expansion of enrolments in primary education. The criterion for distributing the funds resources -based on the number of pupils enrolled in state and municipal education systems – provided considerable impetus to the attempt to enrol all children of school age.

FUNDEF also contributed to the increase in the process of municipalizing primary education and making possible a substantial broadening of enrolment in municipal education systems, above all in the regions of the North and Northeast.

In spite of its financial nature, FUNDEF affected policies aimed at making primary education universal and enhancing the value of the teaching profession. It is worth pointing out that 60% of FUNDEF resources have to be directed towards teachers working in primary education. As a result, because it does not deal with other levels and types of basic education, this fund has created the most diverse distortions. In an attempt to resolve these questions, the Federal Government has created incentives to implement FUNDEB (Fund for the Maintenance and Development of Basic Education and Enhancing the Value of Professional Staff in Education/Fundo de Manutenção e Desenvolvimento da Educação Básica e de Valorização dos Profissionais da Educação), which will deal with the whole of basic education and thus make possible the establishment of organic policies for the different levels and types of education in this area.

As from 2005, basic education – which includes early childhood, primary and secondary education of all kinds – will therefore have its own financing fund to replace FUNDEF, which only finances primary education. The proposal for the constitutional amendment to create FUNDEB was formulated on the basis of broad-based discussions with society at large. In order to stimulate the participation of institutions, educational bodies and specialists in the area of education and finance in creating the fund, the Ministry of Education held meetings at state level to debate and present suggestions in relation to the government's proposal.

It is important to place the effort made by the Ministry of Education in the sense of improving figures relating to the expenses with education. In that direction, the Ministry of Education, through the National Institute for Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira (INEP), created the Information System on Public Budgets in Education (SIOPE), a key instrument for planning, administrating, evaluating and controlling public expenses in Education. SIOPE is structured in a computerized system that will collect data and process accounting information on total incomes and expenses according to subsystems and education modalities at the federal, state and municipal levels. This system, besides allowing the three government levels to follow up the minimum expenditure insured by Article 212 of the Federal Constitution to maintain and develop education, tries to encourage social control of those financial resources and to contribute for the improvement of the flow of financial information aiming at, among others, the development of administrative actions based on indicators of efficiency and social effectiveness.

The aim of FUNDEB, linked to others aimed at evaluation and the establishment of curricular directives to provide a common national reference point, is to contribute to the improvement of basic education and also to improve the pay and professionalization of teachers in the public sector, especially in the regions of the north and northeast. This government effort is explicitly linked to the guarantee of the right to basic education for all, which will definitely provide a better situation for increasing the provision of access, especially to early childhood education (crèche and pre-school) and to secondary level, while responding to the aims of the national plan for education and the Dakar Commitments. In this respect, the setting up of FUNDEF was an important financial instrument in terms of guaranteeing effective action in coordination and specialist and financial assistance on the part of the Union to basic education. This incentive has, among other aims, that of guaranteeing better conditions for the expansion and improvement of assistance during early childhood; ensuring access to good-quality, free and compulsory primary education; ensuring equal access to all young people and adults to an appropriate level of learning; guaranteeing the elimination of gender disparities in basic education and ensuring the progressive expansion of secondary education, as well as guaranteeing the institution of programmes aimed at indigenous communities and rural education.

Although recent legislation has contributed to improving the rate of decentralization in the education system, coordination of national education

policy has been an important task for the Federal Government. To this end, the government has been consolidating its actions in an attempt to establish a relationship of collaboration and co-responsibility with constituent parts of the Federation in a participative and democratic fashion.

In fulfilling its legal requirements, the Ministry of Education has implemented actions and policies aimed at helping the institutional development of education systems and strengthening democratic management with a view, among other actions, to supporting and encouraging educational directors, managers, councillors and workers at primary level in their roles of formulating, planning, managing, regulating, monitoring and evaluating education policies; encouraging the modernization of the structure of secretariats of education in order to develop participative and simplified technology; promoting the mobilization of community bodies to guarantee the effective right to education, the widening and consolidating of democratic management tools in education policies; providing schools with instruments to strengthen the institution and its democratic management by ensuring the participation of the community in managing the school and in monitoring pupils' progress, in making the best use of school time and enhancing the value of the pupil's cultural heritage as a point of departure for optimizing the knowledge produced in the school environment. In order to provide these competencies, the following programmes are being developed: the Link Programme with education systems to track the execution of the National Plan for Education/State Plan for Education/Municipal Plan for Education; the Programme for Recognizing the Value of Non-Teaching Educational Staff; the Programme for Institutional Reinforcement of Municipal Secretariats of Education; the National Programme for Training Municipal Education Councillors (*Pró-Conselho*), and the National Programme for Reinforcing School Councils.

These policies and actions have, among other objectives, that of ensuring the provision of basic education with social quality, thus contributing to meeting legal requirements and helping to overcome regional inequalities by means of installing democratic educational and school management procedures based on a national system of education evaluation.

5. Evaluation of national education

Brazil's Federal Constitution provides for 'the participation of the population by means of representative organizations in the formulation of policies and the control of actions at all levels' (Article 204/CF) in dealing with the rights

of the child and of the adolescent. This means that these procedures (control and evaluation) can and should enjoy wide participation on the part of society as a whole.

The Brazilian experience of educational evaluation, taking into account the continental size of the country and its federative structure, is characterized by the implementation of a set of actions and indicators involving the various participants, schools and education systems in the country. Within this context, it is the responsibility of the Union 'to ensure the national process of evaluation of school performance in primary, secondary and higher education, in cooperation with teaching networks, with the aim of defining priorities and improving the quality of teaching (Article 09, Inc. VI, Law 9,394/96). This requirement is being implemented and evaluated, and attention should be drawn to the application of unified educational tests in basic and higher education. Here, three national evaluation systems come together: SAEB in basic education, ENEM In secondary education and ENC in higher education. These procedures, although standardized and linked to the consolidation of educational indicators, have provided useful help for government in the management and regulation of its education policies. In this way, education statistics and information have become an indispensable tool for those who are formulating, executing and evaluating policies at all levels of education management in Brazil.

In the framework of basic education, the evaluation processes are supplying the government with data on the real dimension of the weaknesses of the local and national education policies, and on the impact on educational institutions. Considering the continental dimensions of the country, the results of those evaluations become crucial to allow local governments to discuss reasonable measures to solve the detected problems.

Regarding higher education, the result of the evaluation process has been subsidizing the competent bodies of the Ministry of Education in the discussion with higher education institutions about the quality/or weaknesses of the courses offered by those institutions, and the need to find solution to the problems faced, in order to allow their offer to continue.

In this context, evaluation is understood as being one of the main avenues for structuring modern education policies. To understand evaluation within this context implies the consideration of various evaluative procedures and possibilities as well as the way in which they link with wider economic and political changes, indicating the social, ideological and management horizons

and perspectives of these procedures. Thus the Federal Government is seeking to implement emancipatory evaluation procedures that will lead to institutional development, and that will provide analytical measures for processes of educational management which will in turn have positive impacts on the culture of teaching institutions in their pedagogical tasks, in the improvement of pupil performance, in the work of teaching staff, etc. The reassessment of SAEB and the implementation of SINAES form part of the effective policies that the Ministry of Education has launched to implement a national evaluation system for basic and higher education.

5.1 Basic education evaluation system

Evaluation of the different systems of teaching in Brazil has been measured by the National System for Evaluation of Basic Education (SAEB) since 1990, producing information every two years about the learning of reading and mathematics by pupils in 4th to 8th grades in primary schools and in the 3rd grade of secondary school. During this time, the evaluations have brought up important questions concerning the orientation and establishment of priorities for education policy-making, especially in reference to the development of basic abilities in reading and mathematics among pupils and the marks differences in teaching conditions both from the geographic point of view and that of the social and economic situations of pupils.

However, the information that should make a valuable contribution to improving the quality, efficiency and equality of Brazilian education has been under-used in the evaluation of policies. The lack of the use of information provided may be explained in part by the fact that the results of the SAEB are representative of the situation in the five geographic regions and the twenty-seven federal units, but are not sufficient to provide a specific picture of municipalities and schools. In order to discover a true situation in Brazilian schools, those aspects which are essential if we are to gain a better understanding of the factors that control the process of teaching and learning, the ministry is studying the expansion of SAEB by adopting the methods of data collection used in censuses. In order to achieve this, a process of gradual broadening of the scope of the evaluation is being planned, the aims of which include setting up a national evaluation network for basic education involving the Union, the states and the municipalities. The idea of the national evaluation network respects the principles of the federation, its diversity and the specific nature of its integral parts, while explaining that evaluation must provide a service to the whole of the educational community, helping to

improve teaching systems and studying the school, the institution that promotes learning.

Thus, SAEB will become a general diagnostic instrument within the education management instruments agreed between the Union, states and municipalities and sharing the responsibilities and the successes of the country's education.

5.2 National system for evaluating higher education

The Federal Government made significant changes in the field of higher education evaluation in Brazil because of the understanding that, to be able to reach the established EFA goals, it is necessary to have effective coordination among the several institutions involved nationally, especially among those that are directly responsible for training basic education teachers: i.e. the higher education institutions.

In this respect, the Federal Government, through the Ministry of Education, gathered together different segments of the academic community, the civil and political society in several hearing. The discussions led to the establishment of a national commission to brainstorm on the current evaluation policies in higher education. That joint effort resulted in the creation, in April 2004 (law 10.861), of the National System of Higher Education Evaluation (SINAES) as a new tool of evaluation of MEC–INEP. SINAES includes three main components: the evaluation of the institutions, of the courses offered, and of student performance. Three main axes guide the evaluation of all aspects: teaching, research, extension, social responsibility, students' performance, institution management, teacher, facilities and several other aspects.

The evaluation policy has, therefore, an important role to play in the process of improving the quality of national education and achieving the EFA goals. In addition to that process, it is critical to discuss the teachers' situation and the professional development policies in place.

6. Situation of teachers: policies for training and professionalization

The period of the 1990s saw significant legal changes in Brazilian education characterized by a return to procedures that were said to be of a decentralizing nature but which in many cases meant only the implementation of processes

of de-concentration of these policies. In other words, changes in the present procedures of management and regulation in education in Brazil did not accompany sufficiently closely, at that time, financial policies that could effectively support the universalization of basic education. There was a significant advance in ensuring access to primary education for all by means of implementing specific policies and thus breaking the principle of introducing universal education at all levels. This situation reveals the intentions, plans and ambiguities of education policies at that time.

In spite of this, it is fundamental to emphasize that the situation of teachers, especially in primary education, was and continues to be the object of national actions and policies concerning their training and professionalization. In Brazil, it is the responsibility of states, Federal Districts and municipalities, together with the respective education systems, to ensure the approval of statutes and career plans for teachers in the public sector, and in accordance with the LDB (Article 67) it is the duty of the education systems to enhance the value of professional educational staff, guaranteeing them entry exclusively by public examination and proof of qualifications; continuing professional training; a professional salary base and a career path based on qualifications for training or on the evaluation of performance, time reserved for study, planning and evaluation included in the working week and satisfactory working conditions.

Career plans in Brazilian public teaching have certain points in common in spite of being defined and approved by governments at the levels of state, Federal District and municipalities. They all require as a prerequisite for entry into the profession, passing a public examination and possessing the minimum qualification for secondary education (*magistério*) and preferably the full teaching qualification (at university level); they draw up the structure for recruiting and promoting teachers, and the systems of qualification, among other activities.

In the light of this policy of decentralization, it falls to the Union, through the Ministry of Education to work towards coordinating national policy and to approve directives that will ensure the implementation of teachers' career plans, the discussion and establishment of a national salary base, etc. Definitions concerning ways of entering and remaining in the teaching profession, policies for the placing and transferring of teachers, salary scales, salary policies and promotions within teaching are the responsibilities of the states, Federal District and municipalities, which must observe the statutes and career plans of public sector teachers and the share of resources

constitutionally linked to maintaining and developing teaching. It is important to point out the complexity of the teaching situation by analysing the diversity of career plans that exist in states and municipalities.

In order to guarantee a minimum standard to all teachers in basic education, it is worth emphasizing that several government actions have been implemented in terms of guaranteeing national action plans relating to the training and professionalization of those working in education, all linked to the processes of democratizing school management in Brazil. To this end, actions and technical and financial assistance programmes are being carried out in an attempt to ensure that state and municipal career plans contain the following elements:

- progress based on qualification for training, in other words, the assumption of medium and higher level qualifications and progress between them, encouraging the acquisition of a teaching certificate (*licenciatura*);
- progress based on the evaluation of performance – the improvement of classroom teaching and learning by pupils should be decisive factors for career progression and improved salaries for teachers;
- a period set aside for study, planning and evaluation of the teacher's work – lesson preparation and (individual) correction of work, and collective activities such as staff meetings, meeting parents and pupils, and training courses which should be included in the timetable and be part of the teacher's activities;
- continued professional training – staff working in basic education should have access to ongoing training programmes with periodic paid leave in order to continue their professional training;
- enhancing the value of the profession and career of teaching by rethinking the amount of remuneration rather than granting extra amounts (gratifications and additional payments).

In general, these plans show, although at an initial stage, mechanisms and procedures aimed at strengthening initial teacher training, working conditions, salary and career and continued training, which must be brought up to date and improved.

This legislation signifies a real advance in terms of the actual situation of teachers. The implementation of this legal advance involves a complex process which must be undertaken taking into account the differences between regions, states and municipalities.

The situation of teachers in Brazil typically has been described in terms of insufficient initial training, low salaries, double workloads, etc. The changes implemented in management policies for higher education by means of institutional diversification and differentiation have made possible, among other things, the expansion of places for training teachers thus altering the figures referring to the provision of initial training, especially in the private sector. The percentage of teachers with inadequate training is falling and is balanced by an increase in training at higher levels.[22] For instance, between 2000 and 2003 the percentage of teachers working in primary education with a higher education degree rose from 61% to 69.5% in the state system. In 2000, 56.1% of teachers had full teaching degrees, and by 2003 that number had increased to 64.7%. In the municipal system the increase over the same period was 11%: in 2003, 42.9% of primary education teachers had higher education degrees, nearly 40% with specific teacher training. Such percentage increases are significantly greater for teachers of the final grades of primary education (5th to 8th grades), and of secondary education. For example, in 2000 76.7% of the teachers teaching 5th to 8th grades in the state system had higher education degrees, and by 2003 the percentage had risen to 81.6%, more than three-quarters of whom had full teaching degrees. In the municipal system, percentages are lower but also increasing.

In addition, the flow of resources initiated by means of FUNDEF has made it possible to increase salaries, especially of those staff in primary education whose salaries did not amount to the minimum national wage. There was an increase in average teachers' pay between 2001 and 2003 of about 38% for teachers of 4th grade and 3rd grade at primary and secondary levels respectively, and of 30% for those teaching primary 8th grade. Generally, the wages of teachers working in the 4th grade of primary education are lower than of those teaching in the 8th grade. Secondary school teachers receive higher salaries than primary-school teachers.

As for regional average salaries, the southeast has the best levels of pay and the northeast and the north the lowest, which shows that even after all the efforts to decrease regional inequalities, they still persist in Brazil. Nevertheless, it is worth emphasizing that for 8th grade at primary level, the

[22] The Ministry of Education has implemented policies and actions aimed at improving the training and professionalizing of teaching staff.

northern region showed the greatest increase in pay between 2001 and 2003 – in the order of 52%.

In this context, it is essential to point out that the analysis and evaluation of these indicators and policies is today linked to the constant rethinking of processes of training and professionalizing teachers, with the aim, above all of implementing a national training policy whose political and epistemological basis takes into account: the knowledge and experience teachers have accumulated; the links between training and other areas of the teachers' work (pay, working conditions, organizational aspects, etc.); the real conditions involved in teaching (motivation, knowledge, time and resources available); the connection between administrative, educational and financial management, the relationship between content and methods and, in equal measure, the requirements and possibilities of teaching systems. This formative process involves taking into account different partners (the Union, states, municipalities, teachers) in the implementation of a national policy for training and teacher professionalization.

It is clear that rethinking education in Brazil involves taking into consideration these new actors, the limits of education policy in terms of intervention, the decentralization process and an understanding of the role of the State, understood as an expression of the interrelationship between the forces that comprise the connection between civil and political society, which is involved in the struggle to put into effect a national policy guaranteeing solid initial and ongoing training. The different areas of teacher training have been given the task of responding to the new economic, political, historical and cultural demands by reshaping their role in the face of ethical-cultural diversity, the challenges posed by the productive sector of the economy and the guarantee of their institutional identity as an area that should not be restricted to teacher training alone.

The guarantee of a pattern of social quality in national teacher training is one of the Ministry of Education's education policies which effectively demands the reformulation of the relationship between training institutions, education systems and secretariats of education in order to develop projects and proposals aimed at ensuring the level of quality to be reached. Training at the level of higher education, therefore, is a banner to be set up for the democratization of access to, remaining in and management at this level of education, to provide a fertile path for training and professionalization. Considering that education, as a social activity, is not limited to schooling or institutionalized educational practice, but has its privileged place in this area,

it is vital that these policies be understood as part of a wider view of forming man, culture and society.

The discussion concerning training and professionalization includes, therefore, the revival of specific policies that include questioning the system, together with new forms applied to present patterns of training, incorporating:

- during initial training, overcoming the dichotomy between theory and practice and between pedagogical training and the acquisition of specific knowledge;
- within ongoing and permanent training, teaching activities as the focus of training. It is also vital to guarantee the improvement of working conditions (salary, career plan, training policies and evaluation) that are compatible with the demands that characterize the new social, political, economic and cultural scenario.

In this context, the Federal Government, working through the Ministry of Education and together with states, municipalities, the Federal District and civil society, is developing actions to reinforce a national project for training and supporting the improvement of the situation of teachers. It is important to state that, together with the ongoing reformulation of some projects in teacher training which have been in development since the 1990s, other projects are being implemented. The attempt to establish a national policy for training and professionalization has been based therefore on evaluation procedures and proposals for training projects and experiments, in order to ensure a solid theoretical training in pedagogical and specific content for those working at primary level, while also ensuring a broad-based background in cultural training and a command of information and communication technologies. The following list shows some of these projects/experiments in training that contribute to optimizing policies for training and professionalizing teachers:

1. The National Network for Ongoing Training of Basic Education Teachers: the network is composed of twenty universities tasked with developing teaching materials for training teachers in different subject areas, responding to the requirements of states, the Federal District and municipalities, under the general coordination of the Ministry of Education. This network will support the construction and/or consolidation of centres to produce and disseminate teaching materials and also promote classroom-based, part-time and distance courses.

2. The In-Service Teacher Training Programme: the Ministry of Education is developing the *Proformação*, a secondary-level course leading to the *Magistério*, by distance learning aimed at teachers who do not have the minimum required qualifications[23] and who are teaching in the first form grades of primary school and in literacy classes in state and municipal public education. The programme[24] consists of a complete distance learning service combining self-study and classroom practice, complemented by fortnightly meetings and the provision of student support. The instructional materials were drawn up by a team of Brazilian university teachers well known for their knowledge in the respective curriculum areas. The curriculum is organized in six themed areas, including the basis of content taught in secondary schools to train teachers. It also contains four Integrating Themes – interdisciplinary areas that bring together all spheres of study. In addition to this common core there are Work Projects and the Foreign Language, which are defined by the states. The Work Projects are inspired by themes of regional or local interest, such as culture, history, the environment, health, etc. The multi-disciplinary team made use of companies specializing in instructional design and video production. Training agencies were set up and equipped in order to

[23] Teachers should by law have higher education training to teach in the final four years of primary school and in secondary education. Teachers may work in early childhood education and in the first four years of primary school with a secondary-school teaching diploma (*magistério*).

[24] Proformação runs for 3,200 hours, divided into four term modules of 800 hours each spread over twenty weeks. Each module starts in the holiday period with a classroom-based phase of lessons and workshops (76 hours) and proceeds to develop the eight units – one every two weeks – containing 12 hours of individual study, fortnightly meetings (alternate Saturdays) lasting 8 hours; 20 hours of classroom practice; 2 hours for producing the written report and 20 hours of classroom support, before bimonthly examinations. The course also includes 46 hours linked to the Study Project and 32 hours of foreign language instruction. The Proformação teaching materials include 32 *Study Guides* with their respective *Learning Verification* exercise books, plus videos. Books and supporting handouts for managers and tutors have also been produced. Teachers on the courses are helped by tutors on an average basis of 12–15 students per tutor in order to provide a constant personalized service. Most of the tutors are teachers working in training schools that provide the *magistério* and can call on the guidance and pedagogical support of teacher trainers – specialists in different curriculum areas. A communication service was set up to allow the free flow of information between tutors and those taking the courses.

decentralize provision and maintain the quality of the course. *Proformação* uses an information system (SIP) to collect and analyse data on student performance as well as monitoring all phases of the programme, thus allowing course managers to make improvements and corrections. In addition, external evaluations are carried out to check on classroom results and on the impact of the course on participating teachers, schools and communities.

The cooperation between the Union, states and municipalities – formalized by a Participation Agreement – has succeeded in creating a system which is both decentralized and articulated and which makes it possible to optimize the public funds that have been allocated to the programme.
The positive results of *Proformação* have made it a reference point for quality in distance learning and teacher training, both in Brazil and abroad. The programme's specialist team has participated in several missions to Lusophone African countries and others with similar problems concerning the qualification of teachers.

Based on the *Proformação* experience, the Ministry of Education is launching the *Proinfantil* and *Pro-Fundamental* programmes, which will expand its benefits to all country regions.

The Pro-fundamental is a distance education teacher-training programme, which provides a university level teaching certificate (*licenciatura*). It is offered for professionals that teach from 5th to 8th grades who do not have the minimum required qualification for teaching at this educational level. The training areas to be offered will be defined based on the data of the Teacher's Census.

At the present time the Ministry of Education is preparing an equivalent programme for non-qualified teachers in early childhood education – crèches and pre-school, the *Proinfantil*.

Proinfantil is a two-year distance learning teacher-training programme, leading to secondary level diploma (*Magistério*), which leads to a qualification for teaching in early childhood education. It is offered to professionals who do not have the minimum legal required qualification, in order to develop their knowledge level and improve pedagogic practice, as well as to contribute to the social quality of education offered to children up to 6 years.

Among the actions of the Ministry towards the expansion and improvement of teaching quality in the country, the School of Managers Program should be highlighted. It aims at the democratization and the excellence of school administration and will qualify more than 150,000 school directors in the entire country. This programme was conceived as an instrument to support the school managers so that they can make decisions with larger autonomy on the allocation of financial, material and human resources, and on the most efficient pedagogic project to the community context. The first stage of the programme will begin in January 2005, and it will start by qualifying 160 school directors of the states of Ceará, Espírito Santo, São Paulo and Rio Grande do Sul.

3. The University for All Programme: this involves giving vacant places in private universities to students attending public secondary schools whose family income is less than one minimum wage per head, and for non-graduate basic education teachers.

4. The TV School: a satellite television channel that presents educational programmes to teachers, primary and secondary school pupils and school communities. It broadcasts continually for fourteen hours a day and also provides material for ongoing teacher training and support for the pedagogic development of classes.

5. The Support Programme for Special Education (Programa de Apoio à Educação Especial – PROESP): this trains teachers and researchers in order to include all pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools and society. It operates in ten higher education establishments that are developing postgraduate projects in special education.

6. Education in the Countryside: teacher training programmes with a methodology and curriculum suited to the needs of rural education. These programmes encourage the broad-based participation of agrarian areas and communities concerning their management activities and social control of the quality of education;

7. Indigenous Education: programmes for the initial and ongoing teacher training and the formulation and dissemination of special teaching materials developed for the cultural characteristics of different indigenous peoples

7. Final considerations: democratic management of education and the effective universalization of basic education

A particular quality of the Brazilian education system is its complex and decentralized nature. In Brazil, crèches, pre-school, compulsory primary education and secondary education have always been the responsibility of the states, Federal District and municipalities, with the Union being responsible for redistributive and supplementary functions and the coordination of this national policy. This situation, while allowing significant advances to take place, also has limitations that are the result, among other factors, of regional disparities affecting education policies.

In this context, the Brazilian education system starts schooling, and has a length of schooling, that are out of step with other countries, and this has had a marked effect on the comparative analysis of these indicators in relation to international figures. Thus it is vital to emphasize that Brazilian primary education consists of 8 grades and normally caters for children from 7 to 14 years. Another relevant measure concerns rates of completion of the eight grades, which, in spite of substantial growth over the years, is still not comparable to that of countries that only require four, five or six years of universal education. On the other hand, statistics concerning illiteracy, which include the age range of 6 and over, do not reflect the real effort made in education in Brazil, as compulsory education begins at age 7.

Brazil continues moving forward in the process of democratization, improvement and universalization of primary education. In this sense, the number of years in primary education is enlarging from eight to nine years, showing Brazilian effort to develop policies committed with social inclusion and equity. Recent data from SAEB/INEP demonstrate that the enlargement of the period of obligatory education, which ensures the school access to 6-year-old children, increases their chances of school success in the following years of primary education.

This measure has already been adopted in some Brazilian cities in the states of Minas Gerais, Amazonas, Goiás, Sergipe, Rio de Janeiro, and is foreseen in cities in the states of Maranhão, Rio Grande do Norte and the Federal District next year. The results are considered extremely positive. This measure meets one of the goals of the National Plan of Education that establishes that, as the

eight-year primary education becomes universal for Brazilians from 7 to 14 years, the nine-year primary education should be implemented by including 6-year-old children. Hence, the country has already 26,530 schools with 7.4 million enrolments.

Brazil is making efforts to improve the access and retention of Brazilians in basic education, especially infantile education and primary education. Some results have been achieved and have been pointed out by international agencies, such as UNESCO in its *2005 Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report*, which includes Brazil in 72nd place in the Education for All Development Index (EDI),[25] with an EDI ratio of 0.899. Although conscious that there is still a lot of work to be done, the following mentioned results show the outstanding progress the country achieved in the 1990's and at the beginning of this new century.

According to the report, the universalization of primary education is one of the great Brazilian conquests in the period 1990–2000, when the net enrolment rate rose from 86% to 96,7% in 2000, leading to educational inclusion of marginalized groups. The report points out that Brazil made efforts to address regional and social inequalities, with the implementation of programmes developed, mainly, by the Ministry of Education, underlining FUNDEF and Bolsa Escola/PETI. Other programmes mentioned include Fundescola, Proformação, organization of School Cycles and Accelerated Learning Programs (UNESCO, 2004, p. 55).

In relation to the global distribution of the illiterate population with 15-year-olds and over, for the period 2000–04, Brazilian participation is 1.9%. The results that the country obtained in reducing the levels of illiteracy not only in relation to male population but also to the female one was pointed out as positive, regarding that the literacy rate for the male population grew 7.7 %, from 80.1% to 88%, while the one for the female population increased 8.6 %, from 79.7% to 88.3%.

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[25] EDI is a composite index aimed at measuring overall progress towards EFA. For the time being, the index incorporates only the four most quantifiable EFA goals – universal primary education as measured by the net enrolment ratio, adult literacy as measured by the adult literacy rate, gender parity as measured by the gender-specific EFA index, and quality of education as measured by the survival rate to grade five. Its value is the arithmetical mean of the observed values of these four indicators.

In the 4–6 age group, the school attendance rate has already overtaken the established goal in the National Plan of Education for the year 2005.

The Brazilian efforts for educational inclusion in the last years can be seen through school attendance rates and in the increasing improvement in enrolments at all levels. Hence educational access, mainly in the population from 7 to 14 years, reached satisfactory levels (97%), comparable to those of developed countries. It must be pointed out that this age group is not the only age group that has been increasing significantly, but also in the 15–17 age group where data show 82% of youths were attending school in 2002.

With respect to the offer of specialized education for people with special needs, Brazil has been progressively improving its numbers, as today there are already almost 360,000 assisted students.

Regarding the access of minority groups by colour or race data shows that 53% of the students in primary education are black, however in higher education, only 23% classify themselves as black.

Indigenous communities' policy is another relevant aspect in basic education in Brazil and, in the last years, was introduced in the educational agenda. Between 2000 and 2003, there was an increase of 44% in the enrolment rate. Brazil has today more than 116 thousand indigenous students in primary education. The Federal Government, aware of the situation of national education and its responsibilities in terms of supporting the consolidation of basic education, whatever it may be: its *normative* role – establishing the broad lines and directives of the system – its *redistributive* and *supplementary* role – working with assistance and financial help to reduce social and regional inequalities, is systematically establishing policies and directives gained at: improving the quality of teaching in the different regions of the country; establishing a common national base; establishing a national evaluation system founded on new forms of evaluation (courses, pupil and institutional performance) working together with initiatives implemented by states and municipalities to create national parameters for evaluation, institutional development and the improvement of educational processes in primary, secondary and higher education.

Together with legislation and with the fixed idea of increasing access to basic education and breaking the 'culture of repetition' which leads to exclusion from school, policies have been put into place to generate the socialization, discussion and implementation of concerns, methodologies and mechanisms

to improve teaching processes, bearing in mind the relationship between development and learning at the different levels and types of education. From that perspective, the invigoration of the processes of initial and continuous education is key to improve the qualification and working conditions of teachers and, as a consequence, to improve the students' teaching-learning process in the different levels of national education, especially in basic education. Strengthening the training and professionalization of teachers contribute to the improvement of their professional performance, which is reflected in the policies and administration of basic education, in a sense of breaking with the culture of repetition and establishing a systematic and procedural evaluation process that effectively supports students' preparation. From this point of view, evaluation of the new forms of progress and learning on the part of the pupil that take into account advances in studies according to level of success and the verification of learning; holding remedial lessons in school time for pupils whose results are not satisfactory, increasing primary education from 8 to 9 years,[26] are among the measures comprising the experiments being evaluated as pedagogical initiatives to increase the chances for success at school and greater achievement for the learner.

To this end, certain principles have guided the policies put in place by the Ministry of Education to construct a school with social quality, mainly: the view of the school as a centre from which culture and knowledge radiate; the centrality of the development of the learner as a principal reference point in the organization of the school's time and space; the importance of ensuring participative, shared management practices whose reference point is the collective construction of the political and pedagogical project and emphasis on evaluation procedures that are progressive and formative and thus lead to institutional development and the improvement of teaching processes and the defence of democratic management.

Thus, democratic management implies introducing new organizational and management procedures based on initiatives that favour collective and

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[26] The programme to extend primary education to nine years is the result of the priority the federal government has given to joining its activities to those of the states, Federal District and municipalities. After seven regional meetings, the Union, Ministry of Education Secretariat for Basic Education, is developing its action of coordinating education policy by means of technical and pedagogical assistance to increase the number of children included in the education system.

participative decision-making within education systems and schools in order to bring about increased levels of school autonomy.

Taking into account the situation of Brazilian education, shaped by the existence of various education systems, it is vital to emphasize that different forms of organization and management of systems and the schools within them, co-exist. This scenario indicates the existence of multiple possibilities for organization and participation. In other words, there are organizational initiatives characterized by a guided, restricted and functional participation process, and others stand out by virtue of carrying out procedures in which an attempt is made to share decision-making actions and processes.

In order to reinforce democratic actions in schools, the Ministry of Education has developed certain actions and policies, among which are the creation and consolidation of school committees as a way of ensuring greater participation on the part of those involved in the educational process (parents, pupils, teachers, support staff and the local community); the transfer of funds directly to schools as a way of guaranteeing the better operation of the school, not only in terms of consumables and the maintenance of infrastructure, but also of financing actions that improve teaching processes and instil progressive degrees of autonomy within the school; support for democratizing procedures for choosing the head teacher as a way of encouraging the participation of the school community in school life and, above all, closer cooperation between education systems and educational institutions.

The process of decentralizing school management from central bodies and therefore ensuring greater degrees of autonomy have been consolidated in recent years by the efforts of state and municipal education systems with the strong specialist and financial support of the Union. In this context, the democratizing process includes respect for the culture of the school and its procedures as well as its links with broader social relationships. Comprehending these cultural processes means taking into account different sectors of the local and school communities, their values, attitudes and behaviour, and strengthening the collective work in sharing power to build collective projects.

Basic Education Secretariat (SEB), Vocational and Technological Secretariat (Setec), Higher Education Secretariat (Sesu), Distance Learning Secretariat (Seed), Special Education Secretariat (Seesp), Secretariat for Continuing Education, Literacy and Diversity (Secad) and also the Co-ordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (Capes), the Anísio Teixeira

National Institute for Educational Studies and Research (INEP) and the National Educational Development Fund (FNDE)

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Chapter 4:
Teacher Deployment and Resource Management for EFA Implementation in the Context of Decentralization: National Report of China[27]

1. Introduction

The current education system in China has been reconstructed since the late 1970s, with a school structure as follows:

- three-year kindergartens;
- six- or five-year primary schools for children beginning at age 6;
- three- or four-year junior secondary schools, which, together with primary education, comprise compulsory education in China;
- three-year senior secondary schools, divided into academic and vocational streams;
- two- to four-year college and/or university education;
- two to three years' study for a Master's degrees and three years' study for doctoral degrees in universities.

Besides this formal education, a structure for non-formal education exists, especially through television programmes, distance and correspondence education.

In the late 1970s, China started to implement new policies for modernization and opening up to the outside world, aimed at speeding up its socio-economic development. In late 1984, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China published a significant document, *Decision on the Reform of the Economic System*, which declared that the focus of reform would shift from rural to urban, and from agriculture to industry, commerce and other economic fields. The all-round reform was from the outset based on the two

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[27] Prepared by Zhao Zhong-jian, East China Normal University. The views expressed herein are those of the author. No official endorsement by the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO is intended or should be inferred.

basic principles of the 'open door policy' and 'let some people and regions become richer first'. And the highly centralized planning economy has been gradually transformed into a more dynamic market-oriented economy since then, particularly since 1992. The rapid economic change and growth has stimulated the social demands for education reform.

The new principles and strategies in social and economic spheres were reflected in educational development as well. In the *Decision on the Reform of the Educational System* in 1985, the government clearly affirmed that 'Our country is a vast but imbalanced one in its economic and cultural development levels' and so 'the educational contents, methods' and 'development paces and approaches...should be in line with local conditions.' This decision laid the foundation of education decentralization. The 14th National Conference of the Party pointed out in 1992 that a socialist market economy should be established, which heralded a new period of education reform.

In February 1993, the Central Committee of CPC and the State Council issued Outline for Reform and Development of Education in China, which puts forward the following general goal for the new period. In the 1990s, with the deepening of reform of the market-oriented economic system, a policy of step-by-step promotion is to be adopted in the reform of the education system. And it will also be necessary to accelerate steps to reform the highly centralized system, set up preliminarily a new education system which is suitable to the market-oriented economy, strengthen the vitality of adaptation of the education sector to outside economic and social development, and to develop new ways for educational development, so as to lay a foundation to create the new education system with Chinese characteristics. This new Outline for Reform and Development of Education in China is also a national policy on educational reform for the future.

One more thing should be mentioned here: the legislation system for education has also been established gradually since the mid-1980s. First came *The Compulsory Education Act of the People's Republic of China*, promulgated in 1986, which established universal compulsory education for 9 years. Then came *The Teachers Act of the People's Republic of China* in 1986, which concerns teachers' qualifications, treatment, training, working conditions etc. *The Education Act of the People's Republic of China,* adopted in March 1995, came into force in September 1995. This act is the fundamental educational legislation in China. *The Vocational Education Act* and *The Higher Education Act,* respectively, were passed later.

As to EFA, the first *National Action Plan for EFA in China* was issued in 1993 at the Chinese National Conference on EFA, setting out the goals of EFA in China and implementation measures towards the goals. This action plan provided the guidelines for the implementation of EFA during the whole of the 1990s, stimulating the whole country to try its best to achieve the EFA goals. At the Fourth Ministers' Conference on EFA of the Nine High Population Countries held in Beijing in 2001, the Chinese Ministry of Education issued *the National Report on the Development of EFA in China.* This report acknowledges the problems faced in EFA implementation in China and sets out the mission and goals of EFA towards 2010.

The six main problems faced in EFA implementation are as follows:

- Serious shortages of educational inputs continue to be the obstacle hindering the development of compulsory education;
- Poor areas are facing various problems in developing compulsory education;
- Students feel their learning as a heavy burden, and there are substantial differences in the quality of compulsory education;
- The increasing educational needs of children and their parents cannot be met through sufficient access to the quality of pre-school education, and the development of such education in rural areas is at lower levels;
- There are 87 million adult illiterates in China, among whom 23 million are young adults. It is very difficult to carry out literacy education in poor, remote areas and minority areas;
- The average quality of teachers needs to be improved, and the structure of the teaching force should also be improved.

The general mission of EFA is that by 2010, the general level of basic education in China should arrive at or approach the level of medium-developed countries. To achieve the above mission, three tasks have been determined according to the basic situations of the development of basic education in different regions and areas:

- In poor areas, which constitute about 15% of the whole population of the country and have not achieved the goals of universalization of 9 years' compulsory education nor the eradication of literacy among young adults, it is necessary to provide compulsory primary education, to actively promote 9 years' compulsory education and to eradicate young adult

illiterates, to appropriately develop senior secondary education and actively develop one-year pre-school education.

- In rural areas, which constitute about 50% of the whole population of the country and have achieved the goals of universalization of 9 years' compulsory education and the eradication of young adult illiterates, the necessary emphasis is on the consolidation and improvement of the current situation, the improvement of school running conditions for compulsory education, and the further increase of educational quality and efficiency. Senior secondary education should be expanded and 3-year pre-school education developed actively.
- In the large and medium-sized cities and economically developed areas, which constitute about 35% of the total population of the country, it is necessary to provide 9 years' compulsory education with high quality, to meet society's needs for senior secondary education and 3 years' pre-school education, and to pay greater attention to early childhood education.

2. Teacher deployment and management

Before dealing with teacher deployment and management for EFA implementation, one must first describe the system of teacher education and training. China launched strategic adjustments to teacher education during the Tenth Five-year Planning Period (2000-2005), aiming to promote professionalism, integration and information-orientation, and to meet the varied demands on qualified teachers urged by the education reform. The traditional teacher education system shouldered the responsibility of cultivating teachers for pre-school education to school education. This system consisted of the following three levels for pre-teachers and one for in-service training or education:

- Secondary teacher schools, recruiting junior secondary school graduates who would study for three years and then become primary school teachers;
- Higher specialized teacher schools, recruiting senior secondary school graduates who would study for three years and then become junior secondary school teachers;
- Teacher colleges or normal universities, recruiting senior secondary school graduates who would study for four years and then become senior secondary school teachers;

- Educational colleges and schools for in-service training of teachers, offering further education or in-service training to teachers at schools of different levels.

The reformed, new system is characterized by the gradual abolition of secondary teacher schools nurturing elementary teachers, merging the former three-year higher, specialized teacher schools into normal or comprehensive universities. In 1997, Shanghai stopped the enrolment of three-year secondary teacher schools, taking the lead in ending secondary teacher education in China. By 2002, the number of secondary teacher schools in China had been cut down to 430. the number of institutions of higher teacher education to 183, and educational colleges for in-service training to 103 in China, as shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1. Transformation of teacher education sectors of all levels and types in China (1982, 1992, 2002)

		1982	1992	2002
Institutions of higher teacher education	Normal universities	13	32	34
	Four-year teacher colleges	48	46	69
	Three-year higher specialized teacher schools	133	175	80
	Total	194	253	183
Secondary	Secondary teacher schools	908	919	430
Institutions of in-service teacher training	Educational colleges	290	251	103
	Schools for teachers' in-service training	2 174	2 033	1 703

Source: Information Centre, MOE.

Teacher deployment and management is very closely related with the teacher education system. Before the educational reforms, in the 1980s, all college students and those who received teacher education paid no fees for their education and received stipends for their daily expenses. After graduation, they would be assigned jobs and teaching jobs without any choice by governments at various levels, in general, working in schools until their retirement. Even those who studied at normal universities would be deployed to schools in rural areas, because they had received free higher education and subsequently had been deployed without choice. Beginning in the early 1990s and particularly after 1994, because of the change from free teacher education and free higher education to fee-paying teacher education, changes were made to the graduate employment system, including changes to the former system

of teacher deployment. Graduates might have the right to choose where they wanted to work, and also those graduating from teacher colleges and/or normal universities might choose in what kind of schools they would go to work. This new employment system could be called 'matching supply and demand and dual selection,' the system enabling the movement of teachers from one school to another and also from one place to another, as well as the choice of leaving the teaching profession altogether, when the employment contract ended.

With the founding of such a graduation employment system and the opening up of the employment market, there came the change of the teacher education system. In June 1999, the *Decision to Deepen Education Reform and Promote a Full-Scale Improvement of Quality Education* (CCCPC/State Council, 1999) was issued, which put forward the requirements as 'strengthening and reforming teacher education, improving quality of teachers, adjusting the arrangements of institutions, encouraging the participation of comprehensive universities and non-normal institution of higher education in the training of pre-teachers, exploring to run experimental teacher schools in the conditional comprehensive higher institutions.' In March 1999, *Some Suggestions on Teacher Education Reform and Development* was issued by the Ministry of Education, proposing to 'further enlarge the recourse channel of primary and secondary education, and encourage the participation of quality comprehensive universities into the cultivation'.

Owing to the government policy that encouraged non-traditional teacher education institutions to support teacher education, and merged three-year and/or four-year teacher colleges into other institutions of higher education, a phase of independent teacher colleges and normal universities coming together with other higher education institutions dedicated to teacher education gradually came into being. By the end of 2002, the number of non-normal teacher colleges involved in teacher education had increased from around 20 to 258 at the beginning of 1980. The ratio of prepared teachers produced by non-normal teacher colleges to the total number of prepared teachers was 27.4% (figures from MOE Information Centre).

Meanwhile, some comprehensive universities began to initiate their own teacher education programmes, such as Xiamen University and Beijing University, which began to establish educational colleges. Currently, only a few comprehensive universities have followed suit, though some teacher colleges have merged with comprehensive universities to continue

undertaking their responsibilities for teacher education. Since 1992, eleven educational colleges at provincial level have been merged into normal universities or comprehensive universities, forty municipal or regional educational colleges have been promoted into comprehensive or teacher colleges, together with higher specialized teacher schools and/or other specialized professional schools (Xun, 2004).

Together with these changes to the teacher education system and the opening up of the employment market, the teacher certification system has also changed in order to ensure quality teachers for school education and for EFA. Under the *Teacher Qualification Regulations* (MOE, 1995), the three requirements for a teaching qualification are Mandarin level; basic quality and competence in teaching; and knowledge of pedagogy and psychology.

Because of the achievement of nine-year universal compulsory education in the most populous regions of China, EFA now mainly concerns schools in poor rural areas in general and poor rural and remote areas in the western provinces in particular. Though teacher deployment and management in city schools has gradually accommodated the changes in the employment market, the situation of poor rural areas is still serious; every effort is being addressed at achieving the goal of EFA, particularly the goal of quality EFA.

In the mid-1980s and under the administrative decentralization since that time, besides the teachers graduating from normal schools and/or teachers' colleges being assigned to work in rural schools for EFA implementation, some teachers who had received no teacher training before, were selected by local (township or even village) authorities or local educational authorities to teach in rural schools, particularly during the period of universal compulsory education. Such teachers were called Min-ban teachers (non-public finance-supported teachers). The number of Min-ban teachers was 2.4 million in 1992, constituting 26% of all primary and secondary school teachers all over China, and in 2000 there were still more than 1 million Min-ban teachers (Li, 2000).

Min-ban teachers have contributed greatly to the development and consolidation of compulsory education in China in general, and to the achievement of quality EFA in particular. However, with social and economic development and the gradual founding of the market economy, Min-ban teachers, because of their lower educational backgrounds, could not meet the quality demands of rural education. As early as the National Educational Conference in 1994, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China

and the State Council tried 'to basically solve the problem of Min-ban teachers at the end of 20th century,' and to stop the Min-ban teacher deployment system which was not suitable for the socialist market economy, under the guidance of 'reducing numbers, raising quality, improving treatment, and reinforcing administration' policy and through the five words policy of 'stopping, transferring, enrolling, firing and retiring.' The Standing Office of the State Council (1997) issued the *Announcement Concerning the Solving Problem of Min-ban Teachers*. This policy may be considered an important approach to the promotion of the quality of teachers for EFA implementation.

Since 1985 when the *Decision on the Reform of the Educational System* was issued, local governments at township level have taken most of the responsibility for recruiting Min-ban teachers and have paid the majority of their salaries, with some special stipends from educational authority at county level. Min-ban teachers generally have received lower salaries than those of their peer teachers who have graduated from normal schools or teachers' colleges. With the abolition of the Min-ban teacher deployment system, and with the change of fees to taxes (see below), those remaining Min-ban teachers will be under the administration of local educational authorities at the county level.

We are facing another major problem with regard to the quality of teachers or the capacity building and professional development required for teachers in rural schools for quality EFA. The percentage of qualified teachers in rural schools in poor areas has remained lower than the percentage in both economically advanced rural schools and city schools. Schools in advanced rural areas require qualified primary-school teachers with a two-year teachers' college education, while schools in poor rural areas still set the standards for qualified teachers as being only senior secondary teacher education level (Chu, 2003; Wen, 2004). Taking Xunhua County of Qinghai Province in 2001 as an example, among all the 713 primary school teachers of the whole county, 7 have the certification of a four-year teachers' education, 31 have diplomas of two-year college teachers' education, 486 have finished their senior secondary teachers' education, and the remaining 189 teachers are senior secondary school graduates or those who have not graduated from senior secondary schools, but only have just passed the 'specialized qualifications.' Among all the qualified primary school teachers, 325 teachers have been transferred from former Min-ban teachers (ZHANG, 2004). At the same time, because of limited educational resources, some counties with less

financial income would rather select more unregistered teachers than recruit qualified teachers graduating from teacher education institutions, because the salaries of the former will be less than the latter. Allowing unregistered teachers to teach slows the rate of improvement of qualified teachers in rural areas for EFA implementation.

A survey covering the attitudes toward locating the responsibility for the Personnel Appointment and Dismissal in Rural Schools in China, gives us some information concerning the reform of teacher deployment and management (HUANG and ZHANG, 2004). The survey was conducted by researchers in West-South China Normal University from May 2002 to November 2003. 1800 pieces of questionnaire were distributed to more than ten provinces in eastern, western and central regions in China. And 1423 pieces of effective questionnaire were returned back, among which 360 pieces were from eastern region, 611 pieces from central region and 452 pieces from western region. Among all those 1423 persons who answered the questionnaire, 804 are teachers in rural schools, 81 are school principals and other administrators, 154 are leaders and administrators in educational authorities and other government departments, and 384 are those from other walks of life. Questions concern the responsibility for the appointment and dismissal of principals and deputy principals and other school administrators, and the responsibility for recruitment of teachers and other working in rural schools. Regarding the recruitment of teachers, more than 35% of those surveyed thought that it was better for principals to have the responsibility of recruiting teachers, and about 20% thought that county-level educational authorities should have that responsibility. While this may represent positive attitudes towards greater decentralization and school-based management, it could also be a reflection of not wanting poorly resourced county-level educational authorities to have such responsibilities.

As to the capacity building and professional development of teachers for quality EFA implementation, we have teacher in-service training schools in every county and district, and have good ideas of school-based teacher training (SONG, 2001). However, we have met many difficulties in offering further education or in-service training to those teachers in rural schools where the achievement of the goals of quality EFA still needs a long way to go. ZHANG (2004) in his paper analyzes the reasons why it is difficult for those teachers to receive further education. He concludes the following three reasons:

1. Teaching sites are located away from the schools, and teachers there have heavy teaching loads, particularly in one-teacher schools, from which the teachers cannot leave to have further education.
2. Because of the limited financial resources for education, it is difficult for the educational authorities and/or schools to pay the fees for the further training or distance education or some kinds of training, and it is also difficult for teachers themselves to pay such fees because their salaries are not sufficient.
3. Some teachers are no longer young and thus have no serious desire to acquire further education. Taking Huangzhong County of Qinghai Province as an example, among 1224 primary school teachers, 582 teachers are at the age of 45 or above. They just want to work until their retirement.

3. Resource mobilization and management

EFA resource mobilization is closely related to the reform of the educational administration system. A highly centralized administration was once the main feature of China's education system. Reform of this administrative system has become one of the most important features of China's educational reform. Relevant to the decentralization of economic administration during the period of economic transition, there began the decentralization of educational administration and management. Two important approaches have been adopted, which influenced the development of resource mobilization and management.

The first was the implementation of the system of local responsibility for basic education and administration at different levels in compulsory education in 1985, regulated in the *Decision on the Reform of the Educational System*. Within this new system of administration, the central government is responsible only for national education planning, the school system, curriculum standards, the setting up of a special grant fund to backward areas and for teacher education, and inspection of education at the provincial level. Provincial governments are responsible for provincial education planning, selecting textbooks and examining provincial compiled textbooks, evaluating basic education, setting up special grants to fund economically backward areas and minority areas within the provinces. Governments at county level have the main responsibility for the implementation of compulsory education, including collecting and managing money for education, distributing principals and teachers and directing education and teaching work.

Governments at the township level collect the educational surtax and extra money from residents in rural areas, the amount of which once constituted about 30% of all inputs for compulsory education in rural areas (Gao, 2004). The *Decision on the Reform of the Educational System* defines the responsibilities of governments at different levels, and at the same time widens the channels of resource mobilization. The diversified system of resource mobilization has been developed with government financial investment as the main part, supplemented by tuition and fees, the educational surtax and extra money collection. Under this decentralization of responsibilities of the educational administration, government at the township level and residents in rural areas, where EFA implementation is serious, are expected to shoulder about 60% of all educational expenditure. The educational surtax has become an important channel for mobilizing resources to support compulsory education and EFA in rural areas.

Extra money collection from residents in rural areas was a very special phenomenon of the period from 1986 to 2000. This was due to the fact that governments at the township level, as well as at the county level, were unable to provide sufficient finance to support compulsory education. If we had only been dependent on government inputs, it would have taken one hundred years for a high population country of China to achieve the goal of universal compulsory education (QU et al., 1990). The collection of voluntary money and donations for compulsory education from residents in the rural areas was understood as extra money collection, which had existed for more than ten years. Without the enthusiasm of people to support compulsory education with their extra money and voluntary work, China would not have made such a great progress in compulsory education and EFA (China Association of Education, 1991).

The second important change was to authorize different bodies to run schools. During the period of centralized administration, only governments could run schools, but with this change, schools are now run by a variety of bodies, even individuals. Such non-public schools are called Minban Schools in China, or directly, private schools. By the end of the 1980s, there began to appear some non-public institutions, but most of them were spare-time or evening schools, and the courses they offered were mainly short language or vocational courses. Particularly since the early 1990s, and with the gradual establishment of a market-oriented economy, non-public schools have grown. According to some statistics, there were about 60,000 such schools and institutions from kindergartens to post-secondary colleges in 1994 (and they can be divided

into several categories according to how they are maintained: aided schools; joint-venture schools; private schools and private international schools.), and most of them were kindergartens. In 2000, there were 3,316 non-public secondary schools and 4,341 non-public primary schools, among which are 2,318 primary schools in rural areas (Wang, 2003).

It should be affirmed that Minban schools meet, to a certain degree, the social needs of various parties (or people) for the education of their children, becoming one component of wider educational undertakings in China. Such schools mobilize resources from the non-government sector and from parents and save public expenditure, because students and their parents pay tuition fees, while the schools receive no financial support from governments, even those schools at the compulsory education stage. Of course, governments provide enough places for children to attend without tuition fees in the compulsory education stage. The Non-Public School Promoting Act of the People's Republic of China and the Regulations for the Implementation of the Non-Public School Promoting Act adopted in 2002, however, have provided a more favourable legal and institutional environment for such a pluralistic, non-public education.

Teachers working in Minban schools are employed and paid by the schools themselves through working contracts, and the salaries of teachers in such schools, generally speaking, are higher than salaries of teachers working in the public sector. Some such schools are now run only through tuition fees, and some, in fact, receive investment and are run by business companies and are not dependent only on tuition fees.

- The diversification of educational institutions will not be reached without the diversification of resources and funding. In the 1990s, resources from channels other than the government budget increased faster than government resources, in 1992, for instance, by more than 20%, whereas government resources increased by only 17%. The purpose of financing education through diversified resources is to expand investment resources utilizing more individual contributions, while at the same time increasing government investment in education. Since 1990, government appropriations to education have increased at a lower rate than the increased tuition and fees paid by students and their families, and also social donations. The trend toward greater resource diversification since 1990 can be judged from the following: the share of the budgetary

education appropriation, relative to total educational expenditure, continued to decrease from 64.63% in 1990 to 59.83% in 1994;
- The proportion of income from student tuition and fees increased from 4.21% in 1990 to 9.87% in 1993;
- Income from social contributions and donations as a share of total education expenditures decreased from 7.98% in 1990 to 6.55% in 1994 due to the great reduction in the amounts received from fund raising in the rural areas;
- The proportion of total education expenditure provided by enterprises and businesses for their affiliated education institutions increased marginally from 5.83% in 1990 to 5.99% in 1994.

Together with the development of the decentralized system of administration and resource mobilization, the central government has continued to be responsible for universal compulsory education and the eradication of illiteracy. As a follow-up to the Action Outline of EFA in China issued in 1993, a 'Project of Compulsory Education in National Poor Areas' was launched from 1995, lasting until 2000. Between 1996 and 2000, the central government provided between 1996-2000 the amount of 3.9 billion yuan as a special grant to those poor areas and governments at both provincial and district levels provided more than 6 billion yuan, totalling 10 billion yuan. This project covered poor districts within twenty-one provinces, improving their educational conditions, such as rebuilding school buildings, buying teaching equipment, books and teaching materials and desks and chairs, and training teachers and principals (Zhao, 1999). With the effort and undertakings of governments at all the different levels and by people all over China, the net enrolment rate for primary school children increased from 96% in 1985 to 99.1% in 2000; and for junior high-school children from 36.8% to 88.6% over the same period. The illiteracy rate of young adults decreased from 20% in 1985 to less than 5% in 2000 (Su, 2002).

There has also existed a nationwide voluntary project named 'HOPE Project,' which calls for donations from individuals and various kinds of bodies such as business companies, enterprises, schools and universities in urban areas, etc. to mobilize resources to support those children who really would not be able to attend school due to their extremely poor family backgrounds. This 'HOPE Project' has successfully supported hundreds and thousands of children to finish their compulsory school education, supported various kinds of teacher training seminars and workshops, and supported the construction of 'hope' schools in poor rural areas.

Since the reform of the system of educational administration and the development of decentralization, there has been great progress and a rapid development of compulsory education and EFA in China. At the same time, however, deficiencies in the system also exist, such as the weak resource mobilization ability at both township and village levels, which, directly, has influenced the attainment of universal compulsory education. The State Education Commission, now named the Ministry of Education, therefore, put forth the idea of establishing a new balancing mechanism in compulsory education in the 1990s, as follows:

- Further clarifying the clear responsibilities of local governments at different levels, with government at county level, instead of that at township level, as the main administrative authority, so as to deepen and perfect the reform of the administrative system in compulsory education. At the same time, the governments at county, as well as provincial levels, are required to provide poverty-stricken townships with quota subsidies.
- Reforming the investment mechanism in compulsory education. The allocation of funding should be guaranteed, according to the average training cost per student. Educational surtaxes in cities and villages should be fully paid, collected, and used only for such a purpose.
- Establishing a reliable budget system for the salaries of primary and secondary school teachers, so as to enable teachers to receive their salaries on time. The governments at county, as well as at provincial levels are required to provide special grants to aid the universalization of compulsory education in poor areas.

In 2002, two further changes were introduced concerning resource mobilization and management for compulsory education in rural areas. Firstly, the system of resource mobilization through the educational surtax and extra money collection was abolished, changing only to taxes, in order to reduce the heavy burden on peasants that such kinds of fees had imposed. This change is simply called 'Fee-to-Tax Reform.' The second change entailed shifting the responsibility for resource mobilization and management from township and village levels to county level. The General Office of the State Council (2002) issued in April 2002 the Announcement Concerning Perfection of Administrative System of Compulsory Education in Rural Areas, stating that under the leadership of the State Council, the administrative system of compulsory education should be the responsibilities of local governments, and compulsory education should be administered at

different levels, but with the main responsibility and authority at county level. By the end of 2002, 94% of all counties had taken over the responsibility of teachers' salary administration and 89% of all counties had taken over the responsibility of staff personnel administration, both from governments at township level (Hao, 2004). Table 4.2 shows the changes in the responsibilities of governments at different levels under the 'Fee-to-Tax Reform'.

Table 4.2. Changes in responsibility for resource mobilization and management (1986–2000, 2001–present)

System of local responsibility and administration at different levels, with township government as the centre (1986–2000)					
	Central government	**Province**	**County**	**Township**	**Village**
Staff salaries				Salaries provided	
Running expenses				Responsible for running expenses in junior secondary schools	Responsible for running expenses in primary schools
Maintenance of school buildings				Responsible for construction of school buildings	Responsible for construction of school buildings
Grant-in-aid					
Special grants to poor areas	Setting up special grants	Setting up accompanying special grants			
Equipment and library books					
System of local responsibility and administration at different levels, with county government as the centre (2001–present)					
	Central government	**Province**	**County**	**Township**	**Village**
Staff salaries	Special grants to teachers and staff in poor counties	Special grants to teachers and staff in poor counties	Salaries provided		
Running expenses				Only responsible for part of running expenses	Only responsible for part of running expenses
Maintenance	Special	Special	Raise	Offering land	

of school buildings	subsidy for repairing dangerous school buildings in poor areas	subsidy for repairing dangerous school buildings in poor areas	money for new school buildings and for repair and maintenance	for the new school buildings	
Grant-in-aid	Setting up special subsidy				
Special grants to poor arrears	Setting up special subsidy				
Equipment and library books			Buying books and equipment		

Source: Gao (2004).

According to this new administrative system, county governments now have the main responsibility for resource mobilization for rural compulsory education, and governments at provincial and national levels offer financial support to poor counties through special educational grants and indirect support through general financial payment transfers. Compared to the former system of administration, which was more decentralized, this new system looks less diversified in terms of resource mobilization, because the educational surtax and extra money collection from peasants has been prohibited.

Such a Fee-to-Tax Reform has resulted in the following positive aspects (Tian, 2004; Hou and Xiao, 2004):

1. It ensures that teachers can get their salaries on time. Before this reform, because some governments at township level were unable to mobilize sufficient resources for compulsory education, the salaries of primary and secondary schools teachers, particularly those working in rural schools and those unregistered and Min-ban teachers, were often delayed, and as well, there were shortfalls in their amounts. According to an investigation in the first half of 1999 by the National Education Union, in two thirds of provinces all over China, salary payments were in arrears, with some salary payment to teachers taking as long as a year to be paid. And according to some statistics of the Ministry of Education, teachers' salary payments were in arrears in 22 provinces, amounting to more than 7.6 billion by April 2000 (Wang, 2002). The new system, however, requires that with the county financing, the

payment of teachers' salaries would be guaranteed on time and that they would be paid in full.

2. It promotes partly the balanced development of rural compulsory education within counties. Before this reform, because primary schools were financed and administered by villages, junior high schools were financed and administered by governments at township level, schools in different villages and different townships were of different quality because of their different levels of economic development. Under the new system, governments at county level mobilize resources and balance them in different schools, thus assisting the balanced development of compulsory education within the counties.

3. It promotes the payment transfers of special grants by the central and provincial governments. For example, the central government of China during the Tenth Five-Year Plan (2001–2005) provided several transfer payments: (1) central finance arranged a fund of 5 billion yuan per year for teachers' salaries in rural primary and secondary schools in central and western areas of China; (2) central government invested 5 billion yuan for five years to arrange the implementation of the Second Project of Compulsory Education in National Poor Areas, supporting 522 poor counties which had not yet achieved the goal of universal compulsory education; (3) from 2001 to 2006, the central government will invest 9 billion yuan, specified for the implementation of the National Project of Rebuilding Dangerous School Buildings, or about 1.5 billion yuan per year; (4) central finance provides special grants to set up the National Grant to Poor Students in Compulsory Education, investing 100 million yuan per year since 2001; (5) central finance has provided special funds since 2001, for the purpose of distributing free textbooks to those children from rural poor families in the middle and western poor areas, 100 million yuan in 2001, 200 million yuan in 2002, and 400 million yuan in 2003. Particular with the implementation of the Fee-to-Tax Reform, the central government reinforces, to a great extent, the financial support given to compulsory education in rural areas (Gao, 2004).

However, because of the changes in responsibilities for resource mobilization and administration for compulsory education and EFA, despite the central government having increased greatly its investment and transfer payments, most governments at county level, generally remain under deep pressure from

their inability to mobilize sufficient resources for compulsory education and EFA, and resource shortages for compulsory education and EFA continue to exist at county level. One reason may be due to the abolition of the educational surtax and extra money collection in rural areas. Box 1 shows the decrease in the total amount of expenditure on compulsory education after the change of resource mobilization system:

Box 1

Taking, for example, Huaiyuan County which is the pilot area of Fee-to-Tax Reform in Anhui Province, of the total amount of educational resources in Huaiyuan County in 1998, 89.01 million yuan, the government financial grant was 49.70 millions. In 2000, the government financial grant was 64.19 million, 14.49 millions more than that in 1998. However, because of the abolition of the educational surtax and extra money collection which was 39.31 million, the total amount of resources decreased by about 30% to 24.82 million.

In Yijin Township of Changfeng County, the financial grant in 2000 was 1.99 million, 580 thousand Yuan more than that in 1999. Because of the abolition of the educational surtax and extra money collection which was 1.47 million, the total amount of resources for education decreased by 31% to 890 thousand Yuan.
Source: Wang (2002).

4. Experiences and lessons

1. The change of teacher deployment in China from assigned teaching jobs to market-oriented employment reflects the trends of economic reform and educational development, which also conforms to the developmental process of teacher education in the world. At the same time, however, shortages of qualified teachers in rural schools for EFA implementation will continue, partly because those who study educational courses in colleges and universities now have a free choice to work in city schools or to work outside the teaching profession altogether, and partly because governments at county level in rural areas are unable or unwilling to recruit qualified young teachers due to financial resource shortages.

2. Decentralization is relative to China. In the period from 1985 to 2000, governments at the township level undertook the main responsibilities: to pay the salaries of both qualified teachers and Min-ban teachers, and to mobilize resources for compulsory education and EFA implementation. At that time, there existed diversified channels of

resource mobilization. The peasants, however, played a great role in resource mobilization and felt a heavy financial load. This is a serious concern in China, relating to the rural problem as a whole. Now we still may consider the responsibility at county level as decentralization, but considerable educational finance comes from governments at different levels, with less diversification of resource mobilization.

3. Much research on the financing of compulsory education and EFA concludes that governments at different levels should cover all the financial requirements of compulsory education. It is highly necessary to build a formal system of transfer payments in compulsory education in general and EFA implementation in particular, not only for the central government but also provincial governments (Wang and Yuan, 2002). Only through such means can we overcome educational resource shortages and achieve the goal of compulsory education and quality EFA implementation.

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Chapter 5:
Education for All in India: Teacher and Resource Management in the Context of Decentralization[28]

1. Introduction

India has 28 states and 7 union territories, 593 administrative districts, 6,496 subdistrict level administrative units (i.e. community development blocks), 5,161 towns, and 638,665 villages (Census of India, 2001). States and the centre function under a federal relationship. Union territories are under the direct control of the Central Government. Around two-thirds of the population (65.38%) are literate. According to the UNDP *Human Development Report 2004*, India ranks 127th in the family of nations. At the state level, there is wide disparity in the level of human development. In the 1990s, smaller states have improved their level of human development, relatively bigger states like Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa continue to have lower HDI.

In India, since 1976, through a Constitutional Amendment, education has been placed in the Concurrent List. The Ministry of Human Resource Development plays a major role in ensuring a coordinated development of education all over the country and in developing national programmes in some essential areas like elementary, adult and secondary education and research. State Education Departments share the major responsibility in administering education, particularly at the school level. Management of school education has been decentralized in principle in most of the states. The government and local bodies are managing around 91% of the primary schools and 76% of upper primary schools.

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There are broadly four stages of school education in India - i.e. primary, upper primary, secondary and higher secondary. Elementary education is divided into two stages: the first five years constitute the primary stage (grades I–V) and the next three years, the upper primary stage or middle school (grades VI–VIII). Basic education in India includes literacy, early childhood development and education and eight years of formal schooling or its equivalent. In pursuance of the National Policy on Education of 1986, there have been attempts to evolve a uniform pattern of school education with twelve years of schooling, which is known as the 10+2 pattern.

The Constitution of India makes a commitment to provide free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of fourteen. The National Policy on Education (NPE) in 1986, and its revision in 1992 detail the policy measures and broad interventions for providing basic education for all. The international developments in the 1990s for EFA (World Declaration on Education for All, Jomtien, 1990; Dakar Framework for Action, 2000) together with several positive developments within India brought to centre stage the need to recognize basic education as a fundamental right of every citizen. In 2002, with the 93rd Constitutional Amendment, eight years of elementary schooling became the fundamental right of every child. The government also adopted the National Charter for Children (NCC) in 2003 and reiterated its commitment to provide free and compulsory education to all children of age 6 to 14 (Article 21A). The NCC also states: 'it is a fundamental duty of a parent or guardian to provide opportunities for education to his child or ward between the age of six and fourteen years' (Article 51A).

Accordingly, the Central Government, in partnership with state governments, has initiated a number of programmes during the last one and a half decades to achieve the EFA goals. Building on the lessons learned from the implementation of these programmes, the Government of India launched, in the mission mode, the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) (programme for universal elementary education) in the year 2000. In the SSA, effective management of teachers and resources at the local level, particularly at subdistrict level, is recognized as extremely critical in making progress towards EFA. Therefore, decentralization of planning and management of elementary education as a strategy has been given greater emphasis in the Tenth Plan. In this context, the main objective of the paper is to look into the existing practices of teacher and resource management in India, with a focus on operational issues.

The paper is broadly divided into six sections. Section 2 briefly discusses the ongoing programmes and the progress towards EFA. An attempt has been made in Section 3 to report the current status of decentralized governance of basic education. Section 4 deals with the issues of deployment and management of teachers in the elementary education subsector. Section 5 attempts to highlight the issues and trends relating to decentralized management of resources. The concluding section summarizes the major findings and provides some suggestions to improve management of teachers and resources at the local level.

2. Ongoing programmes and progress towards EFA

2.1 Ongoing programmes for EFA

Since the early 1990s, several programmes have been implemented in the elementary education subsector. The important large-scale basic education development programmes include the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP); Shiksha Karmi Project (SKP); Mahila Samakhya (MS); Alternative and Innovative Education and Education Guarantee Scheme (AIE&EGS); Mid-day Meal Scheme (MDM); Teacher Education Programme (TEP); Integrated Child Development Services Scheme (ICDS); Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Programme (UPBEP); Lok Jumbish (LJ); Bihar Education Project (BEP); and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA). The SSA is an 'umbrella programme' that subsumes all ongoing projects, programmes and schemes.

In the Tenth Plan (2002–07), elementary education has been given the highest priority within the education sector, and the SSA forms the major EFA programme. Decentralization of planning, supervision and management of education through local bodies at the district, block and village levels is one of the major strategies in the Tenth Plan to achieve the goal of EFA. Besides, as part of the follow-up, a National Plan of Action for EFA (NPAEFA) has been developed in 2003, which further details the strategies and interventions for achieving the goals of EFA.

The SSA, an umbrella programme for universal elementary education, aims to provide useful and quality elementary education for all children of the 6–14 age group by 2010. Through the SSA, the country, for the first time, is attempting to translate its commitments into a programme of UEE, which provides for greater democratic participation and community involvement;

decentralized planning and management with a specific focus on local requirements; and the needs of the disadvantaged regions, social groups, girls and children in difficult circumstances. The programme calls for community ownership of schools and interventions through effective decentralization. This is facilitated by involvement of women's groups, Village Education Committee (VEC) members and members of Panchayati Raj institutions.

Table 5.1. Responsibility of Panchayati Raj institutions in selected Indian states

State	District Panchayat/ Zilla Parisad	Block/Taluka/Mandal Panchayat/Panchayat Samiti	Village/Gram Panchayat
Andhra Pradesh		Manage elementary and higher elementary schools	
Gujarat	Primary education: recruit primary school teachers; construct school buildings	Establish primary schools; primary education	Primary schools
Karnataka	Establish and maintain ashram schools; promote primary education	Promote primary education; construct, repair, and maintain schools	Promote public awareness and participation in primary schools; ensure enrolment and attendance in primary schools
Madhya Pradesh		Establish primary-school buildings	Inspect schools; construct and maintain primary schools; distribute free textbooks and uniforms; manage scholarships for SC/ST primary-school children; organize non-formal education
Maharashtra	Establish, maintain, inspect, and repair primary schools; provide teaching aids to primary schools	Primary education	Promote education
Rajasthan	Ensure proper functioning of primary schools	Promote primary education	Supervise primary schools; transfer, post, and disburse salary of primary-school teachers
Uttar Pradesh	Construct and maintain primary schools	Establish and maintain primary schools	Establish primary schools
West Bengal	Construct primary schools in flood-affected areas; supervise primary schools	Promote primary education	Construct primary schools in flood-affected areas; distribute textbooks

Source: World Bank (1997).

The SSA covers the entire country and addresses the needs of nearly 192 million children in 1.1 million habitations. The specific objectives of the SSA include: (i) all children in school, EGS centre/alternate school/back-to-school camp by 2003; (ii) all children complete five years of primary schooling by 2007; (iii) all children complete eight years of schooling by 2010; (iv) providing elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis on education for life; (v) bridging all gender and social gaps at primary stage by 2007, and at elementary education level by 2010; and (vi) universal retention by 2010.

The following characteristics are central to the SSA, which operates in a 'mission' mode: convergence of all interventions in education and related areas; institutional reform and capacity building; community empowerment; improvement of mainstream educational administration; community based monitoring; habitation level planning; focus on education of girls and special groups; focus on quality and relevance; sustainable financing; focus on empowerment; partnership with non-governmental organizations; and advocacy, a campaign approach.

The emphasis in the SSA is on functional decentralization down to the school level in order to improve community participation. Besides recognizing Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)/Tribal Councils in Scheduled Areas, including the Gram Sabha, the states are being encouraged to enlarge the accountability framework by involving NGOs/teachers, activists/women organizations, etc. Along with this, the Programme of Mobilizing Local Support to Primary Schools (PMLSPS) has been introduced under the SSA in 2004, which aim at mobilizing local level financial and other support for government and semi-government managed primary schools. It is envisaged that, every year, at least 1% of the country's government/semi-government primary schools will be supported under the programme, reaching up to 10% of total primary schools by 2010.

As education influences equity, it is important to ensure that educational provision is equitably distributed. Primary education being the entry level, it not only covers the largest number of children, but equity in access at this level influences access to further levels of education. Primary education is provided by the state in India, so its distribution is reflected in government policies. Although considerable progress has been made, gender and regional disparities continue to persist. They present a major challenge for planning the provision of basic education for all. From 1990 onwards, the policy response

to address issues relating to regional, social and gender disparities is through targeting. In the effort to ensure equality between women and men, India recognizes the importance of gender mainstreaming, i.e. empowerment, accountability and integration. Besides political will, an effort has been made to incorporate a gender perspective into the planning process, particularly those relating to development planning and planning for human resource development. This gender perspective has been integrated into analysis of progress, appraisal, implementation, monitoring and evaluation policies, and formulation of programmes and projects aimed at providing basic education for all.

Empowerment of women is the most critical precondition for the participation of girls and women in education. In 2001, India adopted the National Policy on Empowerment of Women to effectively address gender disparities, particularly in education. A host of proactive initiatives have been launched over the years to bring about gender parity in basic education. All the basic education programmes in India, including the SSA, are highly gender sensitive. Special incentives are being provided to ensure girls' participation in basic education. Past efforts have brought down gender disparity in basic education considerably. Besides, fifteen years of free schooling (i.e. up to graduation level) is provided to girls and women. Early childhood care and education programmes are being further strengthened to allow girls to attend schools. Women's empowerment programmes like Mahila Samakhya are being implemented to raise the awareness about education of girls and women. In the Tenth Plan, the National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) has been introduced since September 2003, which provides additional components for the education of girls in almost 2,600 educationally backward blocks where the rural female literacy rate is lower than and gender gap is higher than the national average.

2.2 Progress towards EFA

The progress towards EFA during the last decade is remarkable in India. Literacy rates in India touched 65.38-% in 2001, up from 52.21% in the preceding decade. The increase of 13.2%age points is the highest in a single decade since 1901. Literacy rates among males and females are 75.65% (up by 11.72 %) and 54.16% (up by 14.87 %) respectively in 2001. The gender gap has narrowed down from 28.84%age points in 1991 to 21.70%age points in 2001. There has been significant decline in the absolute number of non-literates from 328.88 million in 1991 to 296 million in 2001. Kerala continues

to have the highest literacy rate of 90.92% and Bihar has the lowest literacy rate of 47.53%. In all states and union territories, the male literacy rate is now over 60%. The traditionally backward regions of Rajasthan, Orissa, and Madhya Pradesh have shown major improvements.

Primary and upper primary schooling facilities have been expanded to cover small and un-served habitations in remote rural areas. Since 1950–51, the number of primary and upper primary schools has increased substantially, more than doubling the number of primary schools by 2001–02, and the number of upper primary schools increasing more than fifteen times over the same period. The percentage of habitations and rural population served by primary and upper primary schools/sections within a distance of 1 and 3 km respectively has also been increasing. Nearly 87% of habitations in 2002 had a primary school/section within or at a walking distance of 1 km, and 78% had an upper primary school facility within or at a walking distance of 3 km.[29] The ratio of upper primary schools to primary schools has improved to 1:2.7 in 2002 (MHRD, 2003).

In addition, there are a large number of Alternative and Innovative Education (AIE) centres, Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) centres and unrecognized schools which impart both primary as well as upper primary education, the former for children who, because of their circumstances, cannot enter full time schooling. Under the EGS/AIE, 6.64 million children have been covered as of March 2004 (MHRD, Annual Report 2003–04). Under the SSA, arrangements have been made to open 80,000 new schools, appoint 0.45 million teachers during the last two years. Under the programme, physical infrastructure has been improved through the provision of more than 100,000 additional classrooms, around 60,000 school buildings, 100,000 toilets, and drinking water facilities in 75,000 schools. In spite of the substantial expansion of elementary education, disparities among and within states prevail. There are also gender and social disparities in access to elementary education. Even after this expansion of elementary education facilities, some rural habitations do not have schooling facilities as per the norm. Most of these un-served habitations are sparsely populated.

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[29] Provisional, based on the *Flash Report of the Seventh All India Educational Survey*, 2002.

Enrolment at primary level (grades I-V) was 122.13 million30 (964.94 million boys and 57.19 million girls) in 2002-03. At the upper primary level (grades VI-VIII), enrolment was 46.95 million (26.3 million boys and 20.61 million girls) in 2002-03. At the primary and upper primary levels, enrolment has increased at an average annual growth rate of 3.56% and 4.74% respectively between 2000–01 and 2002–03. During the same period, enrolment at the elementary level has increased at an average annual growth rate of 3.91%.

The gross enrolment ratio (GER) at primary level was 103.01% (98.61% for girls) in 2002-03. The GER at primary level was 103.01% (98.61% for girls) in 2002-03. At the upper primary level, the GER was 63.32% (57.36% for girls) in 2002-03. The gender parity index (GPI) of GER at primary level has improved to 0.92 in 2002-03 from 0.82 in 2000-01. At the upper primary level, the GPI of GER has improved to 0.83 in 2002–03 from 0.75 in 2000–01. Even after this remarkable progress in the coverage of elementary school age children, many children in the age group of 6-14 still remain out of the school. The number of out-of-school children, however, has come down from 35 million in 2001-02 to an estimated 23 million in 2003-04 (MHRD, Annual Report 2003–04).

High drop-out rates at primary and upper primary levels continue to be a major concern. However, in recent years, these rates are decreasing steadily. The drop-out rate at primary level has fallen from an average of 40.07% (39.7% for boys and 41.9% for girls) in 2001–02 to 35.06% (36.0% for boys and 33.32% for girls) in 2002–03.[31] At upper primary level, the drop-out rate has marginally decreased to an average of 52.79% (52.28% for boys and 53.45% for girls) in 2002–03 from 53.7% (50.3% for boys and 57.7% for girls) in 2001–02. In spite of the policy of no detention up to grade V, a large number of children continue to repeat grades, though the gender differential in the repetition rates is almost negligible.

[30] Provisional, based on *Abstract of Selected Educational Statistics 2002–03*, MHRD.

[31] Provisional, based on *Selected Educational Statistics*, various years, MHRD.

3. Policy perspective and current status of decentralization

3.1 Policy perspective

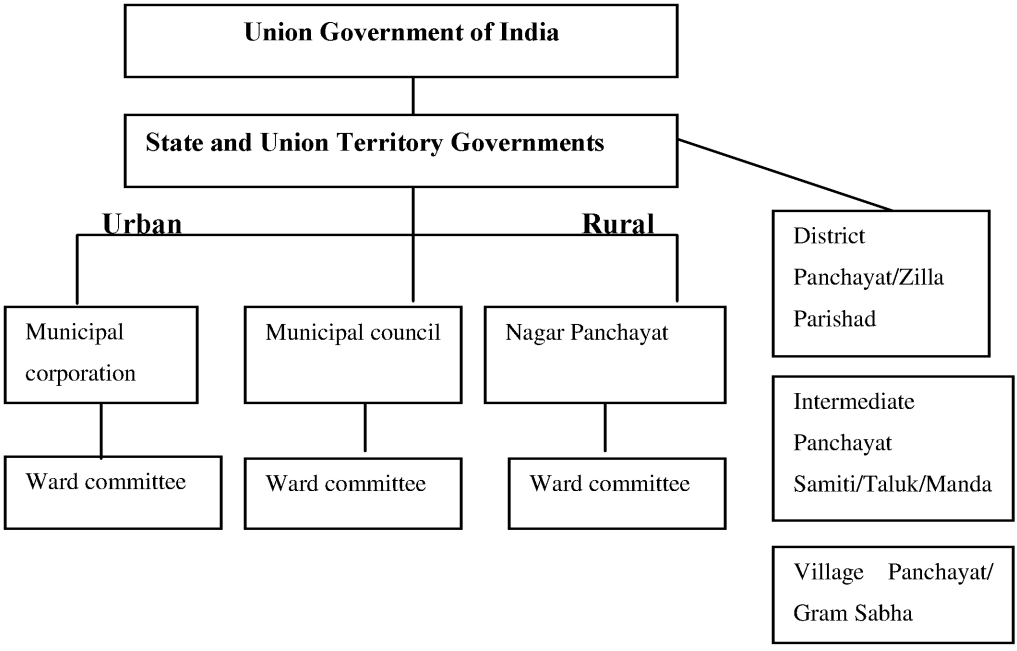
India's form of government is federal. Decentralization of governance in India is, to a large extent, synonymous with the system of Panchayati Raj. Article 40 of the Constitution of India states that ''the State shall take steps to organize Village Panchayats and endow them with such power and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government'. Thus, states are primarily responsible for designing and implementing their own decentralization programme. Though the First Five-Year Plan recognized the need for a disaggregated planning exercise through a process of democratic decentralization incorporating the idea of the village plan and of District Development Councils, democratic decentralization was given a boost with the enactment of the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts during the Ninth Plan in 1992.

In 1992, the 73rd and Amendment authorized states to introduce a three-tier system of rural local government, with the District Council (Zilla Parisad/District Panchayat) at the top, an intermediate level (Panchayat Samiti/Block/Taluk/Mandal Panchayat), and Gram Panchayat (Gram Sabha) at the village level, and to transfer certain authority to these bodies for planning, implementation, monitoring and taking expenditure decisions for effective delivery of public services including elementary, secondary, vocational and technical, adult and non-formal education (Figure 5.1). Five-year fixed tenures, regular elections, financial allocations, finance commissions, assignment of defined functions for planning and implementation of development programmes are the salient features of the new legislation. For the first time, adequate representation for scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and women was provided at all levels of the PRIs.

The relevant sections of the Constitution of India under Part IX, Part IXA, the 11th and the 12th Schedules, underscore the provisions for ensuring true democracy at the grass roots and transferring power to the people. Article 243G and Article 243W, respectively, define the power, authority and responsibilities of panchayats and municipalities. A list of functions in twenty-nine areas, including education, is envisaged to be transferred to the PRIs. In most states, the Gram Panchayat has been given statutory and revenue-raising powers. However, a close examination of the functions of panchayats mentioned in Article 243G reveals that these are in the nature of

entrusted development functions. The functions assigned to panchayats in most states consist of the provision and maintenance of what may be termed as 'neighbourhood public goods' such as street lighting, sanitation, village commons, water supply, etc. and also intermediate functions like education.

Figure 5.1. Local government structure in India



Under the 74th Constitutional Amendment, municipalities are visualized as institutions of self-government, which are responsible for preparing plans for economic and social justice. Few states have clarified the municipal functions listed in the XII Schedule as 'obligatory' and 'discretionary'. In many states, political decentralization has not been backed by financial devolution. The *Panchayati Raj* system has also been extended to Scheduled Areas. The Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (1996) makes the Gram Sabha the cornerstone of people's empowerment, and the village assembly/ward council the centrepiece of local democracy.

In fact, the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments set forth a significantly different pattern of educational governance in India. This legislation aimed at strengthening educational governance at the district and subdistrict levels

through peoples' participation and a greater degree of accountability at local level. The district was recognized as the viable unit for educational planning and management, and the district education officer and staff were made accountable to the Zilla Parisad. Significant transfers of resources and responsibilities to *Panchayati Raj* institutions at district, block and village levels were envisaged in the legislation, including the appointment and transfer of teachers, the construction and maintenance of school buildings, the allocation of school development funds, the disbursement of teachers' salaries, the generation of local resources, academic supervision, etc. With the decentralized reform, school heads were given more responsibility for creating positive teaching and learning environments and assisting the community in local planning. Ensuring transparency and accountability in the delivery of public services, including basic education at district, block and village levels was envisaged as the other important responsibility of the PRIs and ULBs. However, in practice, the changes in educational governance structure and responsibilities as envisaged in 73rd and 74th Amendments vary across states.

3.2 SSA and decentralized governance

Besides the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments and related state level legislation, since the early 1990s, the implementation of externally funded basic education development programmes at national and state levels have given a fillip to the process of operationalizing decentralized planning and management of elementary education. The Bihar Education Project (BEP); the UP Basic Education Project (UPBEP); the Andhra Pradesh Primary Education Project (APPEP); the *Lok Jumbish* (LJ); and the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) are some such basic education development programmes, which attempted to operationalize decentralized planning and management in India in the 1990s.

The SSA has made a systematic attempt to decentralize planning and management of elementary education in the country. It emphasizes involvement of all types of grass-roots organizations, including PRIs and urban local bodies, in planning and management of elementary education. It should be emphasized that, unlike earlier centrally sponsored schemes and externally funded projects/programmes in basic education, the SSA is being implemented in partnership with the provincial and local governments using the existing management structure.

Building on the experiences of the DPEP and other similar state-level externally funded programmes, some modifications have been made in the decentralized planning and management processes as envisaged in the SSA. Some of the important changes are as follows:

- To ensure sustainability, decentralized planning and management of the SSA is to be carried out by the existing administrative structures and institutional arrangements at national, state, district, block and village levels.
- Considering the fact that DPCs have not been created so far in many states, the SSA insists on creating Planning and Resource Groups/Committees at the district, block, cluster/Mandal and village levels to facilitate decentralization process.
- The emphasis is on extensive consultations during the plan formulation process, particularly at the district and subdistrict levels, and disaggregated target setting exercises and local specific strategies and interventions.
- Relatively more focus on creating a comprehensive database at the habitation, cluster, block and district levels based on household surveys as an enabling condition to initiate decentralized planning.
- Though the district is still considered the lowest viable unit for developing prospective as well as annual work plans for UEE, for the first time, the SSA recognized the habitation as the unit for initiating decentralized planning. In fact, it envisages developing habitation, cluster and block level plans for UEE, and these plans ultimately form the basis for developing the District Elementary Education Plan (DEEP).
- Creation of necessary conditions for participation of the civil society organizations including NGOs and the private sector in planning and implementation processes is also stressed in the SSA. The Village Education Committee (VEC), School Management Committee (SMC), Mother-Teacher Association (MTA), Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), Women's Groups, Mahila Samakshya Sanghas, etc. and PRIs and ULBs have given relatively more space and responsibility to participate in the planning, implementation and monitoring of various interventions.
- Subdistrict level structures such as the Block Resource Centre and Cluster Resource Centre have been created to provide academic and related support to schools and village and school level committees.
- Vertical and horizontal sharing of information at the district, subdistrict and school levels, and transparency and accountability to the community are seen in the SSA as critical for decentralization.

- All these initiatives in the SSA are expected to help further strengthen decentralization as a strategy for planning and management of elementary education. The performance of states like Kerala, Karnataka, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan is relatively better in terms of effective decentralization of educational governance.

3.3 Current status and operational issues

Current status

Though policy and structural reforms have been made in all states, the decentralization programme, particularly in education, has not been effectively operationalized in many states. Though, there is not much information on the effect of decentralization on planning and management of elementary education in Indian states, generally the effect of greater accountability on the provision of elementary education through decentralization is positive. However, in terms of institutional reform for decentralized educational governance under the SSA, almost all states have created Planning Teams and Resource Groups at district, block and village levels. In many states (particularly states covered under the DPEP and other states implementing externally funded primary education projects), the Village Education Committees and School Management Committees have become functional. Elementary education plans are now being developed at habitation, block and district levels, and institutional arrangements are being made for horizontal and vertical sharing of information from village to the district level.

Implementation issues

Decentralization often requires a trade-off between the interests of some of the relatively dominant groups of stakeholders and the pace of decentralization in the education sector. In the decentralization process, therefore, there is a continuous conflict between the objectives of maintaining effective control over the implementation of national development policies and maintaining the legitimacy of governance. It is argued that centralization promotes control, while decentralization fosters legitimacy. Often, the national and state governments are concerned about maintaining effective control over-implementation of education reform programmes, and at the same time, advocate decentralization to legitimize educational governance. In such a situation, the efforts of the central and state governments to ensure effective implementation of education reform programmes often hinder

decentralization. This is equally true in case of implementation of the educational development programmes such as the DPEP, other externally funded projects and even, to some extent, the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. This form of decentralization has promoted deconcentration rather than devolution of administrative and financial powers to lower spatial units.

The pace of decentralization in planning and management in the education sector needs to be seen in the broader context of decentralization taking place in the country. As mentioned earlier, administrative and financial decentralization have not effectively taken place in many states, which act as constraints in the planning and management of education at the local level. When decentralization in education takes the form of deconcentration, it is very difficult to ensure accountability of local administrative units and support structures. This is the reason as to why the administrative structures created at various levels, particularly at the district and subdistrict levels are perceived important in the implementation rather than in the process of planning educational programmes.

In many states, finance allocated for education is controlled by state level departments or their subordinate offices at the district and subdistrict levels; teachers and staff working at the school level (except para-teachers) are generally not accountable to elected local representatives (PRIs/ULBs) and the VEC/SMC; salaries of permanent/tenure teachers and staff are directly payable by the appropriate state department; decisions about the construction and location of new primary and middle schools and their alternatives are generally taken at the district level; and only the District Elementary Education Plan (DEEP) is jointly appraised and negotiated for funding (at least in the SSA and the DPEP). The PRIs/ULBs and VECs/SMCs only act as agents that construct or maintain school buildings, monitor functioning of schools, manage mid-day meal programme, and collect (generally through household survey) and supply data and information on education to cluster, block and district level agencies and authorities.

Major challenges and constraints

Making PRIs and ULBs effective in public service delivery, including education, and institutionalizing state initiatives towards decentralization of educational governance are the two major challenges in the country. Why has decentralization of educational governance not been effective in many states? The following are some of the socio-political, operational and institutional constraints:

1. Limited revenue-raising capacity and fiscal autonomy of LGs and ULBs

Local governments have not been provided with revenue-raising, spending and regulatory authority commensurate with their responsibility. The local self-governments depend mainly on central and state funding for their activities. In other words, fiscal decentralization is weak in almost all states.

2. Resistance to devolution of power

Although the 73rd Amendment together with the State Acts and Government Orders have set up the basic political, administrative and fiscal structures for local governments, administrative and fiscal decentralization has not effectively happened in many states because of continuing bureaucratic control over key decisions on resource allocation and implementation of development programmes, including educational programmes. The bureaucracy has resistance and non-cooperation with the PRIs resulting in inadequate financial devolution (Behar and Kumar 2002).

Politicians and local elites resist the devolution of power to local governments, especially to women and backward classes. Studies have found that representation of women in leadership positions in local governments is associated with increased female public participation and investment in social services, which provides for women's needs (Chattopadhyay and Duflo 2001).

3. Lack of professional and technical capacity and accountability failure

Lack of professional and technical capacity of the local governments and institutions, inadequate information sharing among citizens, low level of political education, and absence of downward and horizontal accountability are other factors that hinder decentralization in India. In other words, poorly developed local democracy has undermined political accountability at local level. Accountability failures at local level exist because of 'local political and elite capture' and 'bureaucratic corruption' (Bardhan and Mookherjee, 2000; Bardhan, 2003).

At present, if one looks into the decentralization process in the education sector in India, it is closer to a 'technical-administrative approach' rather than a 'socio-political approach'. In other words, given the characteristics of decentralized planning and management of education in the country, the current model of decentralization seems to be policy driven rather than a response from below for good governance. Such a model of decentralization

has limited scope for building on the legitimate interests of various actors of the decentralization process. Devolution of power and authority to lower units may work better when it is a response to pressure from below. Creating pressure from below for sharing authority and power takes time, as it involves the long sustainable process of advocacy and empowerment. Nevertheless, decentralization is one of the promising strategies for achieving the goal of EFA in the country.

4. Deployment and management of teachers

4.1 Teacher deployment practices

In India, there is no system of teacher deployment and management at the central level. The deployment and management system of teachers of primary and upper primary schools have been progressively decentralized in the 1990s, though decisions about key aspects of recruitment, deployment, qualifications, transfer, promotion and capacity building still continue to be taken mostly at the state level, and in some states, at the district level. The system of deployment and management of teachers in the elementary education subsector exists at the state and district levels only for the government, recognized aided and alternative schools. States determine the minimum qualifications of teachers, both regular and para-teachers. However, district level authorities and Gram Panchayats, depending on the availability of qualified persons in rural and backward areas, often relax the qualifications of para-teachers.

The State Public Service Commission hires regular teachers, and local level authorities usually recruit para-teachers, in consultation with the community. Decisions about teacher deployment within the district are taken at the district level, and in some states, like Maharashtra, even within the district; teachers from schools managed by ULBs cannot be transferred to rural schools. Additional teacher requirements of the districts are usually decided at the state level on the basis of the existing teacher-pupil norms. Most states practice multi-grade teaching in primary schools, and the minimum requirement is to appoint at least two teachers in a primary school. However, rules, regulations and norms for recruitment of teachers vary across states in India. In many states, instead of school level enrolment, district level total enrolment in primary and upper primary schools is taken as the basis for estimating additional teacher requirements. State Pay commissions decide the pay scales of regular teachers. Decisions about the transfer of teachers are taken at the state and district levels. District level authorities sometimes consider

suggestions and recommendations of VECs, SMCs, PTAs, Gram Panchayats, and women's groups for taking decisions on the transfer of teachers. The village and school level committees have no authority to hire or transfer or fire regular teachers.

State specific civil service rules and education codes govern the recruitment, transfer and promotion of teachers. Many states have transferred some responsibility to VECs, SMCs and Gram Panchayats for monitoring school functioning and teacher attendance. However, the village and school level committees do not enjoy any statutory or administrative powers to regulate teacher behaviour. In almost all states, regular teachers are accountable to state education departments and district education offices. Para-teachers are usually accountable to school and village level committees, local governments and district education offices. The education office and District Institutes of Education and Training (DIET) at the district level, and block and cluster level resource centres mainly provide supervision of and support services to teachers. The State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) at the state level play an important role in designing curricula for teachers' training and related capacity building activities.

Current status of teacher deployment

Since the early 1990s, efforts have been made in many states, particularly under the DPEP, *Shiksha Karmi* Project, *Lok Jumbish*, UPBEP, BEP and the SSA, to increase the number of primary and upper primary school teachers to overcome the problem of imbalances in teacher allocation and to improve the teacher-pupil ratio. In 1991-92, the total number of teachers at primary level was 1.64 million (29.93% females), which increased to 1.93 million (37.09% females) in 2001-02. At the upper primary level, the total number of teachers has gone up from 1.08 million (33.83% females) in 1991-02 to 1.47 million (37.26% females) in 2001-02. However, based on the projected enrolment at elementary level for the year 2007-08, the number of additional teacher requirement is estimated to be 0.092 million.

In 2001-02, the number of female teachers per 100 male teachers at primary level varies greatly between states, and it ranges from 24 in Bihar to 299 in Goa. At the upper primary level, the number of female teachers per 100 male teachers ranges from 25 in Uttaranchal to 238 in Goa in 2001-02. Though there has been an impressive increase in the number of primary and upper primary school teachers in India in the 1990s, the imbalances in teacher allocations between states, districts and within districts, between rural and

urban areas is a major concern in so far as the efforts towards rationalization of teacher deployment is concerned. Relatively rich states and states covered under the DPEP and other externally funded projects, to a large extent, have made efforts towards rational deployment of teachers at the elementary level of education.

Rationalizing the allocation of primary teachers between schools and between rural and urban areas is a major issue in many states. Generally, schools in remote and difficult rural areas either go without full-time teachers or are run by a single teacher. Lack of teachers in schools located in remote and difficult areas has direct implications as far as achievements of EFA goals are concerned. According to the 7th AIES, teacherless rural primary schools are found in some of the states, which range from 0.61% in Uttar Pradesh to 5.31% in Gujarat. Primary schools functioning with single teacher are the reality in both rural and urban India.

In the 1990s, as a teacher diversification strategy, more and more states have gone for the deployment of para-teachers (*Shiksha Karmis, Shiksha Mitras, Gurujis,* and other types of temporary teachers) mostly at the primary level to meet the additional teacher requirements due to increased enrolments, reaching as high as 43% of rural primary teachers in one state, for instance. Around 1.98 million para-teachers have been appointed during 2003-04.

Over the years, the share of female teachers in the total teachers at primary and upper primary levels has increased in many states. Most of the educationally backward states have fewer numbers of female teachers than male teachers at both primary and upper primary levels, the lowest percentage of female teachers across any state being 19.06%. The share of female teachers in the total primary and upper primary teachers is relatively less in rural areas, thereby indicating that females have preference for urban schools. This also indicates the difficulties in rationalizing the deployment of female teachers across rural and urban areas. Further imbalances exist across states and between urban and rural areas by teacher-pupil ratios.

Teacher quality

It is not only geographical and gender imbalances in teacher allocation, but also imbalances in the quality of teachers at elementary level that is a major issue. The qualification of para-teachers, teachers of alternative schools, EGS centres, etc. are relatively less compared to full-time regular teachers appointed by the state. The appointment of para-teachers has partially

alleviated the required deployment of teachers in backward and difficult areas, but it has had implications for the quality of the teaching in schools located in backward areas. Teacher transfer is influenced by exogenous factors; more influential teachers, particularly female teachers, are more likely to be found working in urban schools and schools that are well connected with the road or rail transport networks. Lack of basic facilities, viz., residential facilities in remote rural areas has also acted as one of the de-motivating factors for female teachers to serve in rural areas.

Teacher utilization

Suboptimal use of teachers is another serious issue in many states. Generally, teacher absenteeism is high in India. Even if teachers attend schools, their presence in the classroom is often significantly lower than the school attendance rate. This happens because teachers are often engaged in non-teaching activities (Sharma, 1998; Kremer et al., 2004). According to a recent study[32] on teacher absence[33] in twenty states representing 98% of population of India (Kremer et al., 2004), nearly one-fourth of teachers remain absent from government primary schools in a typical school day. Absenteeism ranges from around 15% to as high as 38% in some states.

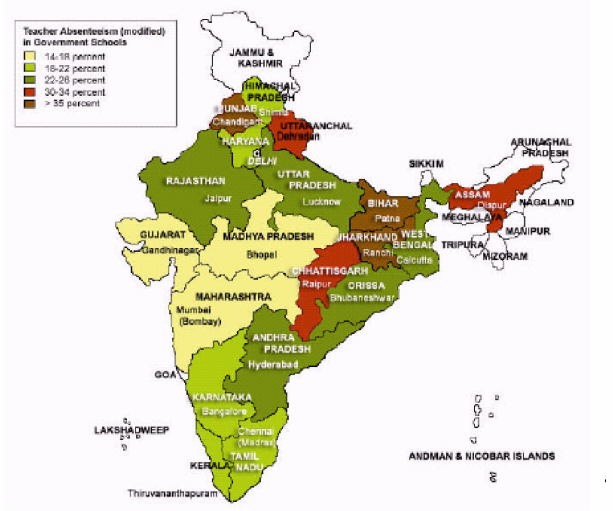
The findings of this study reveal the poor state of teacher management in various states. It also contradicts some of the general perceptions about the presence of community-based supervision and monitoring, accountability of para-teachers/contract teachers, the relationship between teacher salary and absence rate and non-teaching activities of teachers, etc. It emphasizes the

[32] The study is based on a nationally representative survey of 3,750 primary schools in India. Ten districts in each state and ten primary sampling units within each district were selected for the study using geographically stratified random sampling.

[33] The study considers a teacher to be 'absent' if the investigator cannot find the teacher while looking for him/her in the school during regular working hours, excluding cases where the school was closed due to official or scheduled holiday, extreme weather, construction or repair of the building and official functions such as examinations, picnics, sports days, etc. The survey excludes part-time and voluntary teachers. It focused on government primary schools but also covered rural private schools and private aided schools, and estimates of teacher absenteeism are based on 'direct physical verification of presence or lack thereof'. Over 16,500 teachers were covered across the sample schools.

need to develop the capacities of PTAs and similar village level institutions for monitoring, and strengthening school supervision and support services.

Figure 5.2. Teacher absenteeism and teaching activity in public schools by state



State	Teacher Absence
Maharashtra	14.5%
Madhya Pradesh	16.5%
Gujarat	17.0%
Kerala	20.3%
Karnataka	20.5%
Himachal Pradesh	21.2%
Haryana	21.2%
Tamil Nadu	21.4%
Orissa	23.1%
Rajasthan	23.6%
West Bengal	24.8%
Andhra Pradesh	25.2%
Uttar Pradesh	25.5%
Chhatisgarh	30.0%
Uttaranchal	32.8%
Assam	33.5%
Punjab	35.7%
Bihar	38.3%
Jharkhand	39.3%
Delhi	-
All India Weighted Average	24.5%

Source: Kremer et al. (2004, p. 12).

Though efforts have been made in recent years to strengthen school supervision and support services (by establishing BRCs, CRCs and other similar institutions) while implementing externally funded projects, and the SSA, the school supervisors and community-based institutions do not enjoy sufficient formal administrative authority to counter teacher absenteeism in rural areas. Moreover, the supervisor-school ratio is so high in rural areas in almost all states that it is impossible to physically supervise all schools on a regular basis. School supervisors are more likely to work at the District Education Office and Block Education Office as support staff than going out for field supervision. Institutional factors such as the presence of teachers' unions, teachers' involvement in local politics, etc. also greatly affect teacher attendance in schools. Lack of promotional prospects and performance-based incentives further contribute to the low level of motivation and commitment.

4.2 Decentralization of teacher management

As already mentioned, most states have passed legislation to facilitate functional decentralization in public service delivery, including education. Besides strengthening local self-governments, efforts have been made to decentralize the management of elementary education through various externally-funded education projects like the DPEP, and also the SSA.

The experience of Madhya Pradesh in teacher management reveals that devolution of responsibilities to local self-governments and school/village level structures for recruitment, supervision and in-service teacher training can greatly facilitate the effective management of teachers. In Madhya Pradesh, such management is mostly of para-teachers (*Shiksha Karmis*, *Gurujis*, teachers of alternative schools, etc.), and the local level management structures have little control over the full-time tenure teachers appointed by the state government. The appointing authority for teachers in alternative schools/centres is the village panchayat. Such teachers are local residents and generally secondary school graduates. Teachers in the EGS schools are also locally appointed. The local community proposes a panel of names for *Gurujis* to the village panchayat, along with the demand for a school. The village panchayat forwards the demand and the proposed panel to the block panchayat, and after approval, the block panchayat appoints the *Gurujis*. These teachers are not transferable. Devolution of authority to local governments for appointment of *Shiksha Karmis* and teachers in alternative schools and EGS centres and close interaction of such teachers with the community has greatly improved accountability to PTAs and Village Education Committees, who in turn are elected by the *Gram Sabha*. The general perception is that such teachers are less frequently absent and more committed to their work because of local community supervision. This is an example of forging supportive links between the state government, local self-governments, village level institutions (VEC, PTA, etc.) and civil society for strengthening democratic decentralization of management of education.

However, the full-time formal primary school teachers in Madhya Pradesh (and in other states) are employees of the state government and constitute a permanent district cadre. They are recruited directly by a district level committee headed by the District Collector or by state level Staff Selection Commission, and are accountable to the District Education Office and State Education Department. Disciplinary action against such teachers can be taken by the DEO and the State Education Department. The decisions regarding

deployment and transfer of such teachers mostly rest with the district administration. This means that 'dual system of teacher accountability' exists in Madhya Pradesh. All states recruiting para-teachers have similar systems of accountability.

Lack of administrative power of VECs, SMCs, PTAs, CRCs and BRCs makes it difficult to ensure local accountability of regular full-time teachers. Therefore, such local institutions are less effective in monitoring attendance of permanent full-time teachers. Moreover, the local self-governments, VECs, CRCs, BRCs, etc. do not have the required capacity and matching administrative power to ensure teacher accountability. Head teachers of primary and upper primary schools generally have little authority and training to act as managers and leaders. Lack of effective enforcement of teachers' codes of practice also contributes to a low level of teacher accountability. Lack of political education and parental awareness of the importance of education also prevents the community to participate effectively in the management of schools and teachers. The major challenge is to strengthen school-based supervision, monitoring and support services through devolution (even delegation) of administrative power and capacity building of village and block panchayats, VECs, PTAs, SMCs, CRCs and BRCs.

Information base for teacher management

Improving the database for teacher management is another area of concern. Prior to implementation of the DPEP, states used to manually create a database for teacher management. During the implementation of the DPEP computerized Education Management Information System (EMIS), also called the District Information System for Education (DISE), was introduced at the district and state levels. DISE data provide school-level information, including the profile of teachers, which helps in taking decisions regarding the rationalization of teacher deployment, in-service teacher training, and sanctioning additional teachers based on enrolment increases. Strengthening the capacities to generate, process and use DISE data for teacher and school management at subdistrict level continues to be a major challenge.

Professional development of teachers

The training status of primary and upper primary teachers varies across states. At the all India level, the percentage of trained primary and upper primary level teachers was 86 and 87 respectively in 2001-02. The range of trained

primary teachers varies, however between 100% in some states to about 25% in others.

A centrally sponsored scheme of Restructuring and Reorganization of Teacher Education (RRTE) was launched in 1987 to create viable institutional infrastructure, academic and technical resource base for orientation, training and continuous up-gradation of knowledge, competence and pedagogical skills of schoolteachers in the country. The scheme envisages setting up of DIETS in each district to provide academic and resource support to primary and upper primary school teachers and teachers of alternative schools and EGS centres. A total of 498 DIETs, 86 Colleges of Teacher Education (CTEs) and 38 Institutes of Advanced Studies in Education (IASEs) have been sanctioned as of 31st March 2004.

On the recommendations of the Working Group on Elementary and Adult Education for the Tenth Plan, substantial revision has been made in the scheme for improvement in the quality of teacher education. This includes speedy completion of DIET, CTE, IASE and SCERT projects; making these institutions fully functional; and improvement of the quality of programmes conducted by the DIETs. Efforts are being made to effectively operationalize the cascade method of teacher training, in which the BRCs and CRCs facilitate development of teacher capacity through sharing of experiences and promotion of innovative teaching methods.

The revised scheme for strengthening teacher education also provides for partnership with states for strengthening teacher-training institutions like DIETs, through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with each state on issues like staffing, selection and activities of these institutions. It provides for enhanced support for physical infrastructure of these institutions as well as provision for undertaking more activities and institutional capacity building. Besides, special emphasis is being given to use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) and distance mode for in-service training of elementary school teachers. As part of the scheme, the DIETs are developing decentralized plans for teacher development.

During the Tenth Plan the focus areas in teacher education are: (i) development and strengthening of teacher education institutes; (ii) formalization of in-service training in terms of accreditation to ensure quality; and (iii) professional development of teacher educators. The major strategies to ensure quality teacher education during the Tenth Plan period are: (i)

central funding based on state plans to encourage context specific strategies; (ii) flexible funding to states to encourage innovative structure of teacher education institutes; and (iii) support to states through a Teacher Education Resource Group (TERG).

At district and subdistrict levels, often in the absence of a database, the selection of teachers for in-service training does not follow any systematic procedure. Besides, little in-service management training is imparted to primary and upper primary head teachers. In many states, the BRCs and CRCs have little capacity to undertake teacher training on their own, primarily because the staff of these institutions are drawn from the senior primary and upper primary teacher cadres. The CRCs are run in single classrooms attached to formal primary/upper primary schools, and often lack basic facilities to conduct training programmes. However, BRCs and CRCs have proven to be effective as proximate forums for primary and upper primary teachers to share their experiences of teaching and other academic activities among themselves, and facilitate learning from each other.

Under the SSA, teachers are provided grants for designing and using locally relevant leaching-learning materials. However, little information is available as to how effectively teachers are using this opportunity to innovate and up-grade their professional skills. Lack of proper planning for in-service training often keeps many teachers away from schools during regular working days thereby affecting the teaching-learning process. How effective are these training programmes? Do teachers who have had in-service training use the newly acquired skills in the classroom? What is the impact of in-service training on the learning outcomes of students? What is the impact of increasing number of para-teachers on learners' achievement? These are some of the critical issues on which little information is available. Besides, recruitment of large numbers of temporary teachers/para-teachers with lower educational qualifications and little to no training in primary and upper primary schools raises questions about the quality of education. How to improve the quality of such a cadre of teachers is a major challenge.

5. Mobilization and management of resources

5.1 Trends in the allocation of resources for elementary education

The sources of finance for elementary education in India are the central and state governments, local bodies, and foreign aid. Primary amongst these is the source of state government funding. Local organizations contribute relatively little to elementary education expenditure. Budgetary expenditures for the education sector are classified into two broad categories: (i) those on the revenue account; and (ii) those on the capital account. Revenue account disbursements include expenditure on salaries and allowances, contingencies, grants-in-aid and maintenance outlays. The capital account incorporates incremental capital expenditure, on construction and equipment. Nearly 99% of the expenditure of the Education Department of states is incurred on the revenue account.

A part of revenue expenditure, including grants-in-aid to local bodies and schools, includes expenditure on buildings and equipment. It may be noted that much of the capital expenditure on elementary education is incorporated in the budgets of other departments, namely the Ministry of Rural Development, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment at the Centre, and the Department of Social/ Tribal Welfare in the states. The Central Ministry of Rural Development releases funds to districts for rural employment programmes for which matching funds are provided by the states. At the district level, part of these funds is utilized for school construction. The Ministry/Departments dealing with the welfare of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, women and backward communities provide funds for scholarships, other financial incentives, residential schools to promote participation of girls and SC and ST children and other 'backward classes'.

The role of the Central Government in financing elementary education has become crucial in the 1990s. With the implementation of the SSA, the funding pattern of the Central Government for elementary education has changed. Instead of an advisory role, the Central Government has taken the responsibility of a partner in funding elementary education. The sustainable funding strategy for the development of elementary education has been adopted since the implementation of the SSA. During the Ninth Plan under the SSA, the Central Government shared 85% of additional expenditure on elementary education in the states. During the Tenth Plan, the Central

Government is sharing 75% of additional expenditure under the SSA. Central and state governments' share on additional expenditure on elementary education will be 50:50 from the Eleventh Plan onwards. This implies sustainable funding support by the Central Government for efforts towards EFA in India.

Recently, the Central Government has imposed an Education Cess @ 2% on income tax, corporation tax, excise and custom duties, and service tax, which will yield about Rs. 40,000-50,000 million in a year. The whole amount has been earmarked for elementary education. The education cess will flow to the 'National Elementary Education Fund' (i.e. *Prathamik Shiksha Kosh*) created under the Public Account, to ensure its utilization exclusively for elementary education. The Ministry of Human Resource Development is responsible for financing elementary education, the mid-day meal scheme, and maintaining the non-lapsable fund in the *Prathamik Shiksha Kosh*. Besides, the national programme to mobilize local resources for support to primary schools introduced in 2004, aims at ensuring financial and other support for government and semi-government managed primary schools from socially-committed individuals and bodies with a view to improving their physical facilities and performance in terms of enrolment, retention and achievement levels of children. The government also mobilizes resources from external sources such as the World Bank, the European Commission, DFID, etc. for financing elementary education. External aid to education has increased significantly over the years, from Rs. 370 million in 1993-94 to Rs. 12,100 million in 2001-02 (budget estimates). As a proportion of the total Central Government's plan expenditure on education, external aid has increased from below 5% to above 20% during this period. The share of external aid in total plan expenditure of the Central Government has increased from about 10% to above 30% during this period (Tilak 2004).

Over the years, expenditure on elementary education has increased substantially. The share of expenditure on education in the GDP increased from 1.19% in 1951 to 2.78% in 1975-76, i.e. more than double the share. It peaked at 3.87% in 1990-91, after which it had a declining trend till 1998-99. It reached a level of 4.02% in 2001-2002. Expenditure on elementary education was 1.78% of GDP in 1990-91, which increased to 2.02% in 2001-02. The share of expenditure on elementary education to total expenditure on all sectors was 6.19% during 1990-91, which increased to 6.61% in 2001-2002. The share of expenditure on elementary education (plan and non-plan) to total expenditure on education varies greatly across states in India. In 2000-

01, actual expenditure on elementary education as a percentage of the total expenditure on education (revenue account) ranged between 4.77% in Bihar to 68.46% in Madhya Pradesh.

At national level, plan and non-plan expenditure on elementary education has been about 50% in recent years. Data on financial assistance to local bodies for primary and upper primary education are not available for all states. In 2002–03, the total assistance to local bodies for primary education (budgeted estimates) as a percentage of total expenditure on primary education (B.E., revenue account) varied tremendously across the states, from less than 1% to 98% (MHRD, 2003a). With the implementation of the SSA, central assistance to states for the development of elementary education has increased over the years. However, such assistance to the states depends heavily on the capacity of the states to plan effectively for elementary education; their negotiating skills; and their financial absorptive capacity.

5.2 Decentralized resource management and fund flow mechanism

In the 1990s, through the establishment of legislative frameworks, almost all states attempted to decentralize fund management and redefined the fund flow mechanisms to local governments and administrative units. However, in practice, many states are lagging behind in implementing the recommendations of their State Finance Commissions on revenue sharing with the local governments. There are structural problems and states have done little to clearly define the pattern of revenue sharing with Gram Panchayats and ULBs. In other words, in many states, operational issues still exist with regard to local governments' responsibility for service delivery, revenue autonomy, tax administration and financial management. There is limited fiscal decentralization in most states.

As mentioned above, district and block Panchayats have virtually no revenue-raising authority nor expenditure autonomy, and Gram Panchayats have some authority to raise revenue through tax and other measures and to make expenditure decisions. In most cases, funds to local governments flow as conditional transfers and grants often earmarked by functions of specific development schemes, thereby leaving little scope to make decisions on the reallocation of such funds depending on local needs. In such situations, local governments act as mere spending agents of the higher-level governments/state government. In this sense, there is deconcentration rather than decentralization of fiscal management in almost all states. State and

district authorities continue to retain most of the decision-making powers relating to expenditure by local governments. Though primary education is the major responsibility of panchayats in most states, the panchayats have not been efficient enough to play the desired role in the development of primary education, in view of their limited fiscal autonomy.

However, with the implementation of externally funded education development projects and the SSA, efforts have been made to decentralize resource management to the village/school level. The important point here is that developmental funds flow to schools directly from the district, and not through the Gram Panchayat. Under the SSA, attempts have been made in almost all states to simplify and establish an efficient fund flow mechanism to schools (i.e. the lowest unit) and local governments for the development of elementary education. Recognizing the problems associated with the transfer of funds to districts and local governments for elementary education through the State Exchequer, separate structures (i.e. State SSA Implementation Society, District Implementation Society, Block Implementation Society and Village Education Committee/School Management Committee) have been created for the smooth flow of funds.

It may be noted, however, that while capital expenditure for construction and maintenance of school buildings and infrastructure is mostly done by the local governments, the funds for construction of school buildings and other related infrastructure under the SSA flow from the district to the VEC/SMCs. Funds are usually transferred to the joint bank account of the VEC/SMC and the head teacher. The VEC/SMC and the head teacher are made responsible for undertaking the construction activities. It is envisaged that the VEC would utilize the resources efficiently, and make the process of utilization of funds transparent through sharing in the VEC/SMC meetings. In other words, the whole process is expected to ensure social auditing of the utilization of funds for infrastructure development in the school. Grants for repair and maintenance of school buildings (@ Rs. 5000.00 per annum)) are released to the School Management Committee, and it is expected that the community should also contribute in cash or kind. Generally, in many states, the community contributes in kind rather than cash, and provides materials and labour for maintenance of the schools. For establishing and running the EGS and alternative education centres the panchayats are given grants.

Similarly, under the SSA, schools (@ Rs. 2000.00 per school per annum) and teacher grants (@ Rs. 500.00 per primary and upper primary teacher per

annum) are transferred to the joint account of the head teacher and the VEC/SMC chairperson. The school grants are used to replace teaching learning equipment, and teachers are expected to use the grants for developing locally specific teaching learning materials. In many states, the teacher grants have proved to be effective in enabling motivated teachers to develop teaching aids. In some states, salaries of para-teachers and other temporary teachers are paid through the SMC/VEC. The permanent teachers usually draw their salaries from the Block Development Office. It may be noted that, the funds transferred to the VEC/SMC on a regular basis are relatively small (i.e. the school grant, teacher grant, grant for repair and maintenance, and often salaries of para-teachers/temporary teachers), and community contributions to such funds are virtually absent. It may be noted that data on local level financial contribution for elementary education are not available in the states. It is emphasized in the SSA that all funds to be used for upgrading, maintenance, repair of schools and teaching learning equipment and local management are to be transferred to the VECs/School Management Committees. The VECs/SMCs have assumed a critical role in the utilization of resources at the local level.

Other types of transfers of funds from the centre to local governments (through the state government) include earmarked 'Non-Plan' grants for upgrading elementary education infrastructure in backward states. These funds are often not reflected in the education budget of the states. Besides, in many states, a certain proportion of the state plan budget is released to the district panchayat as 'untied assistance', which can be used for district-specific education programmes. Grants given to Members of Parliament for improvement of their constituencies are also used in part for the development of elementary education.

Though the fund flow mechanism to the school level has been simplified and made free from the bureaucratic control of the state governments, the availability of resources at the local level, particularly at the school level has been affected partly due to delays in the release of funds from the Central Government to the State SSA Implementation Society, and from the State SSA Implementation Society to the District Implementation Society. Moreover, funds of other departments such as the rural development and social welfare, part of which are used for construction of school buildings and giving incentives to children from socio-economically backward communities, continue to flow to the local level through the state exchequer. In fact, it is difficult to assess total funds from all sources flowing to a district

for financing elementary education. Under the SSA, efforts have been made to reflect in the District Elementary Education Plan the expenditure of all related departments and semi-government bodies on elementary education, but such plans often fail to reflect expenditure on elementary education from all sources. In other words, there exists the problem of inter-departmental coordination in assessing financial expenditure on elementary education in a district. In such situations, the available data on expenditure on elementary education generally underestimates actual investment of the central and state governments.

Close examination of the fund flow mechanisms and the utilization pattern of funds for elementary education reveals that there are limited resources available at the school level, and then, in the form of conditional grants. In other words, the available funds at the school level can be used only for certain defined activities, and not as per the requirements of the school. Decisions regarding the use of school funds are usually taken by the VEC/SMC, forum often captured by the local elites, where the voices of the representatives of the poor and backward communities are hardly heard. The expenditure decisions of a larger amount of the funds allocated for elementary education still continue to be taken at the district and state levels. Even at the district level, expenditure decisions are governed by the specified financial norms, and not on the basis of the requirements of the district. Interfunctional reallocation of resources at the district level is virtually absent, which often results in large spillovers. This also reduces the financial absorption capacity of the districts. The general trend is that district authorities tend to utilize funds on certain activities in which it is relatively easy to spend, i.e. such as civil works, teacher training, supply of teaching-learning materials, and expenditure is generally low on activities more important for better planning and strengthening local management capacities such as generation and utilization of local level databases, capacity building of local level functionaries and community representatives, management training of head teachers, strengthening of school-community relationships, etc. The very pattern of utilization of financial resources at the district level does not facilitate fiscal decentralization. It can be said that, given the form of decentralization in education, there is limited fiscal decentralization in most states which is reflected in conditional grants to local bodies and governments; very little autonomy in expenditure decision-making; limited accountability; weak management of finance at the local level; absence of a database on the income and expenditure of local bodies and local governments; and a lack of social audit.

Information system and accountability

As has been mentioned earlier, given the variety of sources of funds, it is difficult to give an accurate picture of the total fund flow into the elementary education subsector. However, under the SSA, efforts are being made to collect relevant data on financial resources and its utilization pattern through the Project Management and Information System (PMIS). This forms an important activity of the monitoring of the SSA. State and district level organizations, universities, colleges and NGOs have been identified and given the responsibility among others for collecting and analyzing the financial data and information in the elementary education subsector. The result of this intervention is yet to be visible, however.

Accountability is a complex issue, and does not necessarily refer to complying with formal rules and regulations of administration. Accountability in education is perhaps more meaningful when it is defined in relation to the immediate beneficiaries. It is a well-known fact that, the school/community level forums such as the VEC/SMC are generally captured by the elites not only in India but also in many other developing countries. Many representatives of such proximate forums, especially women and those who come from weaker sections, are neither in positions to raise their voices against corrupt practices because of lack of livelihood security, nor do they have the required capacity to reveal their preferences for specific services.

The accountability system is such that the local level authorities are answerable to the higher-level authorities and not to the beneficiaries and to the community at large. Often when the members of the VEC/SMC are themselves involved in unethical practices such as embezzlement of school grants, it becomes virtually impossible to make the school authorities accountable to the community. The most important point is that, in the absence of fiscal autonomy, it is not possible to make the local governments and VECs/SMCs accountable for the non-utilization or underutilization of available financial resources. Similar problems of accountability exist at the district level. Being spending agents of the state government, district and subdistrict level authorities are hardly concerned with the optimum use of resources. It has been found in many states that spillover of annual education budgets is a general phenomenon indicating a weak financial management system. As there exists limited geographical mobility and alternative choices for education in rural areas, particularly in backward areas where most out-of-school children are found, households have no exit options but to avail

themselves of the services provided by the government. In such a situation, making the system of social audit functional becomes difficult.

In the 1990s with the implementation of the externally funded education projects such as the DPEP, schools have been made to display on a board the information on income and expenditure of the school along with details of enrolment, retention, achievement, and teachers' profiles. The basic purpose has been to ensure transparency in the functioning of the school by making the related information readily available to the community. This intervention has been further strengthened under the SSA. In many states, where communities including PTAs and MTAs are relatively more informed, this school display board has helped strengthen accountability. Though many states are promoting the policy of right to information, the corresponding activities to empower communities to use this right effectively are lagging behind.

Capacity building for effective management of resources

Decentralization of service delivery in many developing countries has not produced the desired results primarily due to lack of institutional reforms and the required capacity for implementation. A recent study in Kerala and Karnataka (World Bank, 2004), which have a long history of promoting decentralization, finds that decentralization will not work if policy reforms are not accompanied by the required capacity building activities. This is equally applicable in almost all states where the capacity of local governments and school level organizations is not up to the desired level to manage financial resources effectively, not only in the education sector, but also in all other sectors. Though efforts are made to build the capacity of higher-level authorities to manage finances effectively, few initiatives have been designed to train middle level bureaucrats and the functionaries of the district and subdistrict level panchayats in financial management.

It may be noted that, in the absence of data and empirical research on financial management in elementary education subsector at local level, it is difficult to assess the impact of fiscal decentralization on EFA. What is important is to find out what works and what does not work at the local level given the institutional framework for fiscal decentralization in education in the country. In the above context, the following are some of the issues relating to resource management in education at local level:

- The models of financial decentralization vary among states. Most states have weak and poorly functioning financial management systems. The poor financial position of states is partly responsible for the low transfer of funds to local governments for education.
- The design and implementation of the system of inter-governmental transfer of fiscal relations are complex, ambiguous and less than effective in many states. The fiscal autonomy of the local governments and ULBs are poorly defined and do not match their responsibility to deliver public services such as elementary education. Expenditure assignments are not very clear between the different tiers of government. There are limited resource transfers (other than resources earmarked under specific developmental programmes) from states to local governments.
- Limited devolution of fiscal autonomy to local governments, district level authorities, and VECs/SMCs has made them to act as spending agents of the state government.
- Lack of capacity of the panchayats to raise local resources has limited their role in financing elementary education. This has led to ineffective downward accountability, as the panchayats are not in a position to attract and hold the interest of the community.
- Lack of technical capacity of the functionaries of the panchayats, absence of database, and irregular audit of the activities of the panchayats do not facilitate strengthening of the financial management system at the local level.
- Local elite capture of some of the VECs/SMCs distorts the decision-making process, and expenditure decisions often do not reflect the needs of the relatively deprived community. This obviously has a limited impact on the efforts toward EFA.
- In the absence of enough funds at the disposal of the panchayats and VECs/SMCs, they generally do not plan for expenditure on elementary education.

6. Conclusions and suggestions

6.1 Conclusions

Since independence, India has made tremendous progress in basic education. Progress in basic education has been more visible since the 1990s. Access to primary schooling facilities (formal and alternative) has become nearly universal. There is a visible increase in participation rates, particularly those of girls and children from socio-economically backward communities. The

number of primary and upper primary teachers and their average years of schooling have gone up. However, the phenomenal expansion of elementary education facilities has not been the same across the states, and educationally backward pockets and communities continue to be found in almost all states. Therefore, 'targeting ' has been the strategy to address the EFA issues of such educationally backward pockets and communities. To enable the 'targeting strategy' to be effective, decentralization of planning and management of basic education has been promoted in almost all states. All EFA interventions are generally gender sensitive, and designed to be implemented with support from and participation of the communities and civil society organizations.

The 1990s has also seen the implementation of some of the most important basic education reform programmes in the country, i.e. starting from the state specific programmes like the APPEP, UPBEP, BEP, Lok Jumbish to the large scale programmes like the DPEP. Some of the enabling conditions, including legislative measures and constitutional amendments to make eight years of schooling free and compulsory and to put in place a decentralized system of governance, have been created in the nineties. Learning from the experiences of implementing large-scale decentralized education reform programmes, the SSA has made a coordinated and sustainable effort in addressing the issues of EFA in the country. With the implementation of the SSA, the role of the Central Government has changed to become more of a partner than an advisor in developing elementary education in the states. The centre has also made a long-term, sustainable, financial commitment for EFA.

Even after such concerted efforts by both the State and Central Governments, the elementary education subsector continues to face problems of low internal and external efficiency; poor governance at the local level; irrational distribution of teachers across rural schools; under-utilization of teachers; lack of mobilization of local resources; ineffective and often non-functional school and village level bodies; low expenditure capacity of districts; poor administrative and social accountability (i.e. poor quality of educational governance); and non-conducive institutional arrangements for the implementation of educational decentralization.

Furthermore, during all these years following independence, the focus has been on expansion of the basic education system, and there have been few initiatives to consolidate and improve the quality of education. States have been more concerned with the establishment of schools; the recruitment of teachers; the provision of teaching-learning materials; increasing participation

rates and the like, but relatively little attention has been given to 'what goes on in classrooms'. The quantitative expansion has not been properly aligned with interventions for the improvement of the quality of elementary education, the very fact still reflected in the intervention strategies of the District Elementary Education Plans of almost all states. Unfortunately, in some states, the strategy for the improvement of the quality of elementary education has been synonymous with in-service teacher training and the development of locally relevant curriculum and teaching-learning materials, and a whole range of other identified strategies for quality improvement have always been given a back seat role: strengthening grass-roots processes (i.e. governance of schools; school-community relationships; community-based monitoring and support services; making VECs/SMCs functional; establishing a comprehensive database for the planning and management of basic education at the local level; developing management skills of middle and community-level educational functionaries, including members of the VECs/SMCs, PTAs, etc.; promoting downward accountability; improving coordination between the local governments and subdistrict level structures for management of elementary education). The outcomes are obvious, i.e. a weak system of general and fiscal management; low accountability to stakeholders; lack of an information base for planning and monitoring at subdistrict level; poorly functioning school and community level bodies like the VECs and SMCs; and apathy of the stakeholders in the affairs of the school. These factors, to a large extent, have been, responsible for neutralizing the positive impacts of the education reform programmes such as the DPEP and the SSA in recent years.

Keeping in view the above limitations and learning from past experiences, the focus in the Tenth Plan and the SSA is to strengthen the management of basic education at the subdistrict level, besides supplying the necessary physical inputs, teaching learning materials and manpower, and expanding the resource base of schools. Teacher quality and behaviour; financial flows to schools and local governments; resource utilization patterns at the local level and participation of user groups and the community at large in the affairs of the school are no doubt critical in achieving the EFA targets. However, these areas (i.e. teacher and resource management, and promotion of participation in school management) have been most hard hit due to the existence of the non-conducive economic, political, administrative and institutional climate in many states. Increasing financial deficits has compelled most states to ban recruitment of teachers and to go for the deployment of para-teachers of low

quality and the establishment of EGS and alternative schools. This may result in a second track elementary schooling system.

Though most states spend nearly half their education budget on elementary education, this relatively large share of total educational investment has shown little improvement over the years. The funds flowing to schools continue to be small, and most of the spending decisions are either taken at the district or at the state level. The local governments are yet to be made effective partners in the planning and management of elementary education. Mobilization of local resources for elementary education is nearly absent in most states. Formal and informal rules and practices limit the scope of participation of local governments, VECs, SMCs, PTAs, CSOs, etc. in the affairs of the school. Institutional barriers such as the existence of teachers' unions, political and bureaucratic behaviour, the existence of dual systems of accountability, low levels of commitment of some of the teachers, have affected teacher management in the elementary education subsector.

Elite capture of some of the proximate forums such as the VEC, SMC, Gram Sabha is a concern, which limits the voices of the poor in revealing their choices and preferences. The fiscal relationships between the state and the district and subdistrict panchayats and ULBs, and among district, block and gram panchayats are ambiguous and not aligned with local government responsibilities for delivering educational services. Political decentralization, unaccompanied by proper devolution of administrative and expenditure decision-making powers has been reflected in a form of educational decentralization closer to a 'technical-administrative construct'. The top-down approach to educational decentralization in most states has facilitated administrative deconcentration, rather than promoting participation in educational management. The form of educational decentralization in most states is the outcome of conscious policy reforms to legitimize government actions, rather than as a response to the demand for good governance. This tells the whole story of the limited impact of decentralization as a strategy to improve teacher and resource management in states to achieve the EFA targets. However, in recent years, while implementing the SSA, efforts have been made to reverse the trends in the decentralized planning and management of elementary education through interventions aimed at strengthening the capacities of subdistrict and community level structures; improving coordination between the VECs/SMCs, local governments and related departments; empowering communities and NGOs, CSOs for

participatory planning and management of elementary education; and forging linkages and networking with the private sector.

6.2 Some suggestions

In the above context, the following interventions can be useful in improving teacher and resource management in the context of decentralization in the country (see also Figure 5.3).

Possible interventions to improve teacher management

1. Reviewing the policy of ban on teacher recruitment

Reviewing the policy of banning teacher recruitment in many states, bearing in mind the EFA targets. Given the fact that there are severe imbalances in teacher allocation, particularly in rural India, and that there will be increased demand for additional teachers with the increased enrolment in the coming years, a strategy of recruitment of para-teachers and teachers on contract may not serve the very purpose of EFA.

2. Rationalization of teacher deployment

Rationalization of teacher deployment is thus a major issue in all states. Further strengthening the system of teacher transfers (perhaps by making it criteria-based and thus reducing the political, bureaucratic and institutional distortion of the process), and making the transfer process transparent may help overcome the problem of the inequitable distribution of teachers between urban and rural schools, and across rural schools. Providing residential facilities to teachers in remote rural areas can also help motivate teachers to serve in difficult areas.

3. Optimal use of available teachers through improved accountability

Suboptimal use of available teachers (viz. teacher absenteeism) in rural areas is a major concern in most of the states. Empirical findings of studies on teacher absenteeism have clarified many of the misconceptions about teachers' behaviour. All types of teachers irrespective of their job status, educational and professional qualifications; age; job experience; salary structure and frequency of payment of their salary; location of their residence; location of schools where they serve; level of job satisfaction; and social status in the community remain absent from the school. In fact, more powerful teachers, i.e. relatively more educated, experienced male teachers and head teachers are more likely to remain absent. Higher salaries and community

appreciation do not serve as incentives to reduce teacher absenteeism. At the same time, the rate of teacher absenteeism is low in relatively rich states. The absenteeism rate is also low in schools having functional VECs/SMCs and PTAs, and where school-based supervision is strong. A better school infrastructure, particularly toilet facilities and electricity connection, is correlated with low rates of teacher absenteeism. This implies that financial incentives in the form of higher salaries and the mere delegation of powers to panchayats for recruitment, deployment and transfer of teachers may not help reduce suboptimal use of teachers.

The need is to strengthen the downward accountability system for teachers. Civil service rules have proved ineffective in arresting teacher absenteeism. Strengthening community-based supervision through the empowerment of VECs/SMCs and PTAs (through capacity building and devolution of statutory powers) may improve accountability of teachers. Interventions are urgently required to make these organizations functional.

4. Defined career path and performance based promotion policy

Low motivation of teachers is also partly responsible for high absenteeism. Teachers are not usually rewarded for innovation and better performance because of institutional rigidities. The incidence of promotion is very low for teachers, and requires a relatively high average number of years to be effected. Introducing a performance-based promotion system may boost teachers' motivation and performance. This will also serve as a fast track for career promotion based on the performance of individual teachers.

5. Improving working conditions

Improving working conditions for teachers, viz. school infrastructure, particularly toilets, electricity and residential facilities, may improve teacher attendance in rural areas.

6. Effective implementation of teachers' codes of practice

Head teachers are also found to be relatively more absent in schools, and it has a negative impact on the attendance of other teachers. Formulation and the effective implementation of codes of practices for teachers may serve as a structural measure to improve teacher attendance. Such codes may help keep teachers away from local level politics.

7. Strengthening supervision and support services

Teachers having relatively high absence rates are unlikely to compensate for loss of teaching when they are present in the school (Kremer et al., 2004). In such a situation, supervision and support services by BRCs and CRCs can help improve teaching learning in schools. Expecting VECs/SMCs and PTAs to monitor what goes in classrooms may not help because of the lack of capacity of these bodies. Therefore, the need is to further strengthen the capacities of the BRCs and CRCs and devolve more supervisory powers to them.

8. Comprehensive subdistrict database for teacher management

Attempts are being made in DISE to capture data and information on all variables relating to individual profile of teachers. However, this information base does not capture the process variables (teacher attendance, interaction of teachers with parents, informal assessment of teacher performance by the community, etc.) of the teacher profile, and this database is also not available at the local level. Creating local level databases that capture process variables for teacher management can help improve teacher accountability. In fact this may be built into the system of DISE, and it may be clarified as to what types of variables relating to teacher profile need to be analysed and shared at various subdistrict levels. Given the problem of lack of capacity to use DISE data at subdistrict level, the district authorities can evolve a system of downward feedback system to help take corrective measures to improve teacher behaviour.

9. Strengthening community based monitoring

The authorities need to be made more responsive in dealing with complaints about the unethical practices of teachers. Delays in responding to the complaints of community members and other stakeholders about teachers' unethical behaviour may de-motivate them to keep away from the affairs of the school. A system of 'penalty and reward' based on teacher performance and behaviour, and improved, coordinated efforts (by the district authorities, block and gram panchayats, VECs/SMCs, PTAs, CSOs, etc.) for strengthening community-based monitoring may go a long way in optimizing the use of teachers.

Suggested interventions for effective management of resources

1. Improving fiscal autonomy and resource base of local governments

Fiscal decentralization is visibly weak in almost all states. Alignment of resource allocation to service delivery responsibilities of local governments is

necessary for the effective participation of panchayats and ULBs in EFA movement. There is a need to devolve more expenditure decision-making power of local governments. As a precondition, the resource base of the local bodies needs to be augmented sufficiently to enable them to plan for basic education. The local governments and ULBs should not be looked at as mere spending agents of the state government.

More unconditional grants to schools may be considered, and the capacity of village-level bodies may be improved for better utilization of such funds. The district authorities may be given powers to reallocate resources among individual functions of the basic education subsector to enable them to better address the needs of the backward areas and communities (i.e. need to ensure allocative efficiency). Fund flow to the districts is generally slow, and spillover is a common phenomenon. Measures are required to improve fund flow to the districts and from the districts to schools, and bureaucratic interventions and related administrative rigidities need to be addressed to raise the financial absorption capacity of districts.

2. Capacity building of the local governments and community level bodies
Technical capacity of the local governments, ULBs and middle level functionaries may be improved for better financial management. Improvements in inter-government coordination may help assess total investment in basic education.

3. Strengthening information base, monitoring and feedback mechanism
Local level database on financial management by the local governments, ULBs, VECs/SMCs may be developed for better planning and downward accountability (i.e. ensuring productive efficiency). A relatively close match between the availability of resources and local demand for education, if coupled with transparency and with local cost sharing, can provide the incentives and information base for effective local monitoring. This implies local level participatory planning for prioritizing needs on the basis of availability of funds. Information sharing is a necessary condition for better management of resources.
A strong system for monitoring the utilization of resources at the local level may be developed at the district level. For this purpose, creation of the database on fund flow utilization is necessary. Though attempts are being made in the PMIS of the SSA to address this issue, further elaboration is needed of the processes of collection, compilation, analysis, report generation and the feedback mechanisms at district and subdistrict levels.

4. Empowering the deprived through capacity building and livelihood security

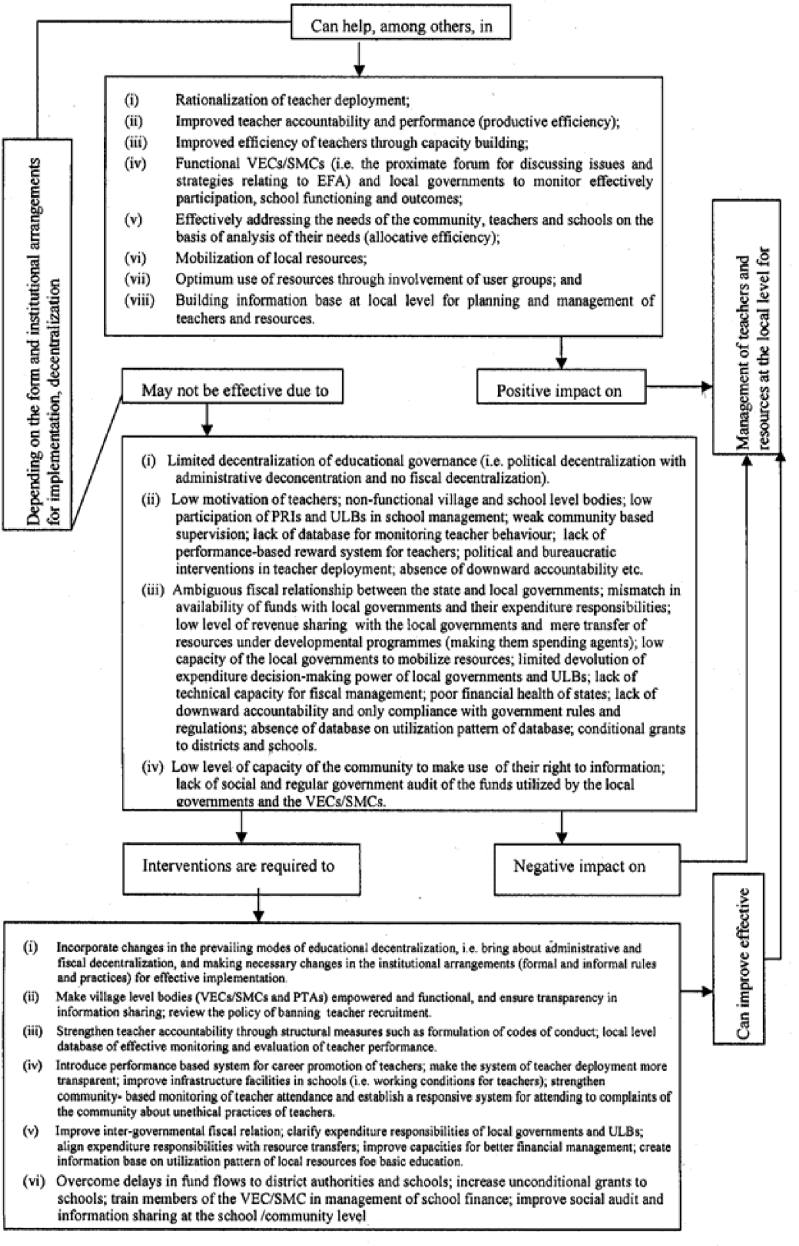
The voices of the poor and the deprived are generally not heard in the village and school level bodies. Empowering representatives from these communities through capacity building and livelihood security can help arrest local elite capture of the decision-making bodies.

5. Research on resource utilization pattern and impact on EFA

There is little information available on the utilization pattern of local level funds and its impact on educational processes and outcomes. Empirical research is required to investigate the impact of decentralization on resource mobilization and utilization at the local level; the structure of accountability; and the fiscal relationship between the local governments, village/school level bodies and progress towards meeting the EFA goals.

Decentralization, in general, and in education in particular, is a slow process. This is due to the fact that decentralization in the education sector, depends on outside forces to a large extent. Decentralization of planning and management in education also depends heavily on the state-level, initial, enabling conditions for take-off, viz. informed and empowered community and local-level institutions; the devolution of political, administrative and financial powers to lower level units; the threshold level of capacity for planning and management; a sound database; monitoring, support services and accountability systems; etc. Decentralization, being a state subject, primarily depends on state-level institutional arrangements for its implementation.

Figure 5.3. Possible channels and interventions through which decentralization can affect management of teachers and resources for achieving EFA in India



The bulk of the power in the Indian education system rests with the state governments rather than the local governments or the schools themselves. Local governments play limited roles in educational governance. In such a context, devolution of power and authority to lower units may work better as a response to pressure from below. Creating pressure from below for sharing authority and power takes time, as it involves long sustainable processes of capacity building, advocacy and conscientization. Currently, one of the challenges of educational planning and management, therefore, is to construct new relationships between the community, the civil society institutions and the government. This implies a reconceptualization of the meaning of people's participation in planning and management of education in the country. Effective interventions to improve teacher and resource management should begin to create the prerequisite conditions necessary for participatory educational governance.

Nevertheless, decentralization is a promising strategy for implementing the EFA programme in India. The slow progress of decentralization in education in some of the states is largely due to the fact that it has been put into practice hurriedly, without creating the basic enabling conditions. The other notable point is that the performance of decentralized systems of teacher and resource management depend on the design of decentralization and the institutional arrangements that govern its implementation. Therefore, it is but a matter of time, together with state-level initiatives to improve institutional arrangements that can make the decentralized management of teachers and resources an effective reality in India.

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Chapter 6: Implementation of Education for All – Teacher and Resource Management in the Context of Decentralization: National Report on the Mexican Education System[34]

1. National outlook

The Mexican education system is formed by basic education, middle education, higher education, and education for employment. Of these, basic education has the highest enrolment, with more than 24 million students, over a million teachers and more than 200,000 schools. Basic education comprises 78% of the national total, while middle education represents 11%, higher education 7% and education for employment 4% (SEP, 2003).

Basic education includes the pre-school, primary, and secondary levels and is the priority field of action of the education system. Pre-school education attends to children from the age of three to five years and is generally given in three grades. Primary education is given to children from six to fourteen years of age in six grades. Secondary education generally attends to the population aged 12–16 and is used to prepare adolescents to study middle education or enter career-oriented colleges. These three levels constitute basic mandatory education.

Both pre-school and primary education are provided in different forms: general and indigenous education and community courses. Primary education is also offered in the form of adult education, whilst secondary education offers the general, technical, employment, tele-secondary and adult education options.

Middle education consists of general high school, technological college, and professional-technical education. In the case of government schools (and most

[34] Prepared by the Ministry of Public Education, Mexico.

private schools), admission requires an entrance exam, as well as the secondary education completion certificate.

Higher education follows on after high school or its equivalent and covers universities, polytechnics, and teacher training. Most public universities are autonomous from the federal and state governments, with a variety of different options in the public sector.

Until 1991, the operation of the Education System (in terms of material and human resource management, administrative and financial organization, and normative and academic orientation) was concentrated basically in the Federal Government. Although previous efforts and gradual approaches had been made, it wasn't until 1992, through the signing of the National Agreement for the Modernization of Basic Education (Acuerdo Nacional para la Modernización de la Educación Básica – ANMEB) that Mexico clearly started the nationwide decentralization process, under the name, *educational federalization.*

This agreement, signed between the Federal Government, the governments of each state of the Mexican Republic and the National Education Workers' Union (Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de la Educación – SNTE) acknowledges the important progress made in terms of educational coverage and quality, but also the challenges that have not yet been overcome. These challenges are highlighted in the areas of literacy, access to primary education, retention and the average number of years of education, as well as the clear regional differences and inadequate attention paid especially to marginalized sectors.

The National Agreement for the Modernization of Basic Education establishes new criteria for responsibilities in education and defines three major lines of action:[35]

> 1. The reorganization of the Mexican education system, underlining the promotion of *educational federalism,* by means of which the Federal Executive transfers school establishments to the state governments with

[35] These commitments, stated through ANMEB, were later strengthened by the constitutional amendment of Article 3, as well as the creation of a General Education Act.

all the technical and administrative elements, rights and obligations, chattel and real-estate property, and, in general, full responsibility for the management and operation of the basic education and teacher-training system. The federation is committed to ensuring the national status of education (through the supervision of the current regulatory framework), continuing to use its faculties for the extension of the forms of the system, formulation of plans and syllabuses, the preparation and updating of textbooks, as well as the transfer of sufficient resources to each state government so that they are able to offer education services with the required coverage and quality.

2. The reformulation of educational contents and materials, in order to concentrate efforts on the development of essential knowledge: reading, writing, and mathematics; natural and social aspects of the environment; ethical principles and skills for creative and constructive participation.

3. The renewal of teaching, which includes teacher training, refresher courses, professional salaries, housing, the teaching career, and social appreciation of their work.

These commitments, stated through ANMEB, were later strengthened with the amendment of Article 3 of the Constitution, as well as the creation of a General Education Act, which defines the respective roles of the federation and the states: the guiding principles correspond to the federation, whilst the provision of basic education and teacher-training services are the responsibility of the state authorities. In the field of middle education and higher education (except teacher training), concurrent attributes are established, including those aspects pertaining to marginalized sectors.

The process of educational federalization has not been simple. Although it constituted an important step, placing education on the political agenda of the states and increasing their decision-making powers, it also imposed the challenge of forming and consolidating local subsystems and integrating them in a new National Education System, in the framework of very different contexts.

Educational decision-making was handed over to states with very unequal levels of economic development and, therefore, with differing possibilities of attending to educational needs. Although at the time some states had undertaken joint educational responsibilities which afforded them

considerable institutional experience and development, others had few resources and lacked the necessary competencies for such decision-making. Added to this was the fact that local governments exhibited unequal political interest in education, so that its placement as a priority on the political agenda was not in fact guaranteed, and this represented a significant part of the work to be done following the agreement itself.

On the other hand, decentralization also converted state governments into new actors in negotiating processes, until then ignored or unexplored, including labour-related aspects. In the specific case of basic education, ANMEB acknowledged the National Education Workers' Union as the sole representative of the labour interests of teachers. This definition, as with the decentralization itself, led to the transfer to the state governments, of a large part of the relations and negotiations traditionally situated in the central authority. This has led to adjustments (not always free of tension) in the definition of negotiating criteria.

These and other difficulties are still far from being completely overcome and allow us to say that the decentralization is still an ongoing process. The agenda for discussion still includes topics such as the improvement of educational finance, the search for better and fairer conditions so that the states can provide the services, and the placement of education as a national priority.

However, over the following years, and living with the aforementioned difficulties, each of the lines of action contemplated in ANMEB has been concretized through the implementation of actions and programs that help to guarantee not only access to educational services for Mexican children and adolescents, but also the necessary conditions for their fairly obtaining a quality education and their retention in the system.

An example of this has been the development, in the years following ANMEB, of a set of compensatory programmes and projects aimed at strengthening and extending the margin of opportunities so that children who live in the poorest zones of Mexico can successfully complete their basic education. These include: the Programme to Combat Educational Shortfalls (Programa para Abatir el Rezago Educativo – PARE), the Integral Programme to Combat Educational Shortfalls (Programa Integral para Abatir el Rezago Educativo – PIARE), the Migrant Agricultural Worker Population Educational Attention Project (Proyecto de Atención Educativa a la Población Jornalera Agrícola Migrante) (1997–2000), the Health, Education and

Nutrition Programme (Programa de Educación, Salud y Alimentación – Progresa), as well as actions aimed at boosting community education and the educational integration of disabled people.

Additionally, reform of the Basic Education Curricula and Syllabuses was initiated with the aim of orienting educational actions towards the achievement of basic learning.[36] In the 1993/94 school year, new curricula and syllabuses were implemented for primary and secondary education, and materials (textbooks, index card files, and programmatic advances) started to be distributed. Today, a proposal for the Integral Reform of Secondary Education is being defined, as well as new Syllabuses and Curricula for Pre-school Education that will strengthen the achievements made to date and the adjustment of processes that have not been altogether successful.

In the field of teacher training, in 1995, the National Programme for the Permanent Updating of Serving Basic Education Teachers (Programa Nacional para la Actualización Permanente de los Maestros de Educación Básica en Servicio – Pronap) began to bring about a return to the valuing of the social function of teachers. This responded to the need for a permanent, national refresher programme that went further than merely joint attention to emerging needs (for example, those derived from curricular reforms and new syllabuses) and instead, that would become an option for the professional development and ongoing strengthening of the work of teachers.

Actions such as those described above, although insufficient and not short of difficulties, have allowed real progress to be seen in recent years (SEP, 2003). Between 1992 and 2003, government spending on education rose from 4.6% to 7.0% of GDP, due to a large extent to the increase in federal funds. Of this, the share of the private sector increased from 0.3% to 1.3%, whilst the contribution of state funds rose from 0.6% to 1%.In the same period, the percentage of federal spending used for basic education continually grew from 64.0% to 67.7%. However, this growth was accompanied by a reduction in spending on the middle and higher education levels.

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[36] This being understood to mean 'the possibility that all Mexicans, upon completing their primary and secondary education, have consolidated the knowledge, skills, habits and values that make it possible for them to continue to learn throughout their lives and to live in the world with an active and responsible attitude based on principles' (Martinez Olive, 1997).

In 2003, 83% of all children and adolescents aged 3 to 15 had access to basic education. . For middle education, 51.5% of the target population was covered, which implies 5% growth in one year. In terms of educational universality, primary education is the closest with access exceeding 93%, a situation that has not yet occurred at other levels, such as secondary education, which has only reached 85%. Table 6.1 shows complementary data regarding several of the principal indicators of the Mexican education system (INEE, 2003).

Table 6.1. Indicators of the Mexican education system

	1990–91	1995–96	2000–01	2002–03
General				
Illiteracy (%)	12.1	10.6	9.2	8.8
Average schooling, grades	6.5	7.0	7.6	7.8
Pre-school education				
Coverage 3 years of age (%)	7.5	10.8	15.3	20.6
Coverage 4 years of age (%)	42.7	48.8	54.8	63.2
Coverage 5 years of age (%)	68.5	76.1	79.3	81.4
Coverage 3, 4 and 5 years (%)	39.5	45.0	50.1	55.5
Primary education				
Coverage (%)	93.5	93.2	92.9	93.1
Drop-out rate (%)	4.6	3.1	1.9	1.5
Primary education				
Failure rate (%)	10.1	7.8	6.0	5.4
Terminal efficiency (%)	70.1	80.0	86.3	88.0
Students per teacher	30.5	28.3	24.6	26.7
Students per school	175	154.2	149.4	149.4
Secondary education				
Absorption (%)	82.3	87.0	91.8	94.1
Coverage (%)	67.1	72.7	81.6	85.6
Drop-out rate (%)	8.8	8.8	8.3	6.9
Terminal efficiency (%)	73.9	75.8	74.9	78.8
Students per teacher	33.0	32.1	30.0	30.0
Students per school	217.9	200.0	188.7	190.3
Middle education				
Absorption (%)	75.4	89.6	93.3	95.4
Coverage (%)	35.8	39.4	46.5	51.5
Drop-out rate (%)	18.8	18.5	17.5	15.9
Terminal efficiency (%)	55.2	55.5	57.0	60.2
Students per teacher	39.4	36.9	34.7	33.2
Students per school	390.7	346.2	319.2	290.9
Higher education				
Absorption, Bachelor's (%)	69.7	80.5	82.1	82.8
Absorption, higher technical (%)	–	–	5.1	5.4

Source: Ministry of Public Education (2003).

In the field of indigenous education, despite the fact that serious shortfalls still exist and a high proportion of children and adolescents still do not complete primary education, the terminal efficiency in schools that provide this form of education rose from 33.8% in 1991 to 75.9% in 2003.

In the field of basic education, the implementation of different programmes has allowed issues fundamental to basic learning to be placed at the centre of education policy. These efforts include the following (SEP, 2003):

- The National Reading Programme (Programa Nacional de Lectura), aimed at strengthening the development of communication skills – speaking, reading, writing and listening – through reading. To date 815 classroom libraries have been set up, with 289 titles and 169,500 school libraries with 253 titles.
- The Citizen Formation Programme (Programa de Formación Ciudadana), stimulates the generation of rules of resistance and attitudes of rejection of corruption and crime. Six states are currently participating in the programme and two divisions of Mexico City. At the same time, the Integral Civic and Ethical Formation Programme for Primary Education (Programa Integral de Formación Cívica y Ética para la Educación Primaria) is under construction and the Secondary school subject of Civic and Ethical Formation is under review.
- The National Educational Development Board (Consejo Nacional de Fomento Educativo – CONAFE) has received aid specifically for improving the quality of education on 45,740 sites in 2,318 municipalities.

2. Teacher development and resources mobility and management

2.1 Description of teachers' responsibilities and levels of authority

As of 1992 and following the commitments derived from ANMEB, most of the states created *decentralized bodies* for the handing over of both real estate and functions and the staff (more than 700,000 teaching and administrative personnel). In this way, at the beginning a direct transfer was not made to the state governments, but rather to such decentralized bodies, with the intention of gradually creating the political and legal conditions for the formation of the

state education systems and for the incorporation of new staff and material resources.

To date, and although the states now possess their own education systems that have assumed the commitments derived from ANMEB, the rate of transfer of labour-related and professional teacher development responsibilities has varied.

Important changes have been made in labour-related issues. Prior to ANMEB, local governments were not involved in wage negotiations of teaching staff. Valid national agreements were reached between the Ministry of Public Education and the National Education Workers' Union, which extended to teachers in state schools. With the National Agreement, local governments now play an important role, substituting for the Ministry of Education (Secretaría de Educación Pública – SEP) in labour relations with teachers transferred by the federal body. Furthermore, the National Education Workers' Union (Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de la Educación) (SNTE) delegated its labour representation on executive committees to each state. Since then and up to the present, negotiations, agreements and decisions taken at a state level have constituted elements of great importance for labour relations between the governments and teachers. Although general wage increases continue to be negotiated centrally[37], the agreements made at the federal level are not concluded until their local counterparts (state education authorities and state union committees) reach their own agreements around the negotiating table.

However, these negotiations are still complex and do not always truly reflect the agreements made at the federal level, and therefore, the conditions and amounts of wage increases vary. One element that represents the complexity of this process is the fact that in most states teachers commonly called 'state' teachers (dependent on the local governments even before the signing of ANMEB) work alongside those called 'federal' teachers. Although neither type is under state management and responsibility, the basic economic conditions of each state have made the equalization of salaries and benefits very complicated. Consequently, different teachers' groups can have varying working conditions and benefits, a situation that in some cases has created

[37] Owing to the organization of the Federal Expenditure Budget, which allocates resources to cover the increase in wages of transferred teachers and federal personnel.

tensions and distancing not only in labour and salary aspects but also in the academic field.

2.2 Operation of the system (teachers)

On the other hand, for the purposes of defining promotions and wage increase, the education federalization process has also generated changes. Two nationwide mechanisms currently exist: the *horizontal scale* (through the *Teaching Career Programme*) and the *vertical scale* (SEP, 1999).

Teaching Career Programme

The Teaching Career Programme originated from the National Agreement for the Modernization of Basic Education. It was created with the intention of encouraging the work of the best teachers, reinforcing interest in participating in permanent updating processes and promoting the provision of services in undeveloped regions.

It is based around a system of financial incentives, using the principle of horizontal promotion through the assessment of two factors: the *school progress factor* (assessed by means of the results of exams taken by students in order to evaluate the impact of teaching on the achievement of basic learning), and the *professional performance factor* with the aim of acknowledging the work and efforts of teachers.

The operation of and responsibility for the programme is shared by three bodies:

- The SEP-SNTE National Commission[38] as the supreme governing body of the programme and empowered to issue related rules, guidelines, and provisions.
- The State Equality Commission that operates in each state, formed by representatives from the local Ministries of Education and from the National Education Workers' Union. This commission is responsible for the observance, fulfilment and dissemination of the guidelines issued by

[38] The National Education Workers' Union (Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de la Educación – SNTE) is a very strong and important representative of the labour interests of teachers in negotiations and different types of agreement.

the National Commission, as well as for assessing the teachers who wish to join the programme.

- The Assessment Body, responsible for reviewing and validating teacher documentation, as well as for assessing the *professional development* factor. There are more than 120,000 bodies installed in different workplaces for the assessment of daily teaching activities.

Classroom teachers, those performing management functions, and those carrying out technical-pedagogic support tasks have been included alike in the programme. Nationally, this represents 63% of basic education teachers, though the percentage ranges from 48% to 88% in individual states. To achieve promotion to the next incentive level (which may be A, B, C, D and E), teachers should be assessed covering each of the factors and obtain the highest qualifications, as well as having remained a predefined period of time at the previous level. Level promotion is translated into financial incentives for the enrolled teachers without this implying a change in the characteristics of their job description or functions.

Vertical scale

The vertical scale constitutes the mechanism by means of which the promotion of education system workers to a higher position is defined. It is regulated through Scale Regulations, which are both federal (which apply to the staff in the federal system) and local in each state. It is prepared by a Joint Scale Commission formed by representatives from the federal or state education authorities, union representatives and, in some cases, personnel assigned by the Executive Branch of the states.

- This Joint Commission has the following functions:
- To provide the necessary rules for the exercise of scaling rights in promotional positions of education workers.
- To call for bids to cover permanent or temporary vacancies.
- To decide on promotions, following the study and determination of the different elements that allow a suitable assessment and rating of the scaling factors.

Both the Teaching Career Programme and the vertical scale system tend to directly involve the state education authorities in decision-making processes (even though a federal presence is maintained through the National Commission), but at the same time constitute mechanisms with a certain degree of independence and by means of which teachers nationwide can

aspire to better working conditions and higher salaries, based on their own merits rather than on the decision of the authorities.

Notwithstanding the possible advantages of these systems and their acceptance by a certain sector of teachers –principally due to the economic advantages of moving up to the next level- they have also generated unwanted results that require critical review. The most important of them is probably the close relationship established between training processes, obtaining points for scaling purposes, and rises in income. Consequently, the participation, for example, in ongoing training activities and refresher courses is now perceived as a means of obtaining a greater income, rather than part of a process of professional and life-long development with the aim of improving teaching.

Studies have revealed that outstanding participation in a Teaching Career Programme is not necessarily accompanied by a rise in the quality of education offered to children and adolescents or, indeed, by greater learning. Although it is impossible to establish a direct relationship between teacher training and educational quality (which is affected by many different factors), it is desirable that teacher incentive and promotion mechanisms have the goal of offering a better education.

Along these lines, in the last two years, a process of review and discussion has taken place that allows the virtues of the Teaching Career to be maintained in the incentive system, at the same time as strengthening the idea of professional development as a lifelong process of academic strengthening. A fundamental topic in this field is the ongoing training of serving teachers, with regard both to its conception and the creation of federal and state mechanisms for its promotion.

National Programme for Teachers Permanent Updating

The main tool for the professional development of basic education teachers is the National Programme for the Permanent Updating of Serving Basic Education Teachers (Pronap). Its creation, resulting from the National Agreement for the Modernization of Basic Education, constituted a very important step in this field, given that previous years' experience had been characterized by systematic and unarticulated efforts, relatively unrelated to improving teaching skills.

With the aim of regulating, developing and operating the first stage of Pronap, the Regulatory and Development Unit for the Updating, Training and

Professional Improvement of Teachers (Unidad de Normatividad y Desarrollo para la Actualización, Capacitación y Superación Profesional de los Maestros – UNyDACT) was created by Ministerial Decision. Today, it is the Serving Teachers Training and Updating Office (Coordinación General de Actualización y Capacitación para Maestros en Servicio – CGAyCMS) attached to the Under-Ministry for Basic Education and Teacher Training that is responsible for designing and regulating programmes and actions for the ongoing training of teachers.

The basic purpose of the CGAyCMS is to aid the construction of the National System for the Training, Updating, and Professional Improvement of Basic Education Teachers, by means of a policy of connection and coordination with the states, which offers teachers refresher programmes that allow them to continuously and permanently improve their professional levels, thus contributing to raising the quality of education.

Pronap responds both to the national nature of basic education in Mexico and to its decentralized organization. In accordance with Article 3 of the General Education Act, it acknowledges that the Federal Government is bound to create the necessary conditions so that all teachers have access to professional development. For this, National Syllabuses have been set up (National Courses, General Courses), which seek to provide training alternatives on topics considered to be priorities of the Mexican education system.

Additionally, Pronap takes into account the federalized nature of education, seeking to meet the updating needs of teachers in a pertinent way through *State Syllabi* (State Refresher Courses, Short Workshops and, in recent years, the General Updating Workshops),[39] which are designed by the state education authorities, to adjust their contents to the specific characteristics and problems of each region.

Both the national and state programmes should be based on fundamental criteria for their design, so that they ensure a selection and treatment in

[39] The importance of the General Updating Workshops should be highlighted as the most extensive programme for teachers nationwide, taken by basic education teachers from all over Mexico prior to the start of the school year. Until 2000, the topics and designs of these workshops were the responsibility of SEP; today, state teams define their content based on the needs and priorities of each state.

accordance with teachers' needs and aimed at improving the quality of education. These criteria include the following (CGAYCMS, 2004):

- Training focused on the school. The school should be the fundamental space where teachers learn and, therefore, the first reference point for the development of collective, ongoing teacher training actions.
- Attention both to individual and collective teacher training needs, with special emphasis on the development of training proposals aimed at groups.
- Attention to the diversity of tasks (classroom work, management, supervisory and advisory functions) and contexts (rural, urban, indigenous, in multi-grade schools).
- Practice as a source of reflection, analysis, and learning. The syllabi must consider pedagogic experience as a fundamental benchmark and anchor for learning.
- Congruence with current teaching approaches, for which it is defined, and which are stated in the syllabi and curricula.
- The exploitation of educational materials used on a daily basis by teachers: annual plans, programmatic progress, class plans, exams, report cards, free textbooks. Furthermore, to promote the use of the lists of books made available to teachers by the Ministry of Public Education.

As in the case of the Syllabi, the components of this programme include:

Teachers' Centres, spaces dedicated to providing teacher-aid services through the development of the Syllabi, as well as by means of advice, accompaniment, and the supply of different resources for the development of teaching work. Although Teachers' Centres represent spaces that are yet to be exploited to their full potential, and their appropriation by teachers has been difficult, their creation represents an important step towards the mobilization of resources and the generation of local (state and municipal) services that aid professional development. There are 512 Teachers' Centres in operation today, distributed throughout the country.

Updating Libraries, which house an important collection on some of the most significant didactic and theoretical topics. The basic nature of such collections is defined by the Ministry of Public Education on a federal basis, whilst the formation of the state collection is the responsibility of local education authorities, according to state requirements.

National Certification Exams, defined as quality certification mechanisms. These are instruments that provide serving teachers with the chance to obtain a diagnosis of their knowledge derived from practice and their participation in ongoing training activities, regarding basic topics. Consequently, teachers can officially obtain certification of their ongoing training.

With this framework, and since the creation of Pronap, the development of state areas for teacher training can be solidified, so that it forms an important item on local education agendas and progresses in the formation of ongoing training systems.. To date, the 32 states of the Republic have a State Updating Body (or equivalent) as a coordinating area, responsible for forming technical teams that develop spaces and proposals for the ongoing training of teachers from the different levels and forms of basic education.

Notwithstanding, one of the main difficulties perceived since Pronap has been the existence of an unarticulated supply and widely varying quality of courses, both on a federal scale and in each of the states. Proposals for ongoing teacher training have frequently been developed by very different bodies (both governmental agencies and from higher education institutions and the private sector), without going through systematic processes to assess and identify training needs and state priorities. This has hindered the construction of short, medium, and long-term planning exercises, which would give professional development efforts greater consistency.

For this reason, and with the aim of advancing the consolidation of the National System for the Permanent Updating of Basic Education Teachers and raising the quality of both the ongoing training service offered to teachers and state capabilities for the management and organization of this programme, as of the 2003/2004 school year, adjustments have been made to the Rules of Operation that govern Pronap. Based on this, the federal body assumes a commitment to:

- Promote the development and consolidation of regulatory, technical, financial and material conditions that ensure the provision of the services.
- Prevent the dispersion of ongoing training options, which, while extensive, at the same time, is unarticulated and frequently distant from planning processes and not linked to priority needs.
- Ensure equality, so that indigenous education teachers, multi-grade groups, and people who act as teachers without have any specialized studies, have access to ongoing training options.

- Promote the certification of the updating of the knowledge of serving teachers.
- For their part, the states' responsibilities include:
- Strengthening and articulating the state training system in order to provide teachers with suitable services.
- Preparing a Guiding Programme for the Ongoing Training of Serving Basic Education Teachers, which contains the rules, policies, goals and procedures for the implementation of Pronap in each state.
- Designating an area which is responsible for directing and coordinating the actions derived from this Guiding Programme.
- Signing an agreement with the Ministry of Education that establishes the rights and obligations of both authorities.
- Administering the resources provided by the Ministry of Education for the implementation of actions aimed at strengthening consulting services, the professionalization of the personnel responsible for operating training services, promoting the development of pilot projects in the field of ongoing teacher-training, attending to teachers' groups from the teachers' centres and the acquiring the necessary materials to meet teachers' needs.

For the evaluation of Pronap and the commitments and actions derived from it, both internal and external evaluation procedures are under development that provide information on its progress and impact.

The first of these (internal evaluation), integrated in the State Guiding Programmes, is based on the definition of results indicators, which specifically establish the parameters, formulas and annual goals for each one. These elements will allow the states and the central body to periodically assess the scope of actions, their impact on the strengthening of ongoing training services, and the proper use of the resources supplied by the federation.

At the same time, the development of an external evaluation procedure has been proposed, to be carried out by an academic or research institution or by a national or international organization with experience in teacher updating.

The actions, programmes, and mechanisms mentioned so far unquestionably have allowed progress to be made in offering quality education through the strengthening of teachers' work and the teaching profession. Through the 2001–2006 National Education Program, the Mexican Government has acknowledged the importance of teachers in the realization of efforts in both

curricular and organizational aspects and in the achievement of learning in children and adolescents.

> *The transformation of education practices is an indispensable element for achieving quality basic education for all. These are determined, among other things, by the possibilities of access by teachers to new knowledge and practical proposals regarding the learning processes of children, the different ways of teaching contents with different natures and specific methods for working under different social and cultural circumstances (PRONAE, 2001–2006, p. 118).*

Along these lines, it is possible to perceive solid advances on questions such as:

- The placement of professional teacher development on the national and state agendas. In this way, the interest in achieving quality education through an improvement of teaching practices is translated into state policies and concrete actions. The active participation of the state education authorities in the establishment of agreements, the definition of priorities, strategies, and actions in the management of local teachers, as well as their ongoing training.
- In the case of ongoing training, the construction of State Guiding Programs and the assumption of responsibility in the design and assessment of syllabuses constitute important steps in the strengthening of federalization and in the differentiated attention to the needs of teachers and students in the different states.
- The creation of mechanisms that promote the teaching career and provide teachers with official recognition and incentives for their efforts to improve the quality of the education received by their students.
- The development of nationwide syllabi and support services for teachers. The attention given to teachers' groups in remote regions and with a vulnerable population is especially important. This has led to the creation of spaces for the development of ideas, skills, and attitudes linked to national priority subjects, such as: basic learning skills (oral, written language and mathematical skills), civic and ethical formation, educational integration of disabled people and education in an indigenous and multi-grade context. Additionally, in the last three years, collaboration has been extended to institutions such as the National Women's Institute and the Federal Electoral Institute, in order to provide the nation's teachers with more training options regarding gender equality and training for democratic life and citizenship. Table 6.2 shows some of

these topics and some examples of courses incorporated into the National Catalogue of Updating Training Options for Teachers:

Table 6.2. State updating courses linked to vulnerable groups, fundamental values, and citizen formation, offered to Mexican teachers (2003–04)

Intercultural education
Attention to student diversity as the backbone of teaching in basic education: a pedagogic approach
Ethnical and cultural identity in the formation of values in indigenous pre-school education girls and boys
Pre-school education: a space for promoting interculturality

Democracy, values, health and gender equality
Gender and values in basic education contents
Civic education supporting interculturality
Didactic strategies for civic and ethical formation
Gender rights and diversity
Children's rights as a strategy for promoting education in values
Do we offer girls and boys the same opportunities? Gender equality as an indispensable element of teaching in primary and secondary education

Special educational needs
Orientation for the educational provision of indigenous children with special educational needs
School organization: collective environments to favour the processes of educational integration in pre-school
Educational integration: towards the creation of one school for all
Diversity: an opportunity to transform our school context – from educational integration to inclusive schools

However, challenges still remain in the field of teacher management and development, basically with regard to the following aspects:

1. A greater strengthening of the federalization process (under equal conditions) that allows local governments to share responsibilities with the Federal Government and assume other specific ones. One aspect of this process of autonomy that requires strengthening is with regard to decision-making, in terms of the implementation of Education Programs that reach the schools. Although advances have gradually been made in this area, to date many programmes with different contents and relevance reach schools directly from the federation, with little autonomy of the local governments and the teachers themselves to decide which meet the needs of their states, towns, and schools.

2. The strengthening of state technical teams with the necessary skills for the development of educational results and quality assessment processes, as well as for planning proposals and strategies to aid teachers.

3. The articulation of efforts that allow the expression of both national needs (derived from common difficulties, historical shortfalls, inequalities) and state needs in professional teacher development policies, which respond to the characteristics of each context. In the case of Mexico (and given its wide cultural, economic and political diversity), attention to local needs arises as an urgent requirement and imposes the need for conciliation between common national goals and the specific emphasis derived from local problems.

4. The orientation of actions, in the field of professional teacher development, directed at existing problems, needs and school conditions: envisaging schools as spaces for teacher training and basing services and aids around them.

5. The enhancement of the notion of ongoing training as a basic component of the teaching career. One of the principal challenges in this field is overcoming the deeply rooted conceptions that identify ongoing training as a synonym for updating and training through attending courses. This perception has recently led to an excessive and unarticulated growth in the number of proposed courses and workshops that only rarely actually help to strengthen the teaching profession. Rethinking the notion of ongoing training as a lifelong process of

professional growth ,with the aim of offering better quality education, forces a review of this set of formal proposals, the evaluation of their pertinence according to the achievement of the goals set out by the National Education System, and the incorporation of new forms of training and support services for schools and teachers.

2.3 Description of responsibilities and levels of authority (resources)

Based on Article 3 of the Constitution and the General Education Act (current applicable legislation), the Mexican State is obliged to guarantee access to education to the entire population, as well as to provide basic education services. Consequently, and with the beginnings of educational federalization established in ANMEB, adjustments have been made over the last few years to the mechanisms and procedures for the distribution and use of the resources allocated to this important aspect.

Public spending on education is formed by the contributions of three basic sources of funds: federal, state and those from the private sector, according to the following procedure:

The Federal Expenditure Budget allocates funds for education through the Ministry of Public Education, so that it may perform its assigned normative and compensatory functions, as well as for the provision of education services in the Federal District of Mexico City,[40] attention to other forms and types of education, and the promotion of science, technology, culture and sports.

Additionally, and through the fiscal adjustments made, the functions of state and municipal governments have been extended to the use of federal resources, at the same time indicating their responsibilities regarding the use and accountability for such resources.

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[40] The only 'state' that was not originally integrated in the commitments of ANMEB, given the political conditions that defined it at the time, and which did not allow it to autonomously administer government resources and decisions. Until 1994, the government and administration of the federal district were defined by the federal authorities and not by public election. Today, and based on the corresponding constitutional amendments, the transfer of education services to the elected authorities of the federal district is under way.

Based on such adjustments to tax legislation, public spending on education defined in the Federal Expenditure Budget is formed by the following *branches:*

- Branch 11 (Ministry of Public Education)
- Branch 25 (Provisions and contributions for the Basic Education and Teacher Training Systems):
  – Provisions for personal services for the Basic Education and Teacher Training Contributions Fund
  – Contributions for Basic Education Services in the Federal District
- Branch 33 (Federal Contributions for States and Municipalities)
  – Basic Education and Teacher Training Contributions Fund
  – Multiple Contributions Fund
  – Technological and Adult Education Contributions Fund

The creation of Branch 33 in the Expenditure Budget has meant that resources reach the states directly and not only through the Ministry of Public Education. This branch is formed by six funds, three of which establish specific resources for education (SEP, 1999):

- The Basic Education and Teacher Training Contributions Fund (Fondo de Aportaciones para la Educación Básica y Normal – FAEB), used for the operation of services and whose amount is determined based on the Common Schools and Staff List Registry, which is updated every year.
- The Multiple Contributions Fund (Fondo de Aportaciones Múltiples – FAM), one of whose components includes resources for the building, equipping, maintenance and repair of infrastructure destined for basic education and state public universities.
- The Technological and Adult Education Contributions Fund (Fondo de Aportaciones para la Educación Tecnológica y de Adultos – FAETA).

This branch of the budget is also formed by the Health Services Contributions Fund (Fondo de Aportaciones para los Servicios de Salud – FASS), which does not include resources for education; the Social Infrastructure Contributions Fund (Fondo de Aportaciones para la Infraestructura Social – FAIS), which is mainly used to support municipal investments including infrastructure for basic education; and the Municipal Fortification Contributions Fund (Fondo de Aportaciones para el Fortalecimiento de los Municipios – FAFM), by means of which attention is paid to financial

obligations and needs relating to public safety; however no limitations exist for investment in education.

The supervision of these funds used for education in states and municipalities is the responsibility of the state bodies created for their control and monitoring. Additionally, and on a federal level, the Chief Accountant's Office of the Mexican Congress possesses powers to verify that the funds are used for the explicit purposes indicated by Law.

In addition to the indications of Branch 33, the states make use of some of the resources from Branch 11. This is the case of the federal subsidies for state universities, High School Colleges and Scientific and Technological Study Centres. As a result of this type of spending and of Branch 33, a substantial part of the federal education budget is applied directly by the state governments and their decentralized bodies.

On the other hand, the participation of the private sector represents an important component of national spending on education. Although the highest percentage in terms of the source of funds comes from the federation (due to the fact that schools with federal and state public support represent more than 80% of the total), funds from the private sector have risen over the last few years. These funds principally include resources destined by families and individuals for the payment of school fees in institutions not financed by the State, as well as for goods and services required for education (such as uniforms, didactic material, and transportation).

As shown in Table 6.3, the composition of education spending and the growing efforts of both the public and private sectors, has allowed a significant increase in the amount of spending on education, which has risen from 4.7% of GDP at the time of ANMEB to almost 7% in 2003.

Similarly, public spending per student has undergone constant growth in recent years, particularly in basic education as a result of the boosting of programmes aimed at improving quality and educational equality, such as scholarships and compensatory services, the Quality Schools Program, the National Reading Program, the Information and Communication Technology Program, and the Teacher Updating Program, among others. These programmes are developed with the participation of local governments but are coordinated by the Federal Government, in fulfilment of its responsibility to offer compensatory services and promote equality, and have become a

fundamental tool for the redistribution of spending and public resources in the field of equality.

Table 6.3. Percentage of GDP spending on education by provenance of resources (1980–2003)

Year	National	Public				Private
		Total	Federal	State	Municipal	
1980	4.90	4.57	3.72	0.78	0.067	0.34
1985	4.12	3.81	3.20	0.59	0.024	0.31
1990	4.02	3.70	3.02	0.66	0.013	0.33
1991	4.28	4.06	3.40	0.65	0.012	0.22
1992	4.73	4.43	3.79	0.63	0.014	0.30
1993	5.27	4.97	4.34	0.61	0.014	0.31
1994	5.45	5.16	4.58	0.57	0.013	0.29
1995	4.93	4.70	4.22	0.46	0.011	0.23
1996	5.81	4.79	3.99	0.79	0.009	1.02
1997	5.78	4.77	4.00	0.76	0.008	1.02
1998	5.96	4.84	4.10	0.74	0.008	1.11
1999	6.10	4.92	4.07	0.83	0.008	1.19
2000	6.15	4.95	4.07	0.88	0.008	1.20
2001	6.51	5.26	4.30	0.95	0.009	1.25
2002	6.78	5.51	4.50	1.00	0.009	1.28
2003*	6.84	5.51	4.49	1.01	0.011	1.33

*Estimate

Source: Presidency of the Republic. Third Government Report, 2003.

For example, the *Opportunities* Human Development Program supports the enrolment, retention, and regular school assistance to children from families favoured by this programme, by means of granting scholarships and aid. During the school year 2003/2004, this aid was provided to more than 4 million basic education students, in the form of packages of school utensils or financial resources to obtain them, in the case of primary education, as well as an annual monetary incentive, in the case of secondary education.

The Primary Education for Migrant Children Program (Programa de Educación Primaria para Niñas y Niños Migrantes – PRONIM) addresses the needs of children who are members of agricultural day-worker families. This programme has been implemented in fifteen of the thirty-two states of the Mexican Republic, and in the last school year benefited more than 12,000 students.

The Special Education Fortification and Educational Integration Program, which seeks to meet the needs of disabled people and tries to promote a culture of integration that encourages equality. Based on this programme, resources have been provided for the creation, to date, of sixty-six Resource and Information Centres for Educational Integration (Centros de Recursos e Información para la Integración Educativa – CRIE), as well as the formation of state teams with teachers responsible for following up more than three thousand initial and basic education institutions regarding the inclusion of students with some form of disability.

The Quality Schools Program (Programa Escuelas de Calidad – PEC) responds to the need to guarantee equal educational opportunities for all students, irrespective of their socio-economic status, their ethnic origin, or their family environment. The mission of the PEC is to incorporate a model of self-management in primary schools, with a vision based fundamentally on the freedom of decision, teamwork, participatory planning, assessment, constant improvement, and social participation. The schools in this programme (to date more than 15,000, benefiting 3.8 million students) have boosted the creation and development of the tool called the Strategic School Transformation Plan, in which the school community expresses its main problems and needs (of both an academic nature and regarding different resources), as well as a proposal for addressing its needs and progress in the field of educational quality. Similarly, PEC has promoted the activation of Social Participation School Boards,[41] in order to involve parents (and the community in general) in the management of resources and organizational decisions.

One characteristic worth mentioning is that the Quality Schools Program constitutes a mechanism for the direct allocation of resources to schools for

[41] By Presidential Decree in August 1999, the guidelines were established for the incorporation and operation of the National Social Participation in Education Board, in order to comply with the General Education Act, which requires education authorities to promote, pursuant to the guidelines established by the federal education authority, the participation of society in activities that aim to strengthen and raise the quality of public education, as well as extending the coverage of education services. However, and even though each basic education institution should have a Social Participation Committee, it has not always been possible to involve them in decisions regarding the organization and allocation of specific resources in each school.

their management and administration. Once incorporated into the programme and in accordance with their Strategic Plan, the participating schools receive economic aid through the National Quality Schools Trust Fund and the corresponding State Trust Funds as the direct means of allocation. Each state trust fund is also formed using federal and state resources, so that for each peso contributed by the local government, the Ministry of Public Education contributes another three pesos, until a limit is reached, defined for each state according to the percentage of their population aged 5–14 years compared with the national total.

The benefiting schools should ensure that at least 75% of the resources are used for the purchase of books, utensils, school and didactic materials, technical equipment and furniture, as well as for the remodeling, construction and extension of educational spaces. The rest may be allocated for other components that in the opinion of the school enrich student learning and strengthen teaching and directive skills, as well as parent instruction. In the case of resources used for courses, these should be endorsed by the local education authorities in order to ensure their quality at all times, as well as their pertinence regarding the Strategic School Transformation Plan.

The evaluation of the Quality Schools Program is carried out based on performance standards defined for its operation (PEC, 2003). Based on these standards, an internal and external evaluation process is performed. The first is carried out by each school community so that achievements, difficulties, and challenges derived from the Strategic Plan are assessed. This evaluation is stated in an annual report submitted to the General State Coordinating Office of the programme. For its part, the external evaluation (carried out by an academic research institution) allows the assessment of the central management of the programme, as well as of the State Coordinating Office and the compilation of results from internal evaluations.

In the case of programmes that include federal resources from the Ministry of the Treasury and Public Finance, the Ministry of Public Office and the Federal Government Auditor's Office, (as well as other instances), these may, according to their respective jurisdictions, perform examinations and audits regarding the use of resources. Each programme should observe the legal provisions relating to the use of public resources approved by the federal and state comptrollers or by bodies created for the supervision and monitoring of specific aspects.

3. Lessons learned

In the case of Mexico, the educational federalization is a process which has been promoted with special interest and with the conviction that the offer of quality education cannot be reached through centralized actions that ignore contexts and particular needs. Its implementation has directly affected the levels of responsibility and participation, and has allowed the exploration of new scenarios, not only in the purely academic field (of content definition and foci that support fundamental learning), but also in the political, economic and social fields. The unchained processes have not been free of complexity and have made evident new challenges that today guide the efforts and goals in the education field.

Educational federalization is a never-ending path. It is a developing process in which progress has been recorded and lessons learned that provide some guidance for forthcoming actions. Among these lessons, the following are worth mentioning:

1. The negotiation and dialogue among actors as a condition for establishing prioritized action paths, not only regarding resource utilization, but also regarding the professional and working development of the teachers. In the beginning, centralized decisions had the support of national unity as a purpose; however, this generated risks, such as not considering the more specific and urgent needs in local contexts. In this way, the federalization process has allowed the voices of new actors to be heard in the definition of purposes, goals and specific actions.

2. The close relationship between the social, economic and political growth, and the attainment of educational goals. As mentioned before, the strengthening of state responsibilities cannot become a reality or be adequately translated into offering a quality education for all, as long as social, economic and working conditions are not strengthened, all at the same time. Education and development appear, thus, as indivisible components.

3. The recognition of diversity and its multiple facets in the generation of processes and programmes that impact on federalization, in this case regarding the management of resources and teaching staff. The strategies used in Mexico cannot be 'one and only', but diverse, in view of the diverse conditions in each context. There are national programmes that give unity and congruence to the policies for the management of resources and teachers' development, but their implementation requires processes that link them to

local reality, and that integrate the specific needs that make them relevant for each case.

4. The relationship between reaching a quality education for all and considering the teacher as a relevant actor in the processes of change. The relevance given by the Mexican Government to the permanent training and the professional development of teachers comes from this consideration.

5. The relevance of counting on mechanisms, instruments and procedures that ensure the allocation of resources to the issues prioritized to reach a quality education with equity, and that favour adequate accountability. As a result of this, the definition of Operating Rules by many of the programmes and areas of the education system has allowed the creation of clear guidelines and procedures, not only for the allocation of new resources, but also for their utilization and accountability for them.

6. Finally, the training and strengthening of the state teams on technical-pedagogical competencies as a fundamental factor for the definitive transfer of greater responsibilities to the State Governments and Educational authorities. The experience of the last twelve years has provided evidence that a process of federalization cannot involve the absolute and direct transfer of responsibilities to local Governments, given that this – far from supporting the improvement of the quality and equity of the educational services delivered – can contribute to broadening and deepening the gaps between the involved parts. When these types of processes are established in contexts not only of diversity, but also of inequity in more than one sense, the support and strengthening of the local teams is an unavoidable responsibility of the federal administration to achieve better fulfilment of educational goals.

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PART 3:

THEMATIC REPORT

Chapter 7:
Walking the Last Mile: Meeting the Learning Needs of the Marginalized Populations in Andhra Pradesh, India[42]

1. Education for All in India: progress so far and continuing challenges

While only 16.6% of Indians were literate at the time of India's independence, consistent efforts made by the country over the last five decades has resulted in nearly two-thirds of the total population becoming literate. The literacy rate in the country according to the 2001 census is 65.4%. For the first time, after independence, the absolute number of illiterates has come down in spite of increase in population. The total number of literates has now gone up by 203 million. Today, three fourths of men and more than half of women in the country are literates. The gender gap has also been narrowing. While difference between the male and female literacy was 25% in 1991, it has narrowed to 22% in 2001. Literacy and education have been recognized as important dimensions of national development. Access to education has also significantly improved over the years. During the last fifty years, the literacy rates have improved and the number of schools has increased (Table 7.1).

Table 7.1. Literacy rate and number of primary schools (1951–2001)

Year	Literacy rate (%)			Number of schools	
	Total	Male	Female	Primary	Upper Primary
1951	18.33	27.16	8.86	215,036	14,576
1961	28.31	40.40	15.34	351,530	55,915
1971	34.45	45.95	21.97	417,473	93,665
1981	43.56	56.37	29.75	503,763	122,377
1991	52.21	64.13	39.29	566,744	155,926
2001	63.57	75.85	54.16	641,695	198,004

Note: Literacy rates of 1951, 1961 and 1971 relate to population aged 5 and above. Rates for 1981, 1991 and 2001 relate to the population aged 7 and above.

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[42] Prepared by Dr. I.V. Subba Rao, Principal Secretary, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, India.

Table 7.2. Availability of schooling facilities, by location and population

Particulars	2nd survey 1965	3rd survey 1973	4th survey 1978	5th survey 1986	6th survey 1993
Rural population	396 580 123	465 367 369	509 163 428	593 560 310	659 691 045
Rural habitations	982 251	953 734	964 664	981 864	1 060 612
Habitations having primary schools/sections within 1 km (0.5 mile)	673 643	720 809	773 998	823 117	884 089
Percentage	68.58	75.58	80.23	83.83	83.36
Population served by primary school/sections up to 1 km (0.5 mile)	342 361 376	420 427 143	472 613 716	560 622 974	618 543 482
Percentage	86.33	90.34	92.82	94.45	93.76
Habitations served by upper primary school/section within 3 km (2 miles)	545 138	542 226	674 971	726 594	807 656
Percentage	55.50	56.85	69.97	74.00	76.15
Rural population served by upper primary school/section within 3 km (2 miles)	270 641 514	320 181 397	401 355 603	498 447 378	560 769 559
Percentage	68.24	68.80	78.83	83.98	85.00

Source: Government of India (2001).

According to the last All India Educational Survey conducted in 1993, 94% of the total rural population was served by primary schools and 83% of the habitations had primary schools (Table 7.2) The total enrolment has gone up by nearly six times and enrolment of girls has gone up by 9.16 times. Over the years, the upper primary level enrolment has gone up by more than 13 times. The gross enrolment ratio (GER) in primary schools has increased from 42.6% in 1950-51 to 94.4% in 1999-2000. Similarly, for upper primary stage, the GER has gone up from 12.7% in 1950-51 to 58.79% in 1999-2000. There has also been a substantial increase in the number of teachers since 1950–51. From 624,000 in 1950–51, it has risen to 3,217,000 in 1999–2000. The number of female teachers has shown a dramatic increase from 95,000 in 1950–51 to 1,152,000 in 1999–2000. The number of children dropping out of school system between classes I to VIII has shown a steady decline from 78.3% in 1960–61 to 54.5% in 1999–2000. Between classes I and V, currently 40.25% of children are dropping out compared with 65% in 1960–61 (Table 7.3).

Table7.3: Drop-out rates at primary and upper primary levels (1960–61 to 1999–2000)

	1960–61	1970–71	1980–81	1990–91	1992–93	1998–99	1999–00
Classes I–V Boys	61.7	64.5	56.2	40.1	43.83	38.62	38.67
Girls	70.9	70.9	62.5	46.0	46.67	41.22	42.28
Total	64.9	67.0	58.7	42.6	45.01	39.74	40.25
Classes I–VIII Boys	75.0	74.6	68.0	59.1	58.23	54.4	51.96
Girls	85.0	83.4	79.4	65.1	65.21	60.09	58.00
Total	78.3	77.9	72.7	60.9	61.10	56.82	54.53

Source: Government of India, 2001

Clearly, more children are entering school. There are HOWEVER formidable challenges. More than half of those who enter class I drop out before completing the elementary education cycle and many of them are girls. There is obviously a need to ensure that the holding power of the school is enhanced and all children who enter school complete the full cycle of elementary education.

2. 'Excluded' Scheduled Castes and 'isolated' Scheduled Tribes – the two major marginalized groups

Most of the children who drop out belong to the traditionally disadvantaged, socially, economically backward and marginalized groups in the country and most of them belong to two categories called Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs). These marginalized groups have traditionally been excluded from the development process. Evidently any effort towards realizing the constitutional commitment of universal elementary education for all children or the global endeavour of Education for all must seriously address an array of constraints that have hitherto excluded large section of Indian society from basic education (Nambissan and Sedwal, 2002).

Among the educationally most deprived sections in India are the Scheduled Castes, comprising 16.5% and the Scheduled Tribes comprising nearly 8% of the total population Both groups are disadvantaged and marginalized and have either been 'excluded' because of social discrimination as in the case of Scheduled Caste or 'isolated' because of geographical, linguistic and cultural barriers as in the case of scheduled tribes.

2.1 Scheduled Castes

The Scheduled Castes are not only economically backward but have traditionally been discriminated socially and denied access to learning. These groups have been deprived of education for a long time having been regarded as untouchables in the caste structure of traditional Hindu society. As a result of this cumulative social, economic and educational deprivation, only 37% of this population was literate even after 40 years of independence. Most of these Scheduled Caste groups are poor. Nearly 48% of this group are below the official poverty line. As per the National Sample Survey (NSS) conducted in 1993-94, sixty one% of these families lived on wage labour. These groups live in spatially segregated clusters at the periphery of village, are not allowed access to common village wells and are prevented from entering temples (Nambissan, G and Sadwal, M, 2002). Education is seen as a critical factor for their socio-economic progress. Studies have shown that education has facilitated occupational diversification and social mobility for a small section of these population groups who have got public employment. The educated Scheduled Caste persons are certainly less willing to accept the domination of higher castes and have been able to assert their rights with substantial self confidence, social dignity and self-esteem. The educational deprivation of these groups is not only traditional exclusion because of the caste hierarchy but also a silent exclusion because of the discriminatory practices that occur in quite a few parts in the country. Many of these children are first generation learners, and therefore they are likely to begin schooling with lesser preparedness to learn. Their language, social and conceptual skills are likely to be at a much lower level than other groups coming from relatively better educated homes. It requires a lot more sensitivity to address the learning needs of such children in the class room. The attitude of the teachers is crucial and can result in either reproduction of discriminatory attitudes and practices that underlie caste relations or can play a positive facilitative role that can obliterate caste distinctions and mainstream all children into an inclusive, democratic classroom. (Nambissan and Sedwal, 2002).

2.2 Scheduled Tribes

Nearly 8% of India's population belongs to tribal groups. They are classified as Scheduled Tribes because they are as such notified by the President of India under Article 342 of the Constitution. The notification of a tribal group as scheduled tribe is based on certain characteristics like the tribal group's primitive traits, distinctive culture, geographical isolation and socio-economic

backwardness. There are 698 Scheduled Tribes spread all over the country, in almost all states barring a few States and Union Territories such as Chandigarh, Delhi, Haryana, Pondichery and Punjab.

Of the total 698 Scheduled Tribes, 75 tribal groups have been identified as primitive tribal groups because they are much more backward than other Scheduled Tribes. They continue to be in the pre-agriculture stage of economy and have very little access to education and other social services. There are more than 270 tribal languages belonging to all the major language families, among which the Austric, Dravidian, Tibeto Chinese and Indo European families are the dominant ones. Most of these tribal groups live in sparsely populated, scattered habitations located in the interior, remote and inaccessible hilly and forest areas which have poor communication facilities. Nearly 62% of the tribal habitations have less than 300 people. The exclusion of these marginalized groups can be seen in the markedly low levels of literacy. The literacy rate among these tribal groups was only 30% in 1991 compared with 62% in the rest of the population. The female literacy rate was even lower. It was only 18% as compared to the national female literacy rate of 40%. Inadequate social infrastructure, poor communication network, abject poverty, linguistic and cultural alienation have proved to be formidable barriers for integration of these groups with the mainstream of developmental programmes.

Clearly, these two groups which together constitute 25% of India's population need to be specially focused on if EFA has to become a reality. Most of the out of school children, working children and children who are at risk of dropping out of schools are from these marginalized groups.

2.3 National policy framework: focus on the marginalized

The Government of India has therefore in all the Five Year Plans spelt out that the priority should be given to the educational needs of SC and STs and make it a national commitment. The National Policy on Education (1986) in para. 4.6 deals with the education of the scheduled tribes. Four aspects of this policy framework are worth noting in the current context:

1. Priority will be accorded to opening primary schools in tribal areas.

2. The socio-cultural milieu of the STs has its distinctive characteristics including, in many cases, their spoken languages. This underlines the need to develop the curricula and devise instructional materials in tribal languages at

the initial stages, with arrangements for switching over to the regional language.

3. Educated and promising Scheduled Tribe youths will be encouraged and trained to take up teaching in tribal areas.

4. The curriculum at all stages of education will be designed to create an awareness of the rich cultural identity of the tribal people as also their enormous creative talent.

The Program of Action (1992), based on the National Policy on Education, spelled out the action to be initiated:

> *Children from tribal communities will be taught through the mother tongue in the earlier stages in primary school. Teaching/learning material in the tribal languages will be prepared providing for a transition to the regional language by class III.*
> *The home language of the ST children may be different from others. Therefore, standard teaching/learning material will be rewritten to make them intelligible to the SC/ST children especially in areas where the standard language and the learners' dialect are different.*
> *It will be ensured that MLL already set up for primary schools will be achieved, that the necessary standards of three Rs are acquired by all children in SC/ST communities.*

Article 350(A) of the Constitution of India states:

> *It shall be the endeavor of every state and of every local authority within the state to provide adequate facilities for instruction in the mother tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority groups; and the President may issue such directions to any state as he considers necessary or proper for securing the provision of such facilities.*

It can be clearly seen that the National Policy framework emphasized improvement in access by opening new schools, engaging tribal youth as teachers and preparation of curricular materials in tribal languages. While a number of initiatives have been taken on the first two issues, there has been very little action in terms of curriculum reforms and preparation of textual and learning materials for children belonging to these tribal groups. The objective of providing educational opportunities of comparable quality to these groups

and in all these areas is still elusive. Improving access by establishing schools, positioning teachers, giving incentives both to the learners as well as teachers, engaging the community to create awareness and create a demand for schooling has resulted in higher enrolment rates over the years. However, it is significant to note that the drop out rates among these groups in various states continues to be alarmingly high (Table 7.4).

Table 7.4: Drop-out rates of Scheduled Tribes (classes I–V) in states with high tribal population (1991–92)

State/Union territory	Boys (%)	Girls (%)	Total (%)
1. Andhra Pradesh	66.65	71.95	68.64
2. Bihar	70.96	71.81	71.26
3. Gujarat	53.98	66.51	59.39
4. Madhya Pradesh	31.00	52.27	38.59
5. Maharastra	56.24	63.88	59.48
6. Orissa	78.03	74.14	76.81
7. Rajasthan	73.01	84.20	75.92
8. West Bengal	62.47	69.68	65.07
9. Arunachal Pradesh	62.21	58.19	60.71
10. Assam	65.13	67.10	66.00
11. Meghalaya	68.00	67.95	67.99
12. Mizoram	57.91	58.37	58.13
13. Nagaland	45.83	49.23	47.42
14. Tripura	70.78	73.72	72.03

Source: Government of India (2001).

Table 7.5 indicates the gap between literacy levels in the two disadvantaged groups compared with the rest of the population. Even though there has been a steady improvement in the literacy levels of these groups, the gaps are still quite large.

Table 7.5: Literacy rates (1971, 1981, 1991)

Census year	Literacy rate (%)			Gap with respect to rest of population (%)	
	Scheduled Tribe	Scheduled Caste	Rest of Population	Scheduled Tribe	Scheduled Caste
1971	11.30	14.67	33.80	22.50	19.13
1981	16.35	21.38	41.22	24.87	19.84
1991	29.60	37.41	62.65	33.05	25.24

Source: Sujatha (2000).

3. Meeting the challenge: the Andhra Pradesh experience in involving communities and contextualizing curriculum

This paper focuses on the efforts made by one of the Indian states, Andhra Pradesh, to address the learning needs of one of these two groups – the unreached, ethnic tribal groups in the State. It broadly traces the contours of two initiatives taken by the state government to provide educational opportunities to all children in these remote inaccessible tribal habitations. The first set of interventions relate to *enhancing access and improving governance* and the second set of issues to *contextualizing curriculum design* through a process of empowering communities by offering a choice in the medium of instruction and integrating curriculum development with the professional development of teachers in these areas.

Andhra Pradesh (population 75.7 million) is home to 5 million tribals, constituting nearly 6.5% of the total population. There are 33 tribal groups at various levels of socio-economic development and diverse linguistic and cultural patterns. 90% of them live in eight districts. There are eight languages that are used most commonly by these groups. None of them has a script. The literacy levels are abysmally low. Starting from a mere 3% at the time of independence, the literacy rate has moved up to only 17% over four decades. However all these groups have rich cultural traditions and a heritage of creative performing arts especially, music and dance and a wealth of folklore.

The challenge before the State was to provide educational opportunities and meet the learning needs of these groups. Over the last three decades, the efforts made in the State have yielded tangible results. Access to schooling has improved, more children are enrolled and drop-outs are declining. The tribal enrolment has also been steadily gone up over the years. 15,820 children were enrolled in 1998–99. This figure rose to 1,021,674 children in 1999–2000 and 1,041,843 in 2000–2001. The state has added a large number of teachers in these areas. In 1998-99, there were 10,101 tribal teachers, 516 teachers were added during 1999-2000 and 1153 in 2000-2001 bringing the total number to 11,770. All these teachers are drawn from tribal groups. They are educated young people who also hold a teacher training certificate. In addition, during 2002–03, about 5,000 teachers belonging to various tribal groups without the requisite qualifications were inducted and given a novel teacher training programme involving learning by doing. It was a unique professional development programme in which these teachers did course

work, projects and practical training in the class room under the supervision of master trainers and faculty members from the Colleges of Education.

What, however, is a matter of concern is the high drop out rate. There has been a decline in the drop out rate over the last three decades from 94% in 1970-71 to 81% in 2000 – 2001 but it is still unacceptably high. The current drop out rates for ST children (80%) are significantly higher than the average drop out rate for all children (56%) in Andhra Pradesh.

Clearly, there is a huge unfinished agenda. We seem to be still quite some distance away from the last mile. The policies of the State as far as the tribals are concerned can be seen against the backdrop of the national policy and the constitutional provisions made to bring these marginalized groups into the main stream.

The challenge of achieving Education for All in the State is essentially to reach out to these excluded groups. If one sees, the enrolment and drop out rates at elementary stage in Andhra Pradesh, one clearly discerns the areas that have been relatively left out and segments of the population that have remained outside the educational fold. Most of the tribal habitations are inaccessible and are located in hilly terrains. The communication network is very poor as compared to other areas. The population is scattered and sparely populate. So, effective service delivery to these areas becomes an enormous challenge. The cultural ethos and the language spoken show marked variations.

The major challenges of providing quality education in tribal areas relate to two sets of issues. The first is to establish schools in far flung habitations and position teachers in these remote areas. The major constraints are scarcity of resources and the inadequate number of local educated youth who can teach in schools. This necessitates positioning teachers who do not belong to the tribal areas and who have been educated outside the tribal areas. In order to attract teachers to work in these areas, incentives like additional allowances are provided, yet there is considerable reluctance on the part of the teachers. The questions before the policy-makers thus were: How does one position enough teachers in these schools? How does one encourage local capacities to be built? Are there mechanisms to involve local committees in the provision and monitoring of schooling processes?

The second set of issues relates to the content and process of schooling in these areas. These groups are characterized by a unique culture ethos and life

style. The folklore, the festivals and the way of life are quite different from most other areas. Over the years, with constant interaction, tribal groups have become less isolated. However, this process of acculturation has resulted in erosion of cultural identity and a sense of alienation. Language spoken at home and the language of instruction in school have also been a bottleneck for ensuring a smooth transition from home to school for many of the tribal children.

3.1 Changing patterns of state/community interface in school governance

The State of Andhra Pradesh has undertaken a number of reforms in the field of tribal education over the last three decades. Setting up of residential schools, community centres, appointment of tribals as teachers, creation of a Tribal Cultural, Research and Training Institute and providing training to teachers teaching in tribal areas, preparation of bilingual primers, providing incentives to children, creation of forums for teachers' professional development in the school complexes are a few interventions which have been taken up by the State.

If one sees the history of management of tribal education in the State, we notice six phases of State intervention. First relates to pre-independence period, when there was very little state action. Voluntary organizations and missionary groups set up schools in these areas and the coverage was not substantial or uniformly spread across the tribal areas.

In the 1950s and 1960s, there was a movement to take up community development projects with active public participation. It was hoped that under the community development programmes, tribal areas would also develop. However, it was later realized that the tribal situation was quite different from the non-tribal situation and the specifics of these circumstances were not fully reflected in the developmental priorities. In addition, the poor absorbing capacity of these groups resulting in skewed development. There was very little demand for education and very feeble articulation of these demands in various forms. Consequently, these areas tended to be excluded from the main stream of the developmental process.

The third phase is marked by the emergence of the concept of tribal sub plan in the 1970s. Areas predominantly inhabited by tribals were identified and plans for these areas were drawn up. Area specific, integrated, micro planning exercises were undertaken and an institutional mechanism for taking up a

concerted, coordinated development of these areas was evolved and the Integrated tribal development agency (ITDA) was set up in mid 1970s. This provided a new framework for a decentralized, contextual planning process and took the specific tribal realities into consideration while designing the programmes for those groups. There was considerable autonomy given to the project authorities to innovate and in quite a few areas, this was fully utilized to bring in community involvement in a significant manner. This was the time when residential schools called Ashram schools were set up in all the tribal areas. These were located in certain central locations each serving a cluster of tribal habitations. These schools were supposed to provide quality education and fully offset the opportunity costs of schooling that was proving to be one of the major impediments in universalizing education in these areas. Local teachers were recruited and a package of incentives was evolved for attracting children to schools.

The fourth phase was in the 1980s when the school system was expanded. It was felt that Ashram Schools were too few and did not provide enough educational opportunities to younger children. Parents were unwilling to send young children to these schools because they were far from their homes. So primary schools had to be set up as close to habitations as possible. Nearly 3,500 single-teacher schools with classes I and II were started. The idea was that these small schools manned by local tribal youth could provide basic educational facilities in grades I and II. These schools could later be upgraded by adding more classes and teachers or the children can move to nearby residential schools called 'Ashram schools' from grade III onwards. The Government of Andhra Pradesh had made it a State policy to recruit only tribals as teachers in these tribal areas. This is in consonance with the UNESCO framework: 'All educational planning should include at each stage early provision for the training, and further training, of sufficient numbers of fully competent and qualified teachers of the country concerned *who are familiar with the life of their people and able to teach in the mother tongue*' (UNESCO, 2003).

The fifth phase was one in which community involvement in tribal educations became more pronounced. In the 1990s, the A.P. Tribal Development Project was taken up. One of the main strategies adopted during this period was to involve the community in running of the schools, by enlisting their support for building schools, in serving mid-day meal and in the selection of teachers. Community was involved not only in selecting the teachers but also in making payment of teachers' salaries. It was felt that greater community involvement was essential for bringing out a transformation in the way educational services

ought to be delivered in these areas. Earlier, small alternative schools called 'Maabadi' (our school) were set up in each habitation in these areas, comprising one teacher teaching two classes. They catered to small groups of learners, scattered in these remote areas.

The sixth phase, as we move into the late 1990s, sees the pendulum swing slightly away from the community. There was a growing demand from the teachers to become government employees and seek salary on par with regular teachers. While they were being paid remuneration till then by the community, they wanted salaries to be paid by the Government. There was also a growing demand from them that the schools must be upgraded to regular primary schools. Over the last four years over a thousand single teacher schools have been converted into regular primary schools by adding additional teachers and additional classes. Tribal teachers were recruited by the government for these areas and a special training programme was instituted for them after recruitment. The pay has also been enhanced on par with other teachers in the system.

One can clearly see in these six phases of educational management a see-saw, oscillatory movement between State involvement and Community participation. While the prime mover has been the State, a growing realization that tribal milieu and ethos require a contextualized response gave rise to more area specific, tribal group oriented approach. The role of the tribal communities in generating, articulating and managing the demand was recognized. Community schools were born. However, these islands of community ownership are slowly getting merged into the landscape of State system. However, in this dialectical process, community still has an important role, albeit a little abridged one.

3.2 Community schools: an experiment in forging a meaningful partnership

Various studies conducted in the last decade show that the process of community involvement has strengthened the institution of school in these areas and there is considerable demand for education among tribal parents. The community schools in Andhra Pradesh have been able to involve the community in a very significant manner. As Dr. K. Sujatha points out in her excellent study of these schools:

'As a mechanism to overcome these difficulties, associated with teacher and community, decentralization of the school system was developed, where the

establishment of community schools teacher management and effective participation were entrusted to the community. Village education committees and mother committees were constituted to ensure community participation by directly intervening in the education of children' (Sujatha, 2000).

The study reveals the strengths of this alliance between the community and the government. The participation of parents and community members is significantly higher in these schools as compared to other schools. Data from this very elaborate study of these schools shows that in 67% of schools, parents frequently visited the schools compared with only 12% in the other schools in these areas (Table 7.6).

Table 7.6. Percentage of parents visiting schools

Frequency of visits	Community schools (%)	Other schools (%)
Frequently	67.12	11.97
Now and then	9.01	36.44
Never	23.87	51.59
Total	100.00	100.00

Source: Sujatha (2000).

While in more than half of the other schools, parents never visited schools, the percentage of such schools was only 24% in the case of community schools. Similarly, it was observed that community members attended village education committee meetings in 79% of the community schools as against 21% in other schools (Table 7.7).

Table 7.7. Community member participation in VEC meetings

Participation	Community schools (%)	Other schools (%)
Participating	79.24	21.14
Not participating	20.76	78.86
Total	100.00	100.00

Source: Sujatha (2000).

This intensive interaction with the community has had very perceptible impact on student attendance and teacher's regular attendance. 85% of the students were regularly attending schools in these community schools as against 76% in other schools (Table 7.8).

Table 7.8. Student attendance patterns in different types of school

Type of school	Attendance* (%)		
	Boys	Girls	Total
Community	84.90	86.58	84.91
Single-teacher	77.49	75.83	76.61
Ashram (residential)	80.43	73.70	76.54
Other management	75.50	77.38	76.32

*Attendance for only sampled schools: 139.
Source: Sujatha (2000).

Similarly, it was found that 85% of the teachers were regularly attending community schools, whereas in the other schools only 28% were attending regularly (Table 7.9).

Table 7.9. Percentage of teachers regularly attending school, according to community members

Regularity	Community schools (%)	Formal schools (%)
Regular attendance	84.95	28.06
Few days a week	8.13	59.97
Irregular attendance	6.92	11.97
Total	100.00	100.00

Source: Sujatha (2000).

The popularity of the community schools had increased over the years. As can be seen from Table 7.10, both the number of schools and the student enrolment increased in one of the tribal districts over the years 1991–97.

Table 7.10. Enrolment and growth of community schools in Visakhapatnam District, Andhra Pradesh

Year	Number of schools	Number of students (grades I and II)
1991–92	15	350
1992–93	60	1 300
1993–94	266	8 459
1994–95	405	16 544
1995–96	567	23 367
1996–97	926	35 914

Source: Sujatha (2000).

While enrolment and attendance have improved, the study also found that there has been a higher rate of drop-outs (Table 7.11) and the performance of the learners in language and mathematics has been lower than that of learners in their schools (Table 7.12). This points to certain critical areas in which the community school experiment needed further strengthening. While the local tribal teachers were more regular and could motivate the community to send their children to schools, the problem seemed to be their inadequate professional competence and the ability to respond to the learning needs of the learners in a systematic manner.

Table 7.11. Drop-out and repetition in sample schools, percentage (total)

	Grade I			Grade II		
	Community schools*	Formal schools**	Aided schools***	Community schools	Formal schools	Aided schools
Enrolment	100.0 (763)	100.0 (1890)	100.0 (298)	100.0 (96)	100.0 (1253)	100.0 (221)
Promoted	21.6 (165)	47.41 (896)	50.6 (151)	59.4 (57)	76.7 (961)	68.3 (151)
Repeated	72.4 (552)	43.65 (825)	44.9 (134)	22.9 (22)	16.3 (204)	26.2 (58)
Drop-out	6.0 (46)	8.94 (169)	4.5 (14)	17.7 (17)	7.0 (88)	5.4 (12)

*Number of sampled community schools: 58.
**Number of sampled formal schools: 77 (includes all categories).
***Number of sampled aided schools: 58.
Source: Sujatha (2000).

Table 7.12. Learners' achievement mean score, grade I*

Type of school	Mean score (%)		
	Language	Mathematics	Number of students
Community	34.93	28.76	711
Single-teacher	37.26	32.74	518
Ashram	38.33	31.98	162
Other	45.10	45.28	581
All schools (total)	38.82	34.94	1972

*Number of sampled schools: 139.
Source: Sujatha (2000).

This is not surprising if one looks at the profile of the teachers' educational qualifications and professional training in these community schools as compared to other schools. As can be seen from Table 7.13, while only 80% of teachers in the community schools had more than ten years of general education, there were nearly 98% such teachers in single teacher schools, 93% in Ashram schools and 96% in other management schools. Apparently, 20% of teachers in community schools had less than 10 years of general education.

Table 7.13. Teachers' educational (general) qualifications, percentage (total)

Years of education	Community schools*	Single-teacher schools*	Ashram schools**	Other+ management schools**
Five	2.16 (20)	0.00 (0)	0.00 (0)	0.00 (0)
Six	4.43 (41)	0.00 (0)	0.00 (0)	0.00 (0)
Seven	5.51 (51)	0.00 (0)	0.00 (0)	0.00 (0)
Eight	3.02 (28)	0.00 (0)	0.00 (0)	0.00 (0)
Nine	5.83 (54)	2.63 (13)	7.10 (1)	4.28 (3)
Ten	63.07 (584)	50.60 (251)	42.90 (6)	24.28 (17)
Twelve	15.23 (141)	25.20 (125)	21.40 (3)	22.86 (16)
Undergraduate	0.75 (7)	19.96 (99)	21.40 (3)	38.58 (27)
Postgraduate	0.00 (0)	1.61 (8)	7.10 (1)	10.00 (7)
Total	100.00 (926)	100.00	100.00 (14)	100.00 (70)

* All schools.
**For only sampled schools
\+ Government and aided schools.
Source: Sujatha (2000).

As regards training, none of the community school teachers had any professional qualification (Table 7.14), whereas there were only 5% such untrained teachers in single teacher schools, 14% in Ashram schools and 10% in other management schools. It is therefore, not surprising that the community school teachers were far less academically equipped to impart quality instruction and had to be given additional support by way of teacher training, supplementary teaching learning materials and recurrent guidance and mentoring. These were challenges which this State took upon itself to address through intensive training programme and in the development of new curricular materials. Enhancement of teacher capacity was seen as integral to effective teacher management. It is interesting to note that the community members while choosing the teachers for their village school adopted four criteria.

Table 7.14: Teachers' educational (professional) qualifications, percentage (total)

Training qualification	Community schools	Single-teacher schools	Ashram schools	Other management schools
Untrained	100.00 (926)	5.24 (26)	14.30 (2)	10.00 (7)
Teacher Training Certificate	0.00 (0)	91.13 (452)	78.36 (11)	44.28 (31)
Bachelor of Education	0.00 (0)	2.83 (14)	7.10 (1)	38.58 (27)
Master of Education	100.00 (926)	0.80 (4)	100.00 (14)	7.14 (5)

Source: Sujatha (2000).

As Table 7.15 shows, when parents were interviewed about the criteria for teacher selection, they stated that in 75% cases, teachers were chosen because they belonged to the same village or the same community or had approached the community with a promise to improve education in the village. Only 25% were chosen because they had the ability to teach children. Admittedly, the selection of teachers by the village community was based more on teachers' desire to do something for the village and the children in the habitation rather than on their ability to teach.

Table 7.15: Criteria for selection of teachers according to community members

Sl. No.	Opinion	Teachers (%)
1	Has ability to teach children	24.9
2	Belongs to same village	25.2
3	Belongs to same community	17.1
4	Had approached to improve education in the village	31.5
5	No response	1.3

Source: Sujatha (2000).

The main concerns, then, were essentially centred round retention of children in school and the quality of schooling. Even in the initial grades, the curriculum transaction and the textbooks do not seem to address the learning needs of these tribal children. The focus shifted to the content and processes, to curriculum and instruction.

3.3 Contextualizing curriculum: listening to tribal voices and giving choice to learners

A recent experiment in Andhra Pradesh to contextualize curriculum development process and tailor it specifically for each tribal group shows some possible new direction in which language and culture can be interwoven to improve the quality of classroom transaction. The theoretical backdrop for the programme is provided by educationists who have highlighted the disadvantaged position in which tribal language speakers are because their mother tongue is not represented among the state languages. The tribal identity tends to get submerged in the dominant elite's cultural hegemony. The minority languages tend to fade out if the state doesn't respect diversity (St Clair, 2002). India has traditionally been a multilingual country and this character needs to be preserved and carefully nurtured. Pluralism is sometimes equated with divisiveness and fragmentation. It has to be, however, recognized that celebrating diversity can be an essential facet of a thriving democracy and can lead to greater progress because it gives respect and self-worth to various ethnic groups. This ensures their active participation in societal growth. Language can be a potential barrier if there is an appreciable variation in the cultural ethos of different communities. It can lead to higher drop-out rates if the language spoken at home and at school is different. This may be even more of a problem if children are first-generation learners and have no literate environment at home.

Several studies have highlighted 'language barrier as a factor impeding the progress of formal schooling along tribals. Interestingly the Constitution of India allows the use of tribal dialect (mother tongue) as the medium of instruction. But this has not been adopted on the pretext of feasibility and viability of introducing and sustaining such a change. Notwithstanding persisting problems, interventions and initiatives like mid-day meals, creation of self-help women groups, environment building programmes under different projects, appointment of local tribes as teachers and developing partnership schools and village community have helped tribals realize the importance of education and adopt a positive attitude towards the education of their children. The question which EFA Planners in India are addressing is to consider various strategies and interventions which could more sharply focus on quality concerns and improving the educational needs of the marginalized' (Govinda, 2002). This is precisely the focus that has been built into the process of planning for education of tribal groups in Andhra Pradesh.

Teaching children in the home language has an additional advantage of making learning more activity based rather than rely on the tradition of rote learning. Classrooms using the mother tongue have been found to engaging students in active learning. Researchers have also found that active learning is likely to be more effective particularly for tribal children who have no previous understanding of formal or traditional schooling but have learned through 'doing' for generations.

As pointed out earlier, the Indian Constitution as well as the National Policy statements have been reiterating the need for development of learning materials in the mother tongue of the learners. However, there have been no large scale efforts in this direction. To develop this kind of plural curricular materials requires a re-orientation of the current paradigm of standard, state-wide textbook development and curriculum renewal. In this context, there were a number of debates in which quite a few questions were asked: whether mother tongue instruction would be desirable if these isolated groups have to be mainstreamed into the globalized world? Are we not doing a disservice to these groups by teaching them in a primitive tribal dialect rather than in either the State language or the national language? Will it not restrict their social mobility and economic opportunities? Is it not perpetuating their exclusion and backwardness? There was skepticism, resistance and a bias in favour of status quo. However, there was evidence from a number of studies that was shared with the planning group. For instance, it was interesting to note that a study conducted in mid 1990s by the National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT) on the educational problems of tribal children mentioned that in the predominantly tribal inhabited areas most teachers preferred to use or actually use the regional language in class room transaction and that a large number of teachers believe that the textbooks should be in the standard regional language. Issues emerging in the focused group discussions conducted as a part of this study highlighted the difficulties of the teachers in transacting curriculum in the tribal dialect, and the inability of tribal children to understand lessons because they were in regional language.

In addition to the language barrier, it was recognized that there is also an attitudinal problem that may occasionally compound the problem. As the study pointed out, many non-tribal teachers did not encourage tribal parents to send their children to schools. They tended to look down upon their culture, dress, customs and language. This created a feeling of inferiority among the tribals. The language of the teacher was not intelligible to tribal children. Teachers coming from outside did not have any knowledge of the local tribal language. This created a communication gap between parents and teachers. In

order to being the home and school closer, it was suggested that more educated tribal youth could be recruited as teachers.

Clearly, language is at least one of the major obstacles in these areas. The challenge before the Government was to evolve a policy and a programme of action to translate the policy of providing education in the mother tongue at least at the primary level.

3.4 Translating policy into action

The state government initiated action to make this change happen. A group of anthropologists, sociologists, linguistics, educationists and folklorists was constituted for each of the eight main tribal groups. These were faculty members and students working in various university departments in the state. They were asked to go to each of the tribal areas, stay there with the tribal groups and record stories, songs and conversations of each tribal group as they occur in their daily lives. The teams came back after a week after collecting these data. They transcribed them, analyzed them and looked at the correspondence between the main State language of Telugu and the tribal dialect. There were some sounds in the tribal dialects which did not have their equivalents in Telugu. There were some Telugu words for which there were no tribal equivalents reflecting variations in the world-view and life spaces. A comprehensive glossary of words was then prepared.

The second action taken was to map out themes which would be of interest and relevance to the tribal group. Weekly theme-webs were developed. These formed the basis for development of the entire curriculum. A question arose at this stage. As none of the tribal dialects have any script, should a script be devised for each language or should the orthography of the official state language, Telugu, be adopted. Advantages and disadvantages were carefully considered. The first option was likely to be time-consuming and more unlikely to gain acceptance. Perhaps it was not worth spending so much effort. Moreover, children have to move on to state language in later grades. It would help if they learned the script right from beginning. The transition would be smoother. On a careful consideration of various options and elaborate discussion with experts and tribal stakeholders, it was felt that we should adopt the Telugu script. It would not be necessary to invent a new orthography which could involve not only technical challenges but also pose the problem of political negotiations and consensus building which could be time consuming. Considering all these factors, it was decided that the

textbooks would be based on the cultural realities of the tribal groups, but written in Telugu script.

The next step was to develop visually appealing, pedagogically sound alphabet charts with illustrations, key words and letters. Alphabet books, using the same key words with new words and simple sentences were developed for each letter of the alphabet. All were then linked to the theme webs. Additional learning materials based on the children's natural fascination for listening to stories and narration of tales were developed. A listening story to be read aloud, a children's story book and a *Big Book* were written up for each of the themes. Collecting the linguistic data with sounds and phonemes of each language enabled the multidisciplinary group to identify words suitable for 1st grade learners and it was possible to construct textual materials appropriate for the age and grade. The curriculum themes being based on local culture and the village calendar, the content reflected the seasonal events, daily activities and features of local environment all of which would be familiar to the child.

A unique feature of this programme was the bottom-up approach. It was an exercise in which the local culture and dialectal variations were authentically captured and woven into the entire process of curriculum development. Curriculum themes were developed in a participatory manner and emerged out of constant interaction with the local tribal groups and tribal teachers. This ensured intense community involvement right from the inception of the project. The tribal teachers were a part of the exercise and their participation enriched the process considerably. The buy-in was total. They helped the academic group in collection of data, in writing the lessons, in choosing the themes. Some of them even volunteered to provide illustrations. In the earlier programmes, curricular materials were merely handed down to the teachers to be implemented in the class room. A significant departure in this project was to involve them at every stage, in every possible manner, so that implementation can be easier and constant innovation can become an internalized process. In a way, building of capacities in the tribal teachers became a concurrent activity. There was tremendous enthusiasm among the tribal teachers. While the production of textbooks was being undertaken, extensive interaction with the tribal communities ensured that the end users saw value in what was being done. An unintended spin off of this experiment was restoration of self-esteem of the tribals. Probably for the first time, they found that even their languages can be used as medium of instruction, that their songs, stories and folklore were perceived to be of some value and there was a genuine appreciation of their cultural heritage. They were happy that

someone listened to them and were trying to create a school where children learned in the language of their home. The transition from 'exclusion' to 'inclusion' had begun. In the language policy of the State, tribal languages have had no real place may be because the numbers were too small to produce textbooks in these dialects. Attempts were made earlier but there was hardly any involvement of the tribal groups in the process of production. It remained largely a State directed activity.

The current endeavor was a paradigm shift. It sought to offer a choice to the tribal groups. They were provided the option, if they so desired, to educate their children in their mother tongue. The tribal communities were asked if they would like to adopt the new textbooks in their schools. It was therefore left to the communities to decide, so that ownership of the new curriculum is passed on to the community. This proved to be an empowering process. Communities which wanted these textbooks for class I have now been provided. There are currently eighty such village schools, wherein the first phase of the project is being implemented. Most of these schools have homogeneous tribal population and there are enough native mother tongue speakers working as teachers.

Another unique feature of this experiment is the fact that international educationists like Dr. Pamela Mckenzie and experts from various organizations such as the Summer Institute of Linguistics have volunteered to support the initiative. They have been giving extraordinary technical support to the project. The international experience and expertise has been invaluable as it brought to the project a unique state-of- the- art perspective on language learning, mother tongue education, and multi lingual education. The team has assisted the project since inception and continues to support teacher training, development of literature in these tribal languages and production of dictionaries.

Besides the choice of script, another contentious issue one had to deal with while designing the project was to decide on the transition from mother tongue to regional language and the stage at which the national and international languages need to be included. We had taken a cue from the framework proposed by UNESCO (2003) in its position paper wherein mother tongue has been seen as 'a means of improving educational quality by building upon the knowledge and experience of the learners and teachers.' Going by the worldwide experience in multilingual education in countries as diverse as Papua New Guinea, Brazil and Cameron and many West African countries, we decided that an 'additive' approach might be desirable more

rather than a 'subtractive' one. This would involve *adding* the State and National or International language to the initial instruction in mother tongue rather than *replacing* the mother tongue with the State or National language. UNESCO has suggested that initial education could start with mother tongue and subsequently the second and third languages can be introduced at first orally and then in the written form in the second and third grades. The State's effort was guided by a number of research findings on the role of language in education which seem to indicate that children performed better when they are taught through their mother tongue in the initial grades and that bilingual programmes seem to be more beneficial than monolingual programmes. A carefully worked out multilingual educational programme seemed to be ideal. The emphasis therefore was on integrating tribal languages into the curricular development process and building on the foundations in the native language, introducing other languages in later grades.

The transition which has been tentatively worked out in the state is to introduce state language orally in grade II and writing in grade III and teach through the regional language from grade III. English will be started from grade IV with reading and writing in English being introduced from grade V. However, this is a contested terrain and is being actually discussed in order to arrive at a consensus on the best possible transition plan.

There are six aspects of the programme which seem to make this programme more likely to be sustained and scaled up across the tribal areas.

1. The institutionalization of the programme. The Tribal Cultural Research and Training Institute (TCR&TI) has been nominated as the nodal body for taking this initiative forward. This institute owns the programme but works in close conjunction with other agencies. The entire programme has emerged as a collaborative effort in which the Education department through the State Council for Educational Research and Training (SCERT) works in close cooperation with TCR&TI. This ensures that development of instructional materials, development of literature, conducting pre-service and in-service training, programmes, assessment and evaluation procedures are developed in a systematic, coordinated manner. TCR&TI's long years of research in anthropological facets of tribal life and SCERT's pedagogical expertise can become a very effective symbiotic basis for further collaborative research and innovations.

2. The programme is community centred with active involvement and ownership of the community at all stages.

3. The learning materials are learner centred and involve a variety of instructional materials including alphabet charts, *Big Book*, listening stories and based on learning from the field. The materials are specifically based on the themes relevant to the learners.

4. Preparation of teachers to adopt the new methodology and make it child centred and contextualized has been effectively integrated into the process of curriculum development, making it easy for teachers to internalize the philosophy and understand the dynamics of the new pedagogical model. Introducing local languages as medium of instruction and local environment as the thematic anchor is likely to make teaching more activity based and engage the learners in a much more meaningful way.

5. This project is being seen as a part of the larger EFA process and as an essential element of bringing the school and the community closer. The bridging process and transition from one language to another has also been given serious consideration, so that the tribals have a closer relationship with their roots and at the same time get mainstreamed into the larger world of expanding opportunities in life. It answers the concerns of some skeptics who have reservations about the policy of mother tongue instruction and see it as a ploy to keep tribals excluded and permanently disadvantaged.

6. The entire innovation has given the power of decision-making to tribal communities and is intended to offer them wider educational opportunities. It is a democratic process of empowering the tribal communities. It is a paradigm of curriculum development which has at its core a sound philosophical and theoretical basis and intends to achieve not only what policy-makers had envisaged five decades ago but also provide another opportunity for making education acceptable, relevant and equitable across the large system of disadvantaged areas and groups. The multilingual education gives recognition to tribal languages and cultures and imparts tremendous self-esteem and self-worth to these groups.

4. Conclusions: lessons learned

The two major interventions outlined in the current paper demonstrate that the current challenge of EFA mission is essentially to reach the unreached. The crux of the entire exercise lies in identification of the gaps in development, understand the reasons for 'exclusion' and 'isolation' of certain groups on all their multiple dimensions – physical, psychological, socio-economic,

linguistic, cultural – and find creative ways to deal with the challenge of providing education in these areas for the disadvantaged groups.

The key element of state strategy has been to search for alternative governance patterns where community involvement can enhance the demand for education, provide support to governmental initiatives and enhance the accountability in the system.

Simultaneously, it has been a search for various ways of contextualizing curriculum by reinventing the process of curriculum design. Instead of a State mandated, top – down, standardized curriculum, the State has experimented with a new paradigm in which the voice of the tribals became the starting point for weaving a curriculum framework around the life experience and life spaces of each ethnic group.

The new approach has evolved out of a very meaningful dialogue of the tribal communities and tribal teachers with experts, researchers and academics drawn from diverse disciplines from within India and abroad. A holistic plan to preserve the tribal languages and culture through text books, other literary materials and dictionaries has been evolved restoring the tribal heritage its rightful place and given the self-worth it has been denied for so long. The choice of opting for the new curriculum and instructional materials has been left entirely to the tribal communities, underscoring the democratic principle of empowering communities rather than thrusting something on an unwilling group of learners.

Some of the learning that emerges from these experiences may be useful. Working in close collaboration with communities and being sensitive to the learning needs, appreciative of the richness of the cultural heritage of these ethnic groups and designing an educational programme with their active involvement and participation perhaps holds the key to reaching the cherished goal of EFA. The last mile as usual is the most difficult to trek but it is just that extra effort and sustained sensitive progression which will certainly make a difference between success and failure in our mission.

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CONCLUSIONS AND FOLLOW-UP

At the seminar where the reports in this volume were presented, the participants drew up a list of potential follow-up activities, drawing on the initial discussions held among the E-9 countries concerning their teacher and resource management policies, as well as the example set by Mozambique of its engagement as an FTI country. The first follow-up is this volume itself, together with the other reports that have been made available on the UNESCO website.[43] However, the further follow-up activities suggested to UNESCO cover a wide berth of policy and practice dialogue and exchange, research, dissemination and capacity building.

1. Publications, studies, training materials

- Document and disseminate 'best practices' on teacher and resource management;
- Sponsor collaborative studies on teacher and resource management;
- Prepare online materials for capacity building, covering how it has been planned and executed; how teacher management has been reformed; how school-based management has been planned, implemented, improved and evaluated;
- Produce more analytical information on government and educational decentralization, especially on the processes of how the concept has been developed; how the databases have been compiled and analysed to support the concept; and how the appropriate legislation has been developed and enacted;
- Provide information on qualitative improvement of mother tongue language materials for marginalized groups.

[43] http://www.unesco.org/education/eps under the heading 'Experience Sharing'

2. Capacity building

- Provide policy simulation/dialogue workshops involving database development and training, as in Mozambique;
- Provide a capacity building programme for management, monitoring and evaluation of EFA implementation at community level;
- Organize a workshop on E-9 countries' resource management in collaboration with INEP in Brazil.

ANNEXES

Annex 1:
Report Guidelines

1. Country background

(a) Brief synopsis of education system: structure, institutional organization and management; any recent or ongoing reforms; arrangements for providing learning opportunities for youth and adults.

(b) Nature of decentralization – broad strokes including political, economic and social context.

(c) The EFA challenge: current educational statistics pertinent to EFA goals and progress achieved.

(d) EFA plans: vision and modalities; how existing governance structures have helped to accelerate the pace and quality of EFA implementation.

(e) Reliance on external funds: percentage of education budget/expenditure; amounts, sources, types, use; recurrent versus development expenditure.

2. Teachers

(a) Description of responsibilities and authority levels:
(i) Who determines the qualifications for education personnel?
(ii) Who actually hires and fires?
(iii) Who can transfer teachers?
(iv) Who sets the pay scale?
(v) Who determines increases and promotions?

(b) The way the system works:
(i) Who is accountable (and to whom) and what is the system of accountability? What is measured? Has accountability increased to beneficiaries/local groups? Is there wider participation beyond government?
(ii) How is information gathered and used for the purposes of accountability?
(iii) Capacities and professional development – how developed – effective?
(iv) Effectiveness and efficiency of system in delivering quality EFA:

1. Is the quality of education improving?
2. Have targets been met? Are they likely to be? Why/why not?
3. Are differentiated needs being met?
4. Are the marginalized being reached?
5. What about non-formal education? Private education? What arrangements concerning teacher deployment and management?

3. Resources

(a) Description of responsibilities and authority levels in answer to questions – resources:
(i) Who decides about sources of funds?
(ii) Who decides how much revenue?
(iii) Who decides the allocation or budgeting of revenue?
(iv) Who decides about actual spending?

(b) The way the system works:
(i) Who is accountable and what is the system of accountability? What is measured? Has accountability increased to beneficiaries/local groups? Is there wider participation beyond government?
(ii) How is information gathered and used for the purposes of accountability?
(iii) Capacities and professional development – how developed – effective?
(iv) Effectiveness and efficiency of system in delivering quality EFA:
1. Has resource allocation changed as a result of decentralization? How has this impacted EFA goals?
2. Is the quality of education improving?
3. Have targets been met? Are they likely to be? Why/why not?
4. Are differentiated needs being met?
5. Are the marginalized being reached?
6. What about non-formal education? Private education? What arrangements concerning resource allocation and management?
(v) What effect has extrabudgetary finance had on EFA implementation? How is it directed and utilized? Is its implementation different from the prevailing system, for instance, its use for recurrent or development expenditure, its control, monitoring and evaluation?
(vi) Have communities or the private sector been encouraged to mobilize financial resources? What are the arrangements and have these worked to further effective EFA implementation?

4. Analysis of successes and pitfalls

(i) What differences has the decentralized system – teacher deployment and management and resource mobilization and management – made to EFA implementation?
(ii) Has there been increased local accountability/ participation?
(iii) What has worked? What has not worked? Why?
(iv) Specifically, have teacher recruitment, deployment, training and performance monitoring practices significantly contributed to:

1. Greater teacher motivation
2. Enhanced professional competence
3. Enriched working environment
4. Better school-community interaction

(v) Specifically, has the timeliness and adequacy of fund flow improved and has this made a difference to the quality of service delivery at the school level?

5. Lessons

Following the critical analysis above of why the system works in the way described – whether effectively or ineffectively – it is important to consider how the reforms in teacher deployment and resource mobilization and management were initiated, internalized and sustained. It would be particularly helpful if the reports focused on how the effectiveness of the system is being measured, what capacity building has been or is still required, how needs have been identified for improving the system (of teacher and financial deployment and management), and whether the attempts to address those needs have been sufficient and/or appropriate. This will enable the focus to be on the final two issues below:

(a) Lessons learned;
(b) Road map for sustaining ongoing reforms.

Annex 2: The Programme of the Seminar

UNESCO Seminar on EFA Implementation: Teacher and Resource Management in the Context of Decentralization
6–8 January 2005

6 JANUARY 2005

8:00	Registration of Participants
9:00	Welcome Remarks by Dr S. K. Rao, Principal, ASCI
9:10	Theme Setting by Dr Mir Asghar Husain, Director, ED/EPS, UNESCO, Paris
9:30	Inaugural Address by Dr Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh
9:50	Vote of Thanks by Dr Abby Riddell, Senior Programme Specialist, ED/EPS, UNESCO, Paris
10:00	*UNESCO High Tea*
11:00	Synthesis Paper Presentation on Ten Countries: Dr R. Govinda, National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA)
12:00	Plenary Questions to NIEPA and Country Representatives
1:00	*Lunch*
2:00	Working Groups on Identified Problem Areas: Designation and Discussion/ Sharing of National Experiences
3:30	*Tea*
4:00	Panel Presentations by two Indian States: Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh on Teacher Deployment and Resource Management at State Level; Comments by National Participants: India, China, Brazil and Pakistan
5:00	Plenary Discussion on Issues Raised in Panel Presentations
6:00	Close
6:30	*Cocktails by ASCI at ASCI campus, Bella Vista, Khairtabad, Hyderabad*
8:00	*Andhra Pradesh State Reception at Jubilee Hall, Nampally, Hyderabad*

7 JANUARY 2005

9:00	Report Presentation and Plenary Discussion on Populations in Tribal Areas: Dr I. V. Subba Rao, Principal Secretary, Andhra Pradesh
10:30	*Coffee*
11:00	Report Presentation and Plenary Discussion on Women from Poorer Sections of Indian Society: by Mr Zahid Ali Khan, *Siasat*
12:30	Lunch
1:30	Tasks for afternoon explained; three Working Groups on (1) Teacher Deployment and Management; (2) Resource Management; and (3) Capacity Building Lessons *(Tea served during working group sessions)*
3:30	Report back from Working Groups
5:00	Close
8:00	*Siasat Reception at Taramati Baradari, Golconda Fort, Hyderabad*

8 JANUARY 2005

9:00	Moving Beyond the 'Issues' to the Problem Areas Requiring Attention: Identification of Potential Assistance? – Plenary followed by Working Groups
11:00	Report back: The Way Forward
11:45	*High Tea*
12:15	Valedictory Addresses: Dr S. K. Rao, Principal, ASCI Dr Mir Asghar Husain, Director, ED/EPS, UNESCO, Paris Mr K. M. Acharya, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India Dr Mohan Kanda, Chief Secretary, Government of Andhra Pradesh, India Vote of Thanks, Mrs Leticia Aguirre, Ministry of Public Education, Mexico
1:15	*Lunch*