



Cambodia

Updated version, August 2006.

Principles and general objectives of education

Providing education opportunities to all Cambodian children is central to the Royal Government's poverty reduction and socio-economic development plans. The main goal is to develop an inclusive, easily accessible and high quality service, which is available to all, independent of wealth, gender, ethnicity and mental and physical aptitude. The vision of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports includes an understanding of the critical need for education and training systems to enable economic growth, improved employment prospects and income-generating opportunities. The vision also incorporates a fundamental understanding that quality education can contribute to better family health and nutrition, improved family planning and a well-entrenched democratic system.

The overall objective of the education system is to help children develop mental and physical qualities. In order to achieve this objective, schools need to accomplish many tasks. Schools are obliged to develop in the students the spirit of self-confidence, self-reliance, responsibility, solidarity, national unity and patriotism. Schools must also instil in their students an attitude of respect towards the law and human rights.

Other responsibilities of schools are to nurture children to become good citizens, to live together peacefully, to be able to strengthen their responsibilities towards their families' happiness and to make a contribution to promoting social welfare. General education strives to meet the above-mentioned overall objective by delivering knowledge and skills, promoting the personal qualities of the students, and accumulating work experiences and various activities that are beneficial to students, their schoolmates and to society as a whole.

Current educational priorities and concerns

Cambodia gained independence from France in 1953. In April 1975, the Khmer Rouge captured Phnom Penh, establishing a radical agrarian society under which more than 1 million people died. In 1991, the warring Cambodian factions signed a United Nations sponsored peace agreement. UN-organized elections took place in 1993, following which a coalition government was formed. The country has made significant progress in the past decade in recovering from previous conflicts and disturbances. The 1980s and early 1990s are best characterized as a lengthy phase of emergency relief. Key features included the reopening of many primary schools, community-led rehabilitation of facilities, gradual curriculum reform and emergency deployment and training of the teaching service.

Political and socio-economic changes have led to successive reforms of the education system. Before 1975, the country adopted a French-based education system that required 13 years of education (6+4+2+1) with four or five major examinations.



After 1979, the Ministry of Education, in consideration of the country's urgent needs, launched a ten-year education system (4+3+3) and then expanded it to an eleven-year education system from 1986 to 1996. The curriculum was reformed, new textbooks were developed and new skills were provided to teachers to prepare the groundwork for the introduction of a new twelve-year education system (6+3+3) in the 1996/97 school year.

The early 1990s featured a growing emphasis on Government-led policy development; especially greater attention to basic needs provision and quality improvement through continued restoration of buildings, supply of textbooks, expanded teacher training and efforts to improve examinations. Key milestones included the Education for All Conference (1992) and the plan for Rebuilding Quality Education and Training (1994). Nevertheless, many of the legacies of previous disturbances, especially the destruction of social and human infrastructure remained evident. In addition, the Government capacity to effectively lead education policy development and donor/NGO consultative mechanisms remained underdeveloped.

The mid/late 1990s can be represented as the transition from emergency relief to reconstruction and development. The Government prepared the first Socio-Economic Development Plan (SEDP I) 1996-2000 that set out broad education development policies, strategies and targets. Around the same time, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS) formulated the Education Investment Plan 1995-2000, which detailed priority strategies, programmes and investment requirements. The MoEYS capability to lead, plan and manage these programmes, with substantial levels of international advisory support, was gradually put in place.

Notwithstanding significant education improvements, the overall education development approach suffered from a number of limitations. The long-term vision for education reform remained embryonic, linkage to broader poverty reduction strategies was limited and integration of education financing plans into public expenditure planning and management was under-developed. Education planning over this period also suffered from limited attention to broader stakeholder consultation and unclear priorities and sequencing. Other features included under-developed system monitoring mechanisms and insufficient analysis of the impact of out-of-school factors on student performance and attendance (e.g. pupils' health and nutrition and rural access roads). In summary, education programme design and appraisal processes paid insufficient attention to financial, social and institutional issues.

Since the early 1990s, Cambodia has made considerable progress in expanding basic education services. However, both quality and coverage still remain areas of great concern. There is a shortage of school buildings and learning centers, class sizes are often excessive, the number of actual instructional hours is inadequate, new curricula are not yet fully implemented, and there is a shortage of core and supplementary teaching materials. Teachers are often not qualified and are ill motivated due to low salaries and poor working conditions. The socio-economic and professional status of teachers is poor. There are few incentives such as scholarships, training opportunities, career development, and transfer or public recognition.



A recent sector performance review by the joint Government/donor social sector working group for education highlighted: (a) disappointing sector performance in achieving equitable access, quality improvement and efficiency targets, despite significant aid volumes; (b) poor financial performance, including under-resourcing of education by Government and inefficient salary/non-salary spending shares; (c) unstated policy priorities and processes, including inconsistency between spending patterns and stated policy priorities and targets; (d) under-developed regulatory mechanisms, especially for ensuring student/teacher attendance and for effective management of parental contributions; and (e) weak sector monitoring/evaluation systems, including limited attention to overall impact, lessons learned from projects and financial reporting.

The Education Strategic Plan (ESP), first proposed for the period 2001–2005, revised for the period 2004–2008, and now extended for the period 2006–2010, represents a key milestone in the work of the MoEYS to effectively reform the education services in Cambodia. The ESP is guided by the Ministry's long-term vision of providing expanded and easily accessed, quality education training opportunities for all Cambodians. This long-term vision also includes increased authority to districts, schools and communities for planning and running education affairs, accompanied by steps that enhance a real feeling of mutual responsibility for ensuring high quality education provision at all levels of the system.

The ESP is emphatically pro-poor. The broad policy thrust is that the current education poverty trap will be eliminated. The Plan focuses on a number of measures that begin to eliminate the cost barriers to education for poor families, while still assuring well-managed and relevant education. A key feature of the planning, implementation and monitoring systems for the ESP is that it will require new forms of partnership in education at all levels. The preparation of the Plan has provided an effective platform, encompassing extensive dialogue with the Ministry of Economy and Finance, Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Interior, Council for Administrative Reform, provincial and district authorities and the international community.

The Ministry's vision of an inclusive education system also includes broad-based participation at all levels of Government and civil society in taking responsibility for planning and implementation of education services. The goal is to gradually put in place systems of mutual accountability between the Government and communities in order to ensure that schools and institutions perform well. An associated goal would be to incrementally delegate greater decision-making and spending authority to districts, possibly communes, and schools. In this way, all national stakeholders would also have to openly evaluate how the education system is performing and then take steps to improve it. The Ministry's overall policy goal is to achieve Education for All (EFA) at the latest by 2015, including the increase of enrolment rates, participation, attendance, and other quality-oriented indicators. In the ESP plan period, the MoEYS considers as important to focus down on a narrower range of policy objectives and targets, which will need to be amended as monitoring tools become available and ESP implementation progresses.

The Ministry's top policy priority is to ensure equitable access and quality/efficiency improvement for nine years of both formal and non-formal basic education by 2010, with especial focus on:



- increased enrolment of students in Grades 1–6 and in Grades 7–9;
- gender, socio-economic and urban/rural parity in primary education enrolment, alongside improved gender, socio-economic and geographical balances in Grades 7–9;
- improved survival rates across Grades 1–6 and Grades 7–9 for new and current age cohorts;
- significant improvement in the quality of performance and standards of primary and lower secondary students;
- raising progression rates throughout Grades 1–6 and transition rates from Grade 6 to 7;
- expanded public/ NGO partnership in adult literacy programmes in disadvantaged areas;
- increased re-entry programmes into mainstream schooling at Grades 4, 5 and 6.

The Ministry's medium-term priority was to enable more equitable access to upper secondary Grades 10–12 and higher education and TVET provision by 2005. An associated priority is to improve the quality and relevance of post-basic education programmes, including assuring a cadre of well-qualified and effective managerial and teaching staff. Also linked is the current priority to provide at least one lower secondary school in each of 1,621 communes and one upper secondary school in each district.

The Ministry's reform strategy is also specified in the Education Sector Support Programme (ESSP) 2001-2005. The ESP and the ESSP are guiding the development of the education sector in Cambodia through 2006. New policies and programmes, which stress quality and efficiency, are being introduced at the central, provincial, and institutional levels. Financial reform is essential to educational reform, and a joint committee of members from the MoEYS and the Ministry of Economy and Finance has been established.

Among the main results achieved in the 1996-2000 period, the following deserve particular mention:

- Establishment of an institutional framework (the school cluster system) to strengthen the quality of education and to improve the efficiency of planning, implementation and monitoring; participatory bottom-up planning exercises were initiated in the six UNICEF supported provinces in coordination with the MoEYS.
- Development of curriculum, students' competencies, textbooks and teacher manuals for primary and lower secondary education in three subjects (Khmer,



mathematics and science), and training in the use of these new materials, and also on life skills including HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention.

- Construction or rehabilitation of 1,672 classrooms with community participation under UNICEF/MoEYS supervision.
- Establishment of a nationwide Education Management Information System (EMIS).
- Development of MoEYS management capacities for executing UNICEF/Government of Sweden supported projects, especially in the areas of curriculum and textbook development, cluster schools implementation and school construction.

In 2001, the Ministry abolished start-of-the year contributions in grades 1 to 9 which resulted in around 0.6 million additional students enrolling. However, the Ministry has recognized that this was not sufficient to sustain demand. As a first step, the Ministry introduced targeted scholarships for the poor, girls and ethnic minority students in grades 7 to 9. A medium term priority was to expand these programs into upper secondary and higher education to help these disadvantaged groups to progress further.

In the period of ESP 2006-2010, the Ministry commits itself to achieving the existing priority policies, which are consistent with EFA 2003-2015, the Cambodia Millennium Development Goals 2015 and the National Strategic Development Plan 2006-2010. The priority policies in the ESP 2006-2010 are as follows: 1) ensuring equitable access to education; 2) increasing quality and efficiency of the education services; and 3) institutional development and capacity building for decentralization.

Another priority of the ESSP 2006-2010 is to take early and urgent action to expand education and training opportunities for the number of young people aged between 12 and 24 years who currently are school dropouts or have limited access to post- primary education and training opportunities.

Recurrent programme priorities are to:

- ensure equitable access to education services through eliminating informal payments by parents in grades 1-9, offset by improved and performance based staff remuneration. Improve equity and efficiency in the deployment of teaching and non-teaching staff, responding to targeted expansion of primary and secondary education opportunities.
- expand equitable access to ECE programs especially for 5 year-old children, targeted on those communes with low net admission rates and high repetition rates in primary schools.
- enhance access, quality and efficiency through continuing to increase Government support for school operational costs, alongside the provision of remedial classes and the expansion of child-friendly schooling.



- reduce access barriers for students, and improve quality and efficiency through increased grades 7-9 survival and grade 10 transition rates.
- assure equitable access to upper secondary education and to ensure that proposed user charges are no barriers for academically promising grade 9 graduates from poor families.
- enable increased participation in higher education by highly motivated students from poor families through the use of government-funded merit driven scholarships.
- ensure an efficient supply of basic cycle and upper secondary school teachers for system expansion and to upgrade TTC trainers, school directors and other key MoEYS personnel; ensure that TTC intakes and subsequent trained teacher deployment respond to growing demands in rural/remote and disadvantaged areas, especially by recruiting teacher trainees from remote and ethnic minority areas; provide in-service teacher training.
- ensure adequate provision of textbooks nationwide and to offer schools a choice of textbooks in each subject.
- provide cost efficient re-entry and targeted complementary schooling and programs and selected non-formal community literacy and skills development programs.
- ensure the development of healthy youth by ensuring access to the development of socio-economics and culture.
- improve technical and financial monitoring at all levels for strengthened policy, strategy and program development, management and evaluation.
- ensure increased education opportunities for students with high academic merit from the poorest and disadvantaged families, especially girls and ethnic minorities, through a gradual increase in the number of targeted scholarships for the poor.

Laws and other basic regulations concerning education

Article 65 of the **Constitution** (1993, amended in 1999) specifies that: "The State shall protect and upgrade citizens' rights to quality education at all levels and shall take necessary steps for quality education to reach all citizens. The State shall respect physical education and sports for the welfare of all Khmer citizens." In addition, "The State shall establish a comprehensive and standardized educational system throughout the country that shall guarantee the principles of educational freedom and quality to ensure that all citizens have equal opportunity to earn a living." (Article 66). "The State shall adopt an educational programme according to the principle of modern pedagogy including technology and foreign languages. The State shall control public and private schools and classrooms at all levels." (Article 67).



According to Article 68, "The State shall provide free primary and secondary education to all citizens in public schools. Citizens shall receive education for at least nine years."

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports was established on the basis of the Law (*Kram*) dated 24 January 1996.

Administration and management of the education system

Administratively, the country comprises twenty provinces and four municipalities (Phnom Penh, Sihanoukville, Kep, and Pailin). Provinces are subdivided into districts, and districts into communes. The municipalities are subdivided into precincts, and precincts into quarters. The central administration is the main body handling administrative affairs at municipal/provincial and district levels.

The **Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS)** has four levels or horizontal lines of authority, consisting of the central, the provincial/municipal, the district and the school levels. It should be noted that the school cluster is not a new hierarchical line of authority. A school cluster is a group of schools located near each other that can provide mutual technical and material assistance to make the teaching-learning process more effective.

The unique characteristic of the MoEYS is the widespread network of central headquarters, twenty-four **provincial education offices**, 182 **district education offices** and around 6,500 schools. With over 80,000 education personnel, the Ministry represents more than half of the total public service. In order to operate effectively, the Ministry requires an organizational structure that is comprehensive in terms of education service planning, management, and delivery and monitoring.

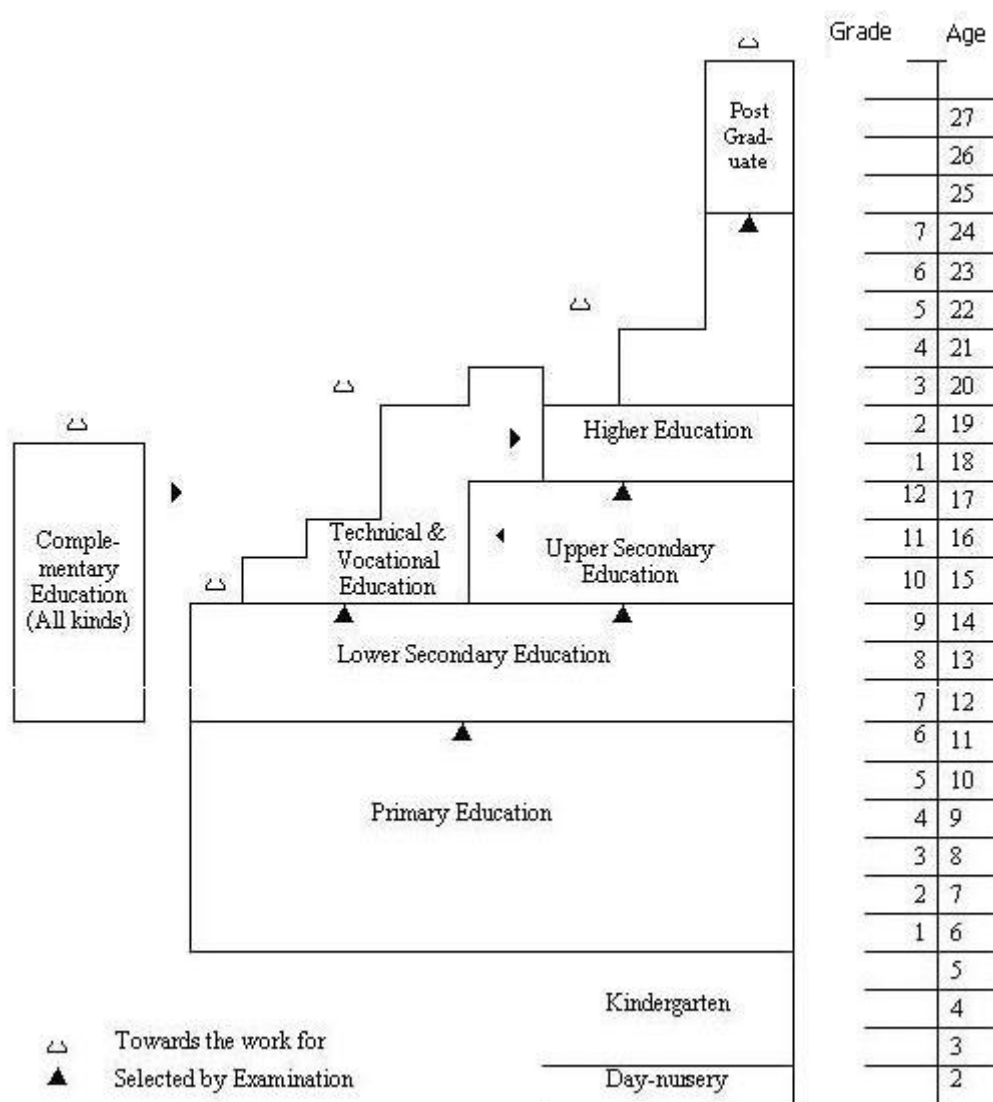
The organizational structure of the Ministry was revised in early 1998. There are five General Departments including General Education, Higher Education and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), Youth and Sports, Administration Finance and Planning, and the Inspectorate. The Department of Planning runs an Education Management Information System (EMIS) Centre. Its mission is to collect data from all schools across the country for processing, analyzing and then compiling into statistics and indicators yearbooks for distribution to and use by all levels of educational administrators.

Over the past decade, in common with most ministries, the primary mission of the central administration has been to exercise a degree of control over MoEYS operations, with a predominant focus on administration of MoEYS affairs. Levels of delegation to line departments, provincial and district authorities have been limited and unclear. The predominant culture has been one of seeking upward approval for decisions. The opportunities and willingness to take decisions at lower levels of the system has been limited by unclear delegation of authority. The situation is reinforced by a tradition of highly centralized resource management for both personnel and operational budgets.

The introduction of the priority action programmes (PAP) in 2000 has provided an opportunity to rationalize organizational structures and responsibilities within the Ministry. Financial channelling and management of PAP funds is directed from the central government treasury to district accounts held in the provincial treasury. This has had a positive effect on various levels of MoEYS to review its role and function. In essence, central headquarters are gradually assuming their proper role of policy making, strategic planning and monitoring. Provincial offices are beginning to assume a progress monitoring and oversight role, with districts and schools being responsible for day-to-day management of PAP funds.

Structure and organization of the education system

Cambodia: structure of the education system



Source: Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) website:
<http://www.seameo.org>



Pre-school education

Pre-school education is not compulsory. It lasts three years and caters to children aged 3-5.

Primary education

In principle, primary education is compulsory for children aged 6-11. The primary education programme lasts six years and is the first stage of basic education.

Within the new National Curriculum, set out in December 2004, pupils in primary education should receive five periods of teaching per day, five days per week, each teaching period lasting forty minutes, plus 2-5 additional 40-minute periods per week of the Local Life Skills Program (LLSP).

Secondary education

General secondary education has two phases: lower secondary, or the second stage of basic education, lasting three years and in principle compulsory for students aged 12-14; and upper secondary, which is not compulsory and also lasts three years.

Higher and tertiary-level education is provided in universities and technical and professional training institutions. Tertiary-level courses last two to three years. Teacher-training colleges train primary and lower secondary teachers (two-year programmes). At the university level, programmes leading to the Bachelor's degree or equivalent usually last four years. A one-year, post-graduate programme at the Faculty of Pedagogy trains upper secondary school teachers. Studies in the fields of medicine and dentistry last seven years (six years in the case of pharmacy and architecture).

Within the new National Curriculum, students in grades 7-10 should receive 30 periods of teaching per week, each teaching period lasting fifty minutes, plus 2-5 additional 50-minute periods per week of the Local Life Skills Program (LLSP). Students in grades 11-12 should receive 32 periods of teaching per week, each teaching period lasting fifty minutes.

The school year should consist of thirty-eight working weeks.

The financing of education

In the 1990s, the education sector was under-resourced in Cambodia. Public spending on education has remained roughly constant, ranging between 0.9–1.0% of the GDP since 1994. Public spending levels have been particularly low at the primary level where it is estimated that per pupil spending was around Riels 30,000 (or US\$7.5) in 1997.

These patterns are mirrored by recurrent spending on education, which remained roughly constant, hovering between 9% and 10% of discretionary spending between 1994 and 1998. Government recurrent spending on the sector grew from



Riels (R) 61 billion in 1994 to R102 billion in 1998, which barely kept pace with enrolment growth. The situation improved somewhat in 1999 with an increase to R150 billion (almost 14% of discretionary spending).

The under-resourcing in the 1990s increased reliance on parental and donor contributions. For example, it is estimated that in 1998 almost one half (46%) of educational expenditure was provided by donors and NGOs compared to government (27%) and private households (27%).

Predictability of available resources over the medium-term is a precondition for effective forward policy making and planning for the sector. This was problematic between 1994 and 1999, where public expenditure planning was limited to an annual basis. In addition, education aid flows were variable and systems were not in place to accurately capture aid-spending volumes. The uncertainty over available resources for the sector is reinforced by the absence of clear regulatory, accounting and management mechanisms for the substantial private contributions. Most of these transactions between parents, schools and teachers are made in the form of informal payments (in addition to unofficial school fees). As a consequence, these resources are not effectively captured or managed in the financing operations of the education system.

A key component of predictability is the effective channelling and disbursement of funds from the Government treasury to Ministry headquarters and the provinces. Officially, budget outturn figures for education have been encouraging in recent years. For example, in 1997 it was estimated that the budget outturn was 95% of planned expenditure and 93% in 1998. It is acknowledged that these figures are difficult to verify due to limited financial tracking and audit systems. Despite these encouraging signs, predictability and forward planning is somewhat undermined by reliance on a monthly cash accounting system and variable transparency in information on budgetary allocations to the provinces and other education units. In addition, the predictability of disbursing allocations could be at greater risk as the share of non-salary spending increases.

Current public spending patterns are not equitable. For example, in 1996/97 it was estimated that only about 40% of recurrent spending was devoted to primary education compared to 15% for secondary and 30% for post-secondary education. Much of this distortion was due to substantial donor support for higher education and TVET. The situation has improved since this period with public spending on primary and secondary education averaging around 80–85% in 1998/99. Simultaneously, donor support has shifted significantly towards a greater share of support for primary/basic education.

Public spending per student also appears to be inequitable. For example, it is estimated that in 1997 spending per primary student was around Riels 63,000 of which public spending was R30,000 (47%). In contrast, per student spending on technical vocational education was estimated at R560,000 with public spending amounting to R446,000 (80%). The public share for higher education was an estimated 67%. Clearly, these patterns are not equitable, given the under-representation of students from poorer families at later stages of the education system.



The efficiency and quality of education spending has been disappointing in recent years. The share of overall recurrent spending used for financing salaries has been roughly constant at 72–75% over the period 1996-99. However, the provincial education budgets that service primary and secondary schools show a much higher salary share (92–93%) over the same period. Per student spending on operating costs averaged only R1,700, being as low as R500 per student in Phnom Penh. This situation increases the reliance on donor and private contribution to sustain key items of expenditure such as textbooks, teacher training and school maintenance.

Improving the equity and efficiency of provincial budgets is especially critical. Current financial planning criteria for provincial budget allocations are unclear. For example, there are wide provincial variations for budget allocations per student, ranging from R33,000 (Siem Reap) to R117,000 (Mondulhiri). For the operating budgets, per student spending ranges between R500 per student (Phnom Penh) to R36,000 per student (Mondulhiri). A review of provincial budget allocations, and especially of operational budget allocations, taking account of poverty and needs indices, is a pressing issue.

In early 2000, the Government and the Ministry of Education took a number of key initiatives to improve the predictability of resourcing, providing real incentives for forward-looking education financing policy development and programme planning. A critical step has been the presentation of a three-year rolling Public Expenditure Plan (PEP), which projects an increase in education recurrent spending from R220 billion (2001) to R400 billion (2003). In the 2001 budget, education was allocated R223 billion, slightly above PEP projections. Simultaneously, the Government introduced the Priority Action Programme (PAP) mechanism, which provides protected and post-audit financing for the implementation of agreed priorities.

These proposed education-financing reforms, if effectively implemented, would undoubtedly assure greater access to primary and secondary schooling for students from poorer families. Nevertheless, the projected levels of continued parental contributions, especially at post-primary levels, could represent a continued constraint on equitable access for the children from the poorest families. A complementary MoEYS strategy is to provide targeted programmes and poverty-indexed scholarships and incentives for the poorest. While this strategy is appropriate, a key strategic consideration will be putting in place mechanisms that ensure that any such incentives reach the poorest (e.g. community, NGOs involvement in selection) and funds are accounted for in a transparent manner.

The provincial and district education authorities will be expected to play an enhanced role in both the operational planning and management of these proposed financial reforms. A critical step will be for the MoEYS to formulate new staff deployment guidelines and norms as a basis for annual salaries budget planning, endorsed by the Ministry of Economy and Finance. Another important requirement will be to develop poverty and needs indexed provincial budget allocation criteria, preferably for both the traditional operating budgets and the new PAP programmes.

The fundamental thrust of the Education Sector Plan (ESP) financing policy for 2001-05 was to reduce average parental contributions for basic education. The



policy target was to increase public spending on basic education from around R40,000 per student to R116,000 per student by 2005, meaning a reduction in average parental contributions from 50% of total (1997 figures) to 18% by 2005.

A key feature was to secure efficiency gains in the use of staff and facilities, through a number of measures. These included increased pupil-teacher ratios for secondary education up to 25:1 by 2005 and the increased use of double shifts in primary and secondary schools. The financing plan also incorporated increased public spending on quality improvement, including for textbooks. The plan projected a doubling of the schools' operating budgets support per student through public funds, alongside allocations for continuous, nationwide training of all teachers and head teachers. Another key feature of the ESP financing plan was to increase both the volume and share of non-wage recurrent spending, in order to secure sustainable quality improvement.

The overall implications for these reforms are a significant increase in public spending on basic education, which was projected to rise from around R180 billion in 2001 to R377 billion in 2005. The spending share on basic education is designed to remain consistently between 70% and 75% of total public spending, in keeping with ESP priorities. Public spending on upper secondary was projected to grow from R14 billion to R65 billion by 2005, in order to secure the participation of rising numbers of students from poorer families as the system expands.

The Government allocated almost 16% of its national recurrent budget to education in 2001 and increased the allocation to 18.2% in 2002. Unfortunately, due to inadequacies in revenue policy and collection, the share still falls short of meeting needs. The shortfall is compounded by the fact that the level of disbursement invariably tends to be well below the amounts allocated in the national budget. This gap between promise and delivery seriously impedes the progress of educational reform. The lack of funds is perhaps most notable in the low (and often delayed) teacher salaries but also in the poor availability of adequate facilities and learning materials. This lack of minimal required finances resulted in a supplementary system whereby parents unofficially paid fees to the school or to the teacher, although this excluded poor children because of their inability to pay.

A priority challenge for the Ministry in the next phase of reform projects will be to continue to demonstrate that both Government funds and external assistance is well spent and having maximum impact on policy and the poor. Further strengthening the internal audit functions and audit coverage is therefore critical. This will ensure greater financial transparency and spending efficiency. The Ministry's main priority is to ensure that all budget management centers are fully operational and to ensure that all schools, institutions and programs are audited by the end of 2008.

The Ministry acknowledges that a fundamental challenge in the next five years will be to improve staff remuneration systems. A priority will be to ensure that any pay rises are clearly related to better performance, more responsibility and contribute to staff deployment efficiencies. The new ESP 2004/08 clearly defines these strategies and their cost implications, including new forms of staff training and development.



The educational process

The aim of the school curriculum is to develop fully the talents and capacities of all students in order that they become able people, with parallel and balanced intellectual, spiritual, mental and physical growth and development. In particular, when students leave schools they should:

- develop a love of learning that will enable them to pursue employment and continue life-long learning;
- have attained a foundation knowledge of Khmer language, Khmer literature and Mathematics;
- have the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to improve and maintain their own physical and mental health and to contribute to the improvement and maintenance of the health of their families and wider society;
- have the capacity to manage and take responsibility for their own actions and decisions and be self-reliant;
- appreciate the value and importance of Science, Technology, Innovation and Creativity;
- have employment related skills, an understanding of and positive attitude towards work and a capacity to manage and work effectively and harmoniously with others;
- have the capacity to exercise judgment and responsibility in matters of morality and a commitment to identifying, analyzing and working towards solutions of problems experienced by their families and society,
- have an understanding and appreciation of other people and other cultures, civilizations and histories that leads to the building of a public spirit characterized by equality and respect for others' rights;
- be active citizens and be aware of social changes, understanding Cambodia's system of government and the rule of law, and demonstrating a spirit of national pride and love of their nation, religion and king;
- have an appreciation of and be able to protect and preserve their natural, social and cultural environment

In order to achieve this, the school curriculum should:

- provide learning experiences that will enable students to learn to know, learn to do, learn to be and learn to live together;
- equip students with the everyday Life Skills they will require to reach their full potential and to be effective and productive members of society.
- enable students to attain a high level of knowledge and skills in the subject areas:
 - Khmer language and literature
 - Mathematics
 - Sciences (Physics, Chemistry, Biology, and Earth and Environmental Studies)
 - Social Studies (History, Geography, Home economics, Art Education, and Morals and Civics)
 - Foreign Languages



- Health and Physical Education and Sport
- emphasize active and applied learning in all subjects across the core curriculum, including the study of technology, which is the application of knowledge to improve the quality of life for all citizens.

Pre-primary education

The goals as stated in the curriculum are to develop life skills, emotional values, social, moral and esthetic values linked to the age of the child. Pre-numeracy, pre-literacy and integrated science is taught through play-way method. Activities include things that promote large muscle development, small muscle development, social skills, problem-solving, art, and drama, pre-reading and pre-writing skills.

Pre-school education provision is a growing public-private partnership. Pre-primary education is provided in 874 government pre-schools for about 50,000 children, alongside some 10,000 children in 364 community and private pre-schools (data refer to 1999). The community schools constitute around 70% of non-public provision. Attendance at community schools is generally tuition-free compared to the urban-based private pre-school, which levy a small charge. Demand for pre-school education appears to be growing slowly in the late 1990s, in part due to two-parent families working in urban areas, requiring daytime child minding.

Overall participation in pre-schooling is low. The estimated gross enrolment ratio for children ages 3, 4 and 5 are estimated at 1.2%, 5.0% and 12.9% respectively, and 10.6% overall for the age group (2004/2005). The percentage of children entering primary education with previous pre-school experience is 13.2% (2004/2005). Girls represent roughly half of the enrolment. There are significant rural/urban disparities in availability of pre-school services. Urban areas with only 15% of the pre-school age population constitute around 25% of pre-school enrolment.

Cambodia developed a policy framework on pre-school education and guidelines on early childhood care and development in 2002.

Officially, formal pre-school education, managed and monitored by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, is organized as a three-step system for 3–5-year-olds (L1 for 3-year-olds, L2 for 4-year-olds and L3 for 5-year-olds). In practice, most pupils receive only one or two years of provision. For example, roughly 70% of the pupils attend the later mixed/higher steps of the programme, due in part to the small size of pre-schools, which on average have 58 children, two or three staff and a children-teacher ratio of 27.3:1. It is reported that few of the pre-schools offer a double-shift.

The Ministry of Women's Affairs is responsible for the functioning and management of community pre-schools (CPS) which are set up by Commune Councils and meant for all children ages 3-5 years, particularly those in rural areas where opportunities for early childhood stimulation are few. An estimated 19,000 children attend community-based pre-schools. Home-based parenting programmes also exist and are attended by approximately 2,000 children.



Teachers in pre-schools run by the government go through a two-year programme at teacher training schools of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. Community teachers have in-service training for 16 days provided by the Department of Early Childhood Education in the provinces, and literacy teachers for parenting programmes receive in-service training for three days twice a year.

The pre-school system has relied significantly on NGO support since the early 1990s. For example, in 1997 Government financing was around US\$750,000 compared to NGO support of US\$300,000 (around 30% of total). It is estimated that NGO financing declined to some US\$125,000 in 1999; the total support from the NGO sector has been US\$27,192,947 (2004-05). Much of NGO support has focused on quality assurance such as the training of roughly 2,000 pre-school teachers and curriculum materials development. UNICEF is providing support for the 609 community-based pre-schools for children of 3 to 5 years of age in 2005. This includes support for infrastructure, training costs, and development of teaching learning materials and honorariums to the teachers. Government funding to ECE was US\$112,500 in 2004-05.

Almost all the NGO and community preschools are targeted towards the poor and vulnerable population.

The quality and effectiveness of pre-school provision is difficult to assess, in part because of a mix of objectives. These include school readiness, elements of pre-primary teaching, structured play and social development, initial hygiene and nutrition awareness and broader child minding and child-care. In all ministries, the quality assurance and regulatory mechanisms are under-developed.

The most fundamental longer-term questions are what should be the primary objectives of pre-school education and the role of Government in provision. Pre-school policy objectives include making children ready for primary school, formally regulating the age of entry through a reception class, and ensuring that older children in families are not prevented from attending primary school due to family child minding duties. Currently the objectives seem to be a mixture of these alternatives.

Primary and lower secondary education (basic education)

The purpose of the Basic Education curriculum is to contribute to the achievement of the aims of schooling in order that students can further their studies at the upper grades, participate in other vocational trainings or to participate in social life by ensuring that every student has acquired:

- knowledge of Khmer language and mathematics;
- knowledge of the national identity;
- an understanding of morality and civic responsibilities;
- the everyday life skills that enable participation in their local community life and Cambodian society.
- a basic understanding of the natural world and of scientific principles
- communicative competence in a Foreign Language.



Within the new National Curriculum (2004), schools, in partnership with parents, their local community, community organizations and NGOs, must develop and administer a Local Life Skills Program (LLSP) of between 2 to 5 lessons per week for basic education. The purpose of the LLSP is to provide schools with time in the curriculum for extra-curricular activities such as social services or youth movement activities that will further develop students' habits of self-confidence and responsibility.

The objective of primary education is to focus on the development of children's personalities by helping to upgrade their mental and psychological abilities. Children will master reading, writing, speaking, listening and arithmetic, will be able to solve their immediate problems, and will cherish learning and labour. Through these efforts, they will become useful members of the community and be capable of acquiring simple skills or continuing their study to higher grades.

The purpose of the Grades 1-3 curriculum is to ensure that every child has a strong foundation in literacy and Mathematics and that they develop their health, physical appearance, moral understanding, learning skills and life skills. Art education (songs, drawing, dance, music) is included in Science and Social Studies.

The purpose of the Grades 4-6 curriculum is to expand and consolidate students' knowledge and understanding of Khmer language, Mathematics, learning skills, life skills, moral, and personal development that will enable them to pursue life-long learning and to introduce students to content in the areas of Science and Social Studies. Art education is included in Social Studies.

The main objective of (lower) secondary education is to enhance the knowledge that the students have already acquired at the primary level. This aims to ensure the development of their freedom of thought and expression, to build their attitude of tolerance, and, at the same time, to develop their talents, individual qualities, creativity, social ethics and skills in order to create a harmonious society. The basic education lower secondary school (Grades 7 - 9) curriculum seeks to provide all students with a breadth of knowledge, skills, Khmer language, Mathematics, Sciences, Social studies, Life Skills, learning skills, life skills, vocational education, moral education and personal development necessary to enable them to contribute as productive members to the growth of Cambodian society and be able to further their studies at the upper grades, participate in other vocational trainings or to participate in social life. Foreign Languages are included as a compulsory subject for all students at Lower Secondary level. Pre-vocational Life Skills are taught as part of Social Studies and through the LLSP. Art education is included in the Local Life Skill Programs. In short, upon completion of basic education students will have grown to full adulthood and be capable of living in society and continuing their study to higher grades as required.

The weekly lesson timetables (before the adoption of the new National Curriculum) are shown below:

Primary education (first stage of basic education): weekly lesson timetable

Subject	Number of weekly periods in each grade					
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
Khmer language	14	12	12	11	8	8
Foreign language (English or French)	–	–	–	–	3	3
Mathematics	5	5	5	5	5	5
Science	2	3	3	3	3	3
History and geography	2	2	2	2	2	2
Moral-civics	1	2	2	2	2	2
Arts	2	2	2	2	2	2
Technology	1	1	1	2	2	2
Physical education and sports	2	2	2	2	2	2
Special activities (which help to improve students' real social life skills and personalities)	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total weekly periods	30	30	30	30	30	30

Source: Ton Sa Im, 2002. (In principle, each teaching period lasts 45 minutes).

Lower secondary education (second stage of basic education): weekly lesson timetable

Subject	Number of weekly periods in each form		
	I	II	III
Khmer language	6	5	5
Foreign language (English or French)	5	5	5
Mathematics	4	5	5
Science	5	5	6
History and geography	3	3	3
Moral-civics	2	2	2
Aesthetic education (drawing, music, songs, dances and plays)	2	2	1
Technology-home economics	3	3	3
Physical education and sports	2	2	2
Special activities (which help to improve students' real social life skills and personalities)	1	1	1
Total weekly periods	33	33	33

Source: *Ibid.* (In principle, each teaching period lasts 45 minutes).

At the primary level, the quality of learning and the learning environment is poor. It is estimated that a student spends approximately 14 years on average to complete the primary education cycle. This situation is particularly serious in rural and remote areas, where repetition and dropout rates are above the national average. In addition, a lack of teaching aids, a shortage of textbooks and teacher manuals, and traditional teaching methodologies affect learning achievements. In secondary education, gender gaps are wide, demanding urgent action. Low performance, centralized approaches, weak participation, and a lack of accountability, transparency and regulatory frameworks, all limit the capacity of planners and administrators to cope with the



changing contexts and the new functions established by the government's broader reform of public administration and finance.

The Government has achieved significant expansion of primary education opportunities in the past decade, with enrolment growing from 1.3 million in 1992 to around 2.2 million in 1999. This represents an enrolment growth of 70% over the period. From 2000 to 2004, primary school enrolment grew from 2.4 million to 2.7 million, with the majority of growth being in rural areas. The overall primary net enrolment rate increased from 84% to 91% since 2000. The rise was even greater for girls, especially in rural and remote areas, and the number of students from the poorest communes increased by around 0.5 million.

The number of schools grew from around 4,500 in 1992 to 5,274 in 1999. Currently there are 6,180 primary schools.

Differing data sources result in some variation in estimated overall gross and net enrolment rates. Official figures estimate the gross enrolment rate (GER) at 90% and the net enrolment rate (NER) at around 78% in 2000. However, census data in the same year show more encouraging with the GER at and estimated 100% and NER at around 86%. Furthermore, despite the overall growth, there are significant geographical and inequities in access to primary education. The overall GER of 90% hides wide provincial variations. For example, in Takeo and Svay Rieng, GER is 100% compared to between 45% and 60% in more remote provinces (i.e. Ratanakiri, Koh Kong and Pailin). There are also significant urban, rural and remote area variations with GERs at 99.5%, 93.9% and 50.6% respectively. The net enrolment figures mirror these patterns.

There are also significant gender disparities in access, directly linked to urban/rural location, and significant variations between gross and net enrolments for girls due to a number of factors, including late age of entry, high repetition rates and early dropout. In particular, a noticeable trend is the decline in girls' enrolment across Grades I–VI, where the girls' share has fallen from 47% to 33%.

A number of factors have contributed to the somewhat disappointing overall enrolment rate and to the significant inequities in access. A key constraint is the high level of repetition, particularly in Grades I and II. For example, in 1998 the overall repetition rates were 41% and 25% in the first two grades, falling to around 4–8% in Grades V and VI. Late entry into primary school can severely hinder pupils' continued participation, for girls particularly. Another obstacle preventing continued progression and retention in primary school is the large number of primary schools, which do not offer a full range of primary Grades I–VI. Another constraint is the substantial number of over-crowded schools and temporary buildings used for primary education.

The Ministry of Education has not set minimum learning standards for primary education and nationally set grade-referenced achievement tests are not in place. Consequently, it is difficult to reliably assess the quality and effectiveness of primary education. However a proxy indicator is the progression rate from Grade IV, based on teacher-made and marked tests. The overall trend is slightly upwards: in 1996/97, 70% of pupils passed these tests compared to 72% in 1998. There are some



urban/rural variations. In 1998, urban school pass rates were 78% compared to 65% in rural areas.

Other proxy indicators of quality and effectiveness are not encouraging. For example, in 1998 the survival rate of the age cohort reaching Grade V (Grade VI was introduced in 1996) was only 45%. Dropout rates in 1997/98 ranged between 10% and 16%. There were also significant variations in overall dropout rates between urban and rural areas (urban: 9%; rural: 15%; and remote areas: 26.2%).

The allocation of instructional hours in the primary curriculum is somewhat inconsistent with the broad objectives of primary education, which are to improve literacy, numeracy and social and scientific competences. Officially, the number of instructional hours over primary Grades I–VI is 635 hours per year, but a study carried out in 1998 suggested that the real teaching time could be as low as 350 yearly hours. In addition, pupil attendance rates are variable. For example, using census data it was estimated that only 60% of 9-year-olds attend schools regularly. Anecdotal evidence also confirms that the attendance by teachers is very variable. All these factors undermine the potential quality and effectiveness of primary education.

The MoEYS has made significant efforts to upgrade the quality of the primary teaching service. In 1996, the entry qualifications to the teaching service were increased to twelve years of schooling and two years of teacher training (in cities and towns; a 9 + 2 scheme is applied in remote areas). By 1999, over 90% of teachers had the required academic qualifications. However, for the remote areas, the figure was only 71%. A vicious circle remains in place whereby poor quality primary education and limited access to secondary education means that few teachers from remote areas are qualified for teacher-training college entry. Posting and retaining better-qualified teachers from urban areas remains problematic due to ineffective incentives. A positive feature is the growing share of female teachers, especially in the remote areas.

There have been substantial improvements in staff utilization rates. Pupils-teacher ratios (PTRs) have risen from around 40 to 53.5, due to a combination of enrolment growth and containment of the primary teaching service. Nevertheless, there are substantial variations in PTRs across provinces ranging from 37:1 in smaller provinces to 71-75:1 elsewhere. These disparities are due to a combination of factors such as the extent to which schools do not offer the complete range of grades, the variable school size and variations in staff deployment practices within provincial education offices.

In the short to medium-term, the pressing priority is to improve the internal efficiency through measures that increase progression rates, reduce repetition and dropout whilst still assuring reasonable quality. A number of measures are proposed, including: (a) more rigorous regulation and promotion of enrolment at age 6; (b) a pre-grade 6 entry school readiness programme as part of the reorganized pre-schooling provision; (c) remedial classes that assure a reasonable balance between increased and/or automatic promotion; and (d) incentive programmes for the poorest that secure early and sustained attendance (e.g. school feeding and other educational materials support).



A second priority is to provide access to primary education that is more equitable. The proposed internal efficiency measures will contribute significantly, especially for girls in rural and remote areas. A key strategy will be to implement the plan for complete Grades I–VI primary schools by: (a) providing primary schools in many villages without a school; (b) adopting a broad policy of double-shift classroom use where demand justifies it; (c) introducing multi-grade teaching in small remote schools; and (d) constructing additional facilities in severely overcrowded primary schools.

A third short to medium-term priority is to take steps to improve the equity and quality of primary education. Improving quality will require a combination of a more efficient use of teaching and learning resources and also improved governance, management and accountability between service providers and the public. To improve the teaching-learning process, key measures could include: (a) steps to enhance the number of instructional hours through extending the school year and/or use of vacation classes; (b) a review of the curriculum and instructional materials to devote a greater share of teaching time to three or four core subjects; and (c) targeted incentives to head teachers and qualified teachers prepared to work in schools with more difficult circumstances.

Secondary education

The purpose of the Upper Secondary school curriculum is not only to expand and consolidate students' knowledge from the basic education but also to provide them opportunity for future orientation, that is, to have capacity to continue their studies at higher education or to specialize their studies or to participate in social life by ensuring that students have acquired:

- advanced knowledge of Khmer literature and mathematics;
- deep knowledge of the national identity;
- a more complex understand of morality and civic responsibilities;
- the everyday life skills that enable participation in their local community life and Cambodian society.
- a broad understanding of the natural world and of scientific principles;
- high communicative competence in a Foreign Language.

The purpose of the Grade 10 curriculum is to expand and consolidate students' knowledge obtained from the Lower Secondary education. In addition, schools must ensure the provision of a significant subject choice advice for students to study in Grades 11 and 12. Art education (songs, drawing, dance, music) is included in the Local Life Skills Programs.

The purpose of the Grade 11-12 curriculum is to provide students with the opportunity for increased specialization through subject choice to develop a depth of knowledge in particular subjects or to take training-based vocational subjects in order to continue their study in higher education or to study vocational subjects or to participate in social life. An Elective Vocational Education Program (EVEP) provides students with the opportunity to participate in locally provided vocational training programs.



Currently, secondary education opportunities in Cambodia are limited. Official 1998 estimates for gross enrolment rates in lower secondary (Grades VII–IX) and upper secondary (Grades X–XII) were 23% and 8.7% respectively. The latest data for 1999/2000 suggests a gross enrolment rate of 22.9% in lower secondary and a rise to around 11.6% in upper secondary. Net enrolments for lower and upper secondary were low at an estimated 6.4% and 4.8% respectively in 1998/99.

Overall enrolment trends in secondary education have been varied. In 1987 the lower secondary enrolment (at that time, Grades VI–VIII) was 330,000 students; enrolment declined to 224,000 students in 1993, generally stagnating until the end of the decade. Since 2000, enrolment levels have increased significantly, and current enrolment is 529,000 students (2004/2005). For upper secondary, the trend has been rising upwards from 19,000 in 1986 to 62,000 in 1993, and most recently to 177,000. The broad trend has been an increase in the proportion of upper secondary enrolments. It should be noted that the shift from a 5 + 3 + 3 structure to a 6 + 3 + 3 system has distorted the figures to some extent and understates the gains in overall participation.

There are significant gender and geographical inequities in enrolment. Females represent only one-third of both lower and upper secondary enrolment, although the number of girls in secondary and higher education has almost doubled in recent years. There are also significant provincial and district variations. For example, there are 32 districts out of 183 (17% of the total) without a lower secondary school. There are also 285 commune-level clusters out of 705 (around 40% of the total) without a lower secondary school.

Some improvement has been evidenced in urban/rural disparities in provision. In 1998, of the 308,000 secondary school students, 172,000 (or 56% of total) were in urban schools compared to 135,000 (43%) in rural areas. Less than 1% of students were located in remote secondary schools. In contrast, it was estimated that roughly 80% of the population lived in rural areas, demonstrating that the rural population was significantly under-served. In 2004/2005, 32% of secondary students were in urban schools, 67% in rural schools, and less than 1% in remote secondary schools.

There has been a trend to move towards consolidated Grades VII–XII schools. For example, in 1993 there were only 33 Grades VII–XII schools, which increased to 134 schools by 1999. In contrast, the number of lower secondary schools remained roughly constant at around 350–360. The number of stand-alone upper secondary schools offering only Grades X–XII declined to only six such schools in 1999. In other words, where secondary schooling is available, the proportion of students with access to a complete secondary education was growing. For example, in 1998 of the 308,000 pupils enrolled in secondary education roughly 177,000 (around 58%) were located in complete phase Grades VII–XII provision.

Currently the objective of the secondary education system is largely academic and quality/effectiveness is defined as primarily preparing students for further studies, especially higher education. Student performance is currently assessed through provincially set and managed Grade IX examinations, followed by a national Grade XII examination, organised through the Examinations Office. Selection for higher education is on the basis of subsequent admissions test set by individual university



institutions. In the absence of agreed minimum standards of performance, it is difficult to assess the validity and reliability of these quality measures, especially in Grade IX where national level moderation is under-developed.

The expansion of secondary teacher-training provision has improved the academic qualifications profile of the teaching force. In Grades X–XII, 70% of the teachers are graduates. In Grades VII–IX, the figure drops to around 5%. For the small number of teachers who teach Grades VII–XII (roughly 10% of total), the proportion of graduates is around 45%. Interestingly, there are 568 graduates who are employed as non-teaching staff, mainly as school directors.

Nevertheless, a number of other factors suggest that the effectiveness of the secondary teaching force is not optimal. Grades VII–IX and Grades X–XII teachers only teach 14 hours per week compared to 18 hours per week amongst Grades VII–XII teachers. In addition, there is evidence that often teachers are not teaching their subject of specialization. For example, in foreign languages, only 30% of classes are taught by trained English and French teachers. In more vocational subjects (e.g. home economics, earth science, agriculture), the figure drops as low as 5–15%. These patterns are similar across lower and upper secondary levels. Training secondary school teachers to be able to teach at least two subjects is a key measure not only in improving staff deployment but also for quality improvement.

Little reliable information is available on the actual instructional hours for secondary school students. The official instructional hours, based on students attending school both mornings and afternoons is around 950 hours per annum. The reality in many schools may be different. The MoEYS reports that 130 schools operate in two shifts (27% of total). In these cases, actual instructional time could be as low as 450–500 yearly hours. This is particularly a problem in the urban areas where 69 out of 152 secondary schools (45%) operate in two shifts.

The internal efficiency of secondary education is comparatively much better than for primary schooling. The transition rate from primary to secondary is roughly 40% for both boys and girls. The transition rate from Grade IX to Grade X is roughly 70%. Dropout and repetition rates across Grades VII–XII are usually under 10%. In other words, once students have made the crucial transition from primary to secondary education, the chances of retention and completion are high. An immediate priority is therefore to increase access to lower secondary education as a first step in broadening secondary education opportunities.

A pressing issue is to improve the deployment of secondary teaching and non-teaching staff. The average student-teacher ratio is 16.4:1 for lower secondary schools and 23.1:1 for upper secondary schools. The student per staff ratios (including non-teaching staff) are 13.4:1 and 15.8:1 respectively, highlighting the large proportion of non-teaching staff in secondary schools.

An associated issue is the uncertain efficiency in the use of deployment of the large numbers of non-teaching staff in secondary schools. Currently non-teaching staff constitutes 3,780 of the 17,220 staff in lower secondary schools, or 22% of the total. In upper secondary, the figures are 1,430 and 5,900 respectively. By international standards, this represents a very high proportion of non-teaching staff. A



recent MoEYS survey (1999) on the deployment of administrative staff in secondary schools highlighted that job responsibilities for non-teaching staff were frequently uncertain, the expected outcomes of their work uncertain and workloads were extremely variable. There was also significant overlap between the stated duties of non-teaching staff in secondary schools.

A recent MoEYS analysis reinforces the need to rationalize the provision of non-teaching staff. School principals and vice principals represent 1,160 of the total non-teaching cadre (roughly 18% of total). In contrast, there is a tradition of a *surveillant* post with responsibilities for class discipline and collection/collation of end-of-term student marks. There are over 2,800 *surveillants* in the system. There is a clear opportunity to make staff efficiency gains by allocating these responsibilities to the classroom teacher, as would be the case in most countries. Most of these *surveillants* are trained teachers, often comparatively experienced ones, who could have more impact in the classroom.

A strategic priority is to assure greater equity in the expansion of lower secondary education. A number of critical measures are required, including: (a) targeted facilities expansion, especially in the identified under-served districts and clusters; (b) targeted incentives for qualified teachers to work in rural and remote secondary schools; and (c) poverty indexed scholarships/incentives programmes for children from the poorest families and girls, to offset real and perceived opportunity costs related family work, transport and accommodation.

A crosscutting priority is to ensure that the secondary school curriculum and programmes produce suitable lower and upper secondary school graduates for the labour market and for effective participation in social and community life. At the same time, the related programmes need to be affordable and sustainable as enrolment grows. In the current economic and labour market climate, there is a strong argument for simplifying the Grades VII–IX curriculum around core subjects, with a life skills component. A simpler curriculum would further provide to the MoEYS economies of scale in textbook provision and teacher training programs.

A related priority is to examine measures for cost-effective diversification of the upper secondary curriculum. Caution is warranted in introducing a two-track academic and vocational stream system, as parents and students frequently see the vocational stream as a second best option. Employers generally prefer trainable secondary school graduates with the necessary numeracy, literacy and scientific skills to learn on the job or allow them to benefit from post-school training. Curriculum options could include: (a) a core curriculum linked to a limited number of electives; (b) schools introducing private provision for particular electives (e.g. computing, accounts, foreign languages); and (c) a core curriculum and electives alongside short work experience or life skills programmes offered in the vacation.

Another priority is to rapidly expand secondary teacher-training provision. The current secondary teacher-training capacity will be unable to generate the teachers required in the forthcoming years. A pressing issue is to examine and implement options for increasing the output of trained secondary teachers. Options include: (a) shortening the in-college period for training in regional teacher-training colleges (RTTCs) from two years to one year, linked to a school-based support



program; (b) introducing a school-based, distance-learning programme for teachers appointed after completing Grade XII; (c) introducing a new training programme in RTTCs and primary teacher-training colleges (PTTCs) to train Grades I–IX teachers; (d) selectively expanding the facilities and teaching staff at RTTCs, PTTCs and the Faculty of Pedagogy to deliver a two-year programme for more students.

Assessing learning achievement nationwide

As far as secondary education is concerned, in the Grade IX examinations, pass rates increased from 47% to 71% between 1998 and 1999, in part due to the need for selecting Grade IX students for an increased number of Grade X places. In 1998, provincial pass rates varied significantly ranging from 31–37% (in Kompong Chhnang and Kompong Cham) up to 63–75% (in Pursat and Stung Treng). These provincial variations are a consequence of the relative availability of Grade X places. Drawing any further conclusions regarding overall quality improvement would be problematic.

For the Grade XII examinations, the overall pass rate increased from around 70% in 1994 to around 79% in 1998/99. Once again, there were wide provincial variations and significant urban/rural inequities. For example, 88% of students passed in Phnom Penh and Sihanoukville compared to only 42% in Kompong Speu, while none of the Kep candidates passed the examinations. The remote provinces have very few candidates, but performance varied dramatically ranging from a 12% pass rate in Ratanakiri to a rate of 70% in Preah Vihear. The levelling of pass rates may indicate that the improved central management and moderation of the Grade XII examination is beginning to provide a consensus on performance standards, which in the medium term will assist better quality assurance and performance and monitoring.

Higher education

As mentioned, higher and tertiary-level education are provided in universities and technical and professional training institutions. Tertiary-level courses last two to three years. Teacher-training colleges train primary and lower secondary teachers (two-year programmes). At the university level, programmes leading to the Bachelor's degree or the equivalent usually last four years. A one-year, post-graduate programme at the Faculty of Pedagogy trains upper secondary school teachers. Studies in the fields of medicine and dentistry take seven years (six years in the case of pharmacy and architecture).

A network of nine public higher education institutions have been established which provide for instruction in areas such as agriculture, medicine, economics, industry, technology, teacher training, science, art and culture. A further fifteen technical and professional training institutions also offer tertiary-level courses lasting 2-3 years. Apart from a recently established private university providing degree programmes, there are a few private institutions providing tertiary-level courses that are non-degree programmes.

There is a growing public-private partnership in higher education. In 1999, the total enrolment was around 22,000 with roughly two-thirds of students as fee-paying



students in public institutions or enrolled in private universities. The growth of private provision is a recent trend, stimulated by the establishment of private universities in 1997, and expansion of more market-oriented programmes. By 2004, higher education enrolment increased to an estimated 45,000.

There are significant urban/rural and gender disparities in current enrolment patterns. For example, 45% of students in public institutions come from Phnom Penh and around 40% come from the more urban provinces (e.g., Kandal, Kompong Cham). There are virtually no students from the poorer, more rural and remote provinces. A recent MoEYS survey showed that around 40% of students have parents who are government officials, followed by land-owning farmers' children (34%). Virtually all the private students come from Phnom Penh, which emphasizes the very heavy urban-bias of current participation.

Female participation is around one-quarter in both public and private institutions. Two-thirds of females are enrolled as private students. This highlights that private sector expansion has increased opportunities for women, particularly from Phnom Penh. The under-representation of females is a consequence of under-representation in upper secondary education and socio-cultural traditions of limited investment in female education.

The Government has adopted a policy of limiting its own involvement in higher education to public funding of only 2,000 students per annum. Admission exams are used to restrict access for public funded students on an annual quota basis. There is significant evidence of demand with only 1 in 20 students being admitted to the Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP) in 1999. However, there is significant variation in admission rates due to variable demand from students. For example, 95% of applicants for the Faculty of Music were accepted in the same year.

The current admission practices are both inefficient and inequitable. Students are allowed to apply for as many faculties as they wish, if they can pay examination fees and other costs. There is no requirement to report transparently on admissions criteria. In 1998, the MoEYS reduced the admission cycle from two test periods to one, which has improved efficiency and reduced costs. However, the Grade XII examination results are not used as a selection or even screening criteria for rationalizing the admissions strategy, due to uncertain reliability and credibility of the Grade XII testing process. Language policy is another factor. Some admission tests are conducted in French (e.g. for health sciences), which disadvantages students from schools without such provision.

There is little reliable information on the quality or effectiveness of higher education. Repetition and dropout rates could be used as a proxy indicator. Repetition rates in public institutions are variable from 1.3% in RUPP to 9.0% in the Faculty of Law and Economic Science. Dropout rates are higher, reaching as high as 19% in RUPP in 1999. Overall dropout rates for public-funded students are around 8% per annum. However, it is reported that dropout is rarely due to student performance considerations, but more related to social and financial factors. Reliable data on the repetition and dropout for private students is not available.



Student performance monitoring systems are still rudimentary. Some faculties have made progress in putting in place regular student testing procedures and an annual collation of student performance indicators. The extent to which these procedures are used as a basis for student progression is less certain. At present, there is little external moderation of student performance (e.g. use of external examiners from regional/international universities).

The institutional status of higher education institutions remains embryonic. Although public institutions have gradually assumed a higher degree of operational autonomy (largely on the back of institution-based donor support), there is no current legal or regulatory framework to underpin this increased autonomy.

Expenditures on higher education are difficult to estimate due to an aggregated higher education-TVET budget. Based on an estimated 1:2 split between the sub-sectors, it is estimated that the annual per student expenditure by the Government is around R40,000 (or US\$100) per annum. Fees for private students are variable, normally ranging between US\$150 and US\$400 per student per annum. Fees policy is not rigorously regulated with levels largely determined by what the market can bear. For both public and private institutions, financial planning, management and reporting systems are very limited. Public institutions are frequently not informed about their annual allocations and have little delegated authority for spending. For both public and private institutions, there is currently no requirement to produce annual development and financing plans, nor is there any requirement to account for the spending of public or private funding.

Particularly in the public institutions, this lack of delegated authority has reinforced a high dependence on donor support. Donor support is largely institution-based which allows institution managers a high degree of autonomy. It is estimated that over the period 1994-99, higher education aid has amounted to around US\$24 million (US\$4 million per annum), compared to Government spending of approximately US\$4.5 million. In another words, donor support amounts to roughly four-fifths of overall higher education spending. In the absence of a well-defined policy and institutional framework for higher education development, it is problematic to assure or monitor aid-spending effectiveness.

There appears to be significant scope for improved efficiency in the use of facilities and staff. The overall students-teacher ratio in public institutions is estimated at 12.4:1, compared to 17.1:1 in private institutions. There is also a significant proportion of administrative staff, which amount to roughly 22% of total staffing in public institutions.

The pressing priority is to implement strategies that will assist the Government to effectively plan, regulate, monitor and provide quality assurance for the public-private partnership in higher education. The key measures required will include: (i) putting in place enabling legislation that defines the status of higher education, including governance arrangements; (ii) designing and implementing regulations for both technical and financial management, monitoring and accounting, for both public and private contributions; (iii) redefining the relative roles of the Department of Higher Education and institutional governors/managers, with the Department adopting greater planning and monitoring functions; and (iv) within new legislation, to clearly



define the roles and responsibilities of the Council for Higher Education, especially related to matters of public accountability. A critical consideration will be to put in place incentives that will assist these institutional and governance reforms.

In the medium to long term, a critical issue will be to improve the equity of participation in higher education. The overarching strategy will be to expand access to quality secondary education in currently under-served areas. Another medium term priority is to enhance the quality and efficiency of higher education. The key intervention will be a combination of enhanced operational budget support linked to well-regulated institutional performance monitoring. These measures need to be applied to both public and private institutions. In order to be effective, initial institutional capacity building for quality assurance will need to be put in place. Key measures include: (a) a targeted programme of curriculum and staff development; (b) a selective programme of small scale facilities development, especially in the institutions which supply the public sectors; (c) putting in place effective technical and financial management systems including management development; and (d) an effective programme of national and international quality assurance and accreditation. There may be scope for stimulating these improvements through a demand-driven higher education development fund with well-defined eligibility criteria for both public and private institutions.

Special education

There are a limited number of special education schools run by charitable organizations, and an unquantifiable number of children with special needs are attending mainstream schools, but currently there is little specific support provided to them or their teachers.

The newly established Special Education Office is located in the Primary and Pre-School Department of the Ministry of Education. The responsibility of the Office is to promote and support education for children with disabilities, minorities, girls and other vulnerable groups.

Private education

Information is not available.

Means of instruction, equipment and infrastructure

Notwithstanding the considerable progress made in expanding basic education services since the early 1990s, both quality and coverage remain areas of great concern. Schools do not yet provide the kind of learning experience envisaged in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). There is a shortage of school buildings and learning centers, class sizes are often excessive, the number of actual teaching/learning hours is inadequate, new curricula are not yet fully implemented, minimum learning and school performance standards are not in place, and there is a shortage of core and supplementary teaching materials. Teachers are often not qualified and are ill motivated due to low salaries and poor working conditions. The



status of teachers, socio-economically and professionally, is poor. There are few non-monetary incentives such as scholarships, training opportunities, career development, and transfer or public recognition for teachers.

Teachers are often unable to provide an active learning environment as the short Textbook Orientation Training alone is insufficient for encouraging teachers to make a shift from the tradition of teacher-centred teaching to child-centred teaching methods. Furthermore, the lack of teaching-learning materials, the absence of teacher support, the large class size, and the double-shift classes, leaving very little time for co-curricular activities, make it even more difficult for such a shift to occur. Against this background, it is no surprise that contact time is low, teachers' attendance irregular and accountability of the school towards the community and vice versa unsatisfactory. These all contribute to rather low learning achievement of the children.

There are a substantial number of over-crowded schools and temporary buildings used for primary education. Nationally, a third of 49,000 schoolrooms are made out of wood and around a quarter have reported building defects. Around 3,300 schools (65% of total) operate a double shift and 108 schools operate a triple shift. This pattern represents a significant barrier to access, but also to incentives to attend school regularly and to receive adequate hours of instruction.

Despite substantial efforts in recent years, rehabilitation of facilities is far from complete. MoEYS surveys indicate that 11% of schools are without desks and 6% have no blackboards. The problem is more acute in rural and remote areas, where almost one-fifth of remote schools are without desks. In addition, 15% of schools have no roofs and 24% have no walls, with rural and remote schools most under-served. It is estimated that some 2,470 primary schools do not offer a full grade range, representing 47% of schools. Most of these schools are located in rural or remote areas, and analysis shows that the promotion rates in these incomplete schools is significantly lower than the schools that offer the full grade range.

With donor assistance, the availability of textbooks is improving at the secondary level. For example, since 1996/97 textbooks for Grades VII-IX are being provided on a one book per student per subject basis. This is in contrast to the mid-1990s, when the average was one book per 5-10 students. In the longer-term, this should enhance quality, subject to efforts to ensure that students and teachers use these additional resources effectively (e.g. through teacher orientation programmes). Presently, there is little information available on the impact of increased textbook access. A number of other key inputs for assuring secondary education quality are limited. For example, of the 490 schools only 27 (around 6%) have a science laboratory. Only 200 schools (roughly 40%) have a school library. Clearly, it is difficult to implement an effective science curriculum, including practical work without such facilities. Equally, the absence of a school library undermines opportunities for self-study, which represents a major constraint given the often-low instructional hours for students.

The Higher Education Taskforce Report (1998) highlighted the shortage of instructional materials, the variable qualifications and experience of university teaching staff and the very limited spending on key determinants of quality (e.g. textbooks, library materials, curriculum and staff development). Many institutions



rely heavily on external assistance for both staff salary supplements and operational budget support. Monitoring of student and teacher attendance is under-developed and as a consequence, assuring instructional time is difficult.

Adult and non-formal education

The Royal Government of Cambodia considers non-formal education (NFE) as an official education system, the same as the formal education system, and an important factor that contributes to human resource development as well as the development of the country. The strategy of the NFE policy is defined as follows:

- Creating opportunities so that all people have access to lifelong learning.
- Promoting literacy and continuing education by creating links, which provide credit, employment and vocational skills so that the population can live in happiness.
- Regularly providing information and knowledge about vocational skill training and technical and scientific subjects to everybody.

NFE activities are arranged flexibly (as complementary, semi-complementary, part-time, self-study, distance learning etc.), and the curriculum is mandated to include the following components listed below:

- Literacy and vocational skill training
- Continuing Education including:
 - Post literacy
 - Equivalency
 - Quality of life improvement, especially hygiene, HIV/AIDS prevention, gender, culture, peace, morality and civics in everyday life.
 - Income generation: such as agriculture, services, handicrafts and small business, provide credit...
- Family education for early childhood development.
- Re-entry programme for primary school dropouts so they have the capacity to go back to public school.

In order to support this policy effectively, the Royal Government has allocated a proper separate expenditure line so that NFE work can develop. The MoEYS must find all means for available funds and technical assistance for developing NFE work and encourage the participation in terms of materials, budget and technical assistance from national and international organisations, non-governmental organisations, the community, the private sector or benefactors in order to mobilise resources for NFE work.

The estimated literacy levels in Cambodia vary, depending on the survey methodology and on the definition of literacy. Based on 1998 census data and previous demographic surveys, overall adult literacy levels have increased from 58% in 1990 (40% for females) to 68% in 1998 (58% for females).

According to a recent UNESCO-UNDP literacy survey (2000) estimate, 36% of the population (or about 2.4 million adults) is illiterate and 27% are only semi-



illiterate (1.7 million adults). This means that only 36% of the population is literate in terms of being able to use their literacy skills for everyday life and income generation. In other words, around 4 million adults are currently in need of literacy training provision.

Current access and coverage of adult literacy classes is limited. At present, around 30,500 adults (76% women) are enrolled in Government-sponsored classes. NGO and donor supported literacy programmes reach around 20,000 students (74% women). In other words, only 2% of the totally illiterate adult population is currently being reached. On the positive side, three-quarters of participants are women, consistent with broad priorities.

The selection criteria for the programmes vary, including on-demand, female head of households, out-of-school youth and links with micro-credit and other rural income generating activities. In broad terms, the geographical targeting of the programme is broadly in line with areas in the country with lower literacy rates. In some instances, primary schools and pre-schools are used, alongside community centers, especially in the rural areas, where many schools operate only a single shift. There appears to be significant scope for the use of schools in early mornings, afternoons and evenings for any expansion of provision. In order to assure easy access and remove potential access barriers, the timetabling of the programmes is critical, taking account of participants' domestic and work patterns.

For the government-supported programmes, it is reported that around 55% of learners acquire functional literacy. For the NGO programmes, the figure is 45%, although the success criteria may vary. The success rate amongst women is only 48% compared to 61% for men. The reasons for this are unclear, but may include a higher commitment amongst males and difficulties for regular attendance by women because of domestic duties. A key consideration for assuring enrolment growth, regular attendance and programme effectiveness will be to build appropriate incentives (e.g. literacy as a credential for accessing micro credit schemes) into programme design.

Literacy programmes normally last six months. Literacy materials are reportedly well designed, with significant donor/NGO support over the past ten years. The literacy trainers are mainly retired primary school teachers or other better-educated members of local communities. Programmes usually include teacher orientation for teaching literacy and on-the-job follow up by specially trained support staff.

Little information is available on the effectiveness and impact of literacy programmes. Many of them have objectives that include income generation, improved school attendance, improved family health and nutrition and greater awareness of family planning techniques.

The role of the Department of Non-Formal Education (NFE) is broad, including policy planning, involvement in programme design, management and administration of the literacy programmes and some monitoring activity. A large proportion of NFE staff time both at the central level and in the provinces is reportedly devoted to programme management and administration. The time devoted



to quality control and impact monitoring of both MoEYS and NGO managed programmes appears to be limited.

The financing of literacy programmes is currently very heavily reliant on NGO/donor support. It is estimated that, over the 1994–1999 period, Government spending on literacy and other non-formal programmes amounted to about Riels 9.5 billion, or US\$2.3 million. Over the same period, external assistance amounted to an indicative figure of US\$5 million.

The main priority is to expand adult literacy classes, especially for disadvantaged groups and in under-served areas. A fundamental strategic priority is to reassess the role of the Ministry of Education in non-formal/literacy education. There is a strong argument for shifting the primary responsibilities of the NFE Department away from programme management and delivery towards policy development, strategic planning and monitoring. Key measures could include: (a) building up an NFE information system that maps poverty indicators, education access indicators and literacy rates as a basis for program targeting and planning; (b) strengthening the capabilities of headquarters and provincial NFE staff in quality assurance and progress and impact monitoring; and (c) strengthening capacity in literacy curriculum and programme screening, including the potential cost implications.

An associated strategic consideration is to review the NGO/community and public partnership in NFE. There is a good case for the main provider role shifting towards the NGO/community group, with the MoEYS adopting a monitoring role. One institutional option could be the setting up of a local NGO Consortium for Non-Formal Education, with responsibility for the day-to-day planning and management of literacy programmes.

The medium-term financing of literacy programmes is a pressing issue. Direct user charges do not appear feasible since a large proportion of the target groups are from the poorest communities. Strategic options include: (a) recurrent budget support for program delivery from donors/NGOs; (b) increased recurrent funding from the Government; and (c) incorporation of literacy programme costs into existing or new micro-credit loan programmes to the rural poor.

As Education for All access and quality targets are increasingly being met, the demand for non-formal education should accordingly decline. Consequently, the case for government financing of literacy programmes becomes less strong. In the medium-term, an associated NFE strategic priority should be to expand Grade IV and Grade VII re-entry programmes for school dropouts to enable them to rejoin mainstream education provision.

Teaching staff

A key component of improved resource management is effective deployment of the education service, especially primary and secondary school teachers. Currently, there are some 45,000 primary school teachers and around 17,500 secondary school teachers. In addition, there are about 10,000 non-teaching staff workers in schools. These are supplemented by some 3,100 education staff in provincial and district



education offices. The number of pre-school teachers is 4,395; 3,027 in formal pre-schools, 920 in community pre-schools and 448 in private pre-schools (2004/2005).

At present, teacher education provision consists of 18 primary education teacher-training colleges (PTTCs), six regional teacher-training colleges (RTTCs), which train Grades VII–IX teachers (both offering a two-year programme), and a one-year post-graduate programme at the Faculty of Pedagogy training upper secondary school teachers. Admission is increasingly based on completion of Grade XII (in the past there was some discretion on Grade IX completion as an admission credential). The enrolment is about 5,900 at PTTCs, 2,250 at RTTCs and 400 at the Faculty of Pedagogy. PTTCs and RTTCs have an annual graduate output of around 2,950 and 1,000 students, respectively. The students-teacher ratios are on average 17:1 and 12:1 in PTTCs and RTTCs, respectively. The Faculty has an output of around 400 students per year. In addition, the majority of primary school teachers have had access to a nationwide, distance learning, in-service programme, financed with donor support over the 1995–2000 period.

Progression rates in the teacher-training colleges are high. The combined rate of repetition and dropout is reasonably low, averaging around 4% in 1999. Student performance assessment is generally well regulated and students have opportunities to re-sit examinations.

One concern is the highly academic nature of the teacher-training curriculum. A large proportion of time is spent on academic upgrading as opposed to teaching methodology and in-school teaching practice. The recent location of a model primary school close to the colleges is reported to be an improvement. Nevertheless, the opportunity to increase the methodology component, as academic entry requirements have been raised, has not been fully grasped. The average number of instructional periods per week is set at 32 core periods plus six extension periods, which is considerably higher than many secondary schools.

The current curriculum and output from the PTTCs and RTTCs is not particularly responsive to emerging requirements. The PTTC programme does not include training opportunities for teaching or managing multi-grade or ethnic minority classes. The RTTC and Faculty of Pedagogy programmes perceive their mission as the training of single subject specialists, which undermines a more flexible deployment of staff, especially in secondary schools. The tradition of graduate teachers being trained for teaching only upper secondary classes also undermines the efficient deployment of newly trained teachers. The provision for the training of teachers of more practical subjects (i.e. foreign languages, industrial arts, art and craft, science) is rudimentary or non-existent.

The Ministry of Education (MoEYS) has a set of staffing guidelines for schools, which in principle form the basis for staff deployment. A survey (November 1999) indicated that these guidelines are not being used effectively to deploy staff. For example, using the MoEYS norms, there is a shortage of around 12,000 primary school teachers and 4,500 non-teaching staff. In contrast, there is an excess of around 3,400 lower secondary school teachers and 170 upper secondary school teachers. There is also an excess of around 2,100 non-teaching staff in secondary schools.



Efficient staff deployment, especially in secondary schools, is constrained by subject specialization and variable teaching loads. The broad MoEYS guideline is teacher workload of 18–20 hours per week. A 1999 survey indicated that the average workload for lower secondary teachers (Grades VII–IX schools) was only 14 hours per week. In upper secondary schools (Grades X–XII), the figure was 13.8 hours. In contrast, the workload in consolidated schools (Grades VII–XII) increased to 17.7 hours per week. Clearly, the larger schools provide greater opportunities for economies of scale and the more efficient use of teachers for their specialist subjects. A key policy issue is therefore to set agreed standards for teacher workloads and ensure their enforcement.

The survey also showed significant variation in the matching of staff deployment with their specialist subjects. For example, if a teacher of Khmer taught only Khmer classes, the matching rate would be 100%. In other words, the match is a measure of efficient internal specialist staff deployment. There was substantial variation by subject with the lowest matching rates of 5–20% in the vocational subjects. Foreign languages have comparatively low matching rates at around 30% in lower secondary, rising to around 45% in upper secondary education. The core subjects (e.g. mathematics, Khmer language, sciences) generally had matching rates of around 85–95%. A key measure will therefore be to ensure that secondary teacher training produces multi-subject specialists rather than single subject specialists in order to optimise use of such staff.

The proposed primary and secondary education expansion over the next 5–10 years provides some impetus for more efficient staff deployment. Based on current enrolment growth scenarios, the total staff requirement will grow from around 73,000 school-based staff to around 103,000 by 2005. Clearly, this will put significant pressure on education budgets. A first option should therefore optimise redeployment of non-teaching staff back to the classroom over the period 2001–2005.

The proposals for rationalization of provincial or district education administrations and teaching/non-teaching staff need to take account of other considerations, especially the potential impact of greater decentralization of education service management. For example, the proposed enhanced monitoring role for provinces and districts will have to be taken into account (e.g. use of schools' inspectors).

There is a growing support for increased delegation of education personnel management to district education authorities in order to allow adaptation on a case-by-case basis. The role of the central administration should be to set effective staff deployment guidelines against agreed levels of service provision, leaving it to lower levels of the system to implement them accordingly. It needs to be recognized that if personnel management functions are delegated downwards, urgent capacity building in these functions will be needed, including appropriate staff deployment, personnel information systems and relevant training.

The salary scales and career progressions are comparatively compressed towards the lower end of the scale, with large numbers of non-graduate primary school teachers. Currently, there is only a very limited career path and promotion prospects. For example, school directors are not paid additional responsibility



allowances for management responsibilities. In addition, there are only limited and insufficient incentives for posting qualified teachers to work in remote areas and schools in difficult circumstances.

The MoEYS strategy is to gradually grant a higher degree of operational autonomy to the PTTCs and RTTCs. As part of this programme, there is currently donor support for PTTC and RTTC operational budget provision and management by institutional heads. The central Teacher-Training Department (TTD) has been active in formulating a forward-looking teacher education strategic plan and programme for 2001-2005. The overall direction of the programme is responsive to the requirements of primary and secondary education expansion. However, the limitations of the plan are illustrative of a number of difficulties in coordinating teacher supply/demand planning and staff deployment. The current supply/demand planning arrangements are best characterized as highly centralized, making it difficult for provincial authorities and training colleges to be more responsive to local circumstances.

Another strategy for improving the responsiveness to local circumstances and changing demands of the education system is to make use of PTTCs, RTTCs and the Faculty of Pedagogy for in-service training, especially during the vacation period. Up until the mid/late 1990s, RTTCs were used for this purpose, including for foreign language training. Currently, the in-service provision is focused on orientation programmes for the new textbooks and curriculum. Nevertheless, there is significant scope for expansion of a well-planned and resourced in-service programme, even using local secondary schools as a strategy for responding quickly and efficiently to changing education service demands.

In order to achieve the proposed enrolment growth, a critical requirement is to increase the number of trained teachers at all levels. Taking into account attrition rates and additional posts needed, it is projected that by 2005 an additional 11,500 trained primary school teachers will be needed. For lower and upper secondary education, the figures are 23,000 and 8,400 respectively.

The fundamental strategic priority for teacher education is therefore to strengthen teacher supply/demand planning, in consultation with central and provincial personnel departments. In the short term, some breathing space for additional trained teacher output can be achieved by massive redeployment of non-teaching staff back to the classroom. Key measures for meeting these teacher development demands will include: (i) a well-planned programme of the teacher qualified, non-teaching staff back to the classroom, possibly linked to very short refresher courses; (ii) increasing the capacity of the system to generate additional trained secondary school teachers; and (iii) reforming the current teacher-training college programmes to produce multi-skilled teachers that will help optimise flexible staff deployment within schools, especially across Grades VII–XII.

Some additional teacher development strategic options that are being considered by the Ministry include: (a) revising the PTTC curriculum in order to define a training programme for Grades I–IX teachers; (b) reducing the duration of in-college training programmes of RTTCs (and possibly PTTCs) from two years to one year, linked to a supervised school-based programme for the second year of training, (c) posting of new university graduates directly to secondary schools linked to a short



pre-service orientation programme and in-school supervised teacher training; and (d) expansion of the staff and facilities in PTTCs, RTTCs and the Faculty of Pedagogy. The strengths of options (a), (b), and (c) are that they will provide a quicker response to rapidly growing teacher requirements. The potential disadvantage, especially if the in-school component is not effectively managed, could be a decline in teacher performance. The advantage of option (d) is that the reforms would be minimal and less likely to meet resistance. The clear disadvantage of option (d) could be large increases in both recurrent and capital expenditure on teacher development, although there may be scope for using existing staff and facilities more efficiently.

Another strategic priority is to increase the planning and operational autonomy of teacher-training colleges and the Faculty of Pedagogy, taking account of the varying teacher requirements across the provinces. Key measures could include: (a) an annual planning exercise between headquarters, provincial education offices and teacher-training colleges to set targets and budget requirements; (b) the delegated management of operational budgets to teacher-training colleges, linked to appropriate guidelines; (c) capacity building for headquarters, provinces and institutional managers in technical and financial planning/management; and (d) granting authority to colleges to raise additional revenues through in-service programmes (e.g. refresher courses, multi-grade courses, training multi-subject teachers), possibly on a competitive basis.

Educational research and information

Information is not available.

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Web resources

Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport: <http://www.moeys.gov.kh/> [In Khmer and English. Last checked: October 2007.]

For updated links, consult the Web page of the International Bureau of Education of UNESCO: <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/links.htm>