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“EDUCATION FOR ALL” MID-DECADE ASSESSMENT REPORT

2000-2006

Islamic Republic of Iran



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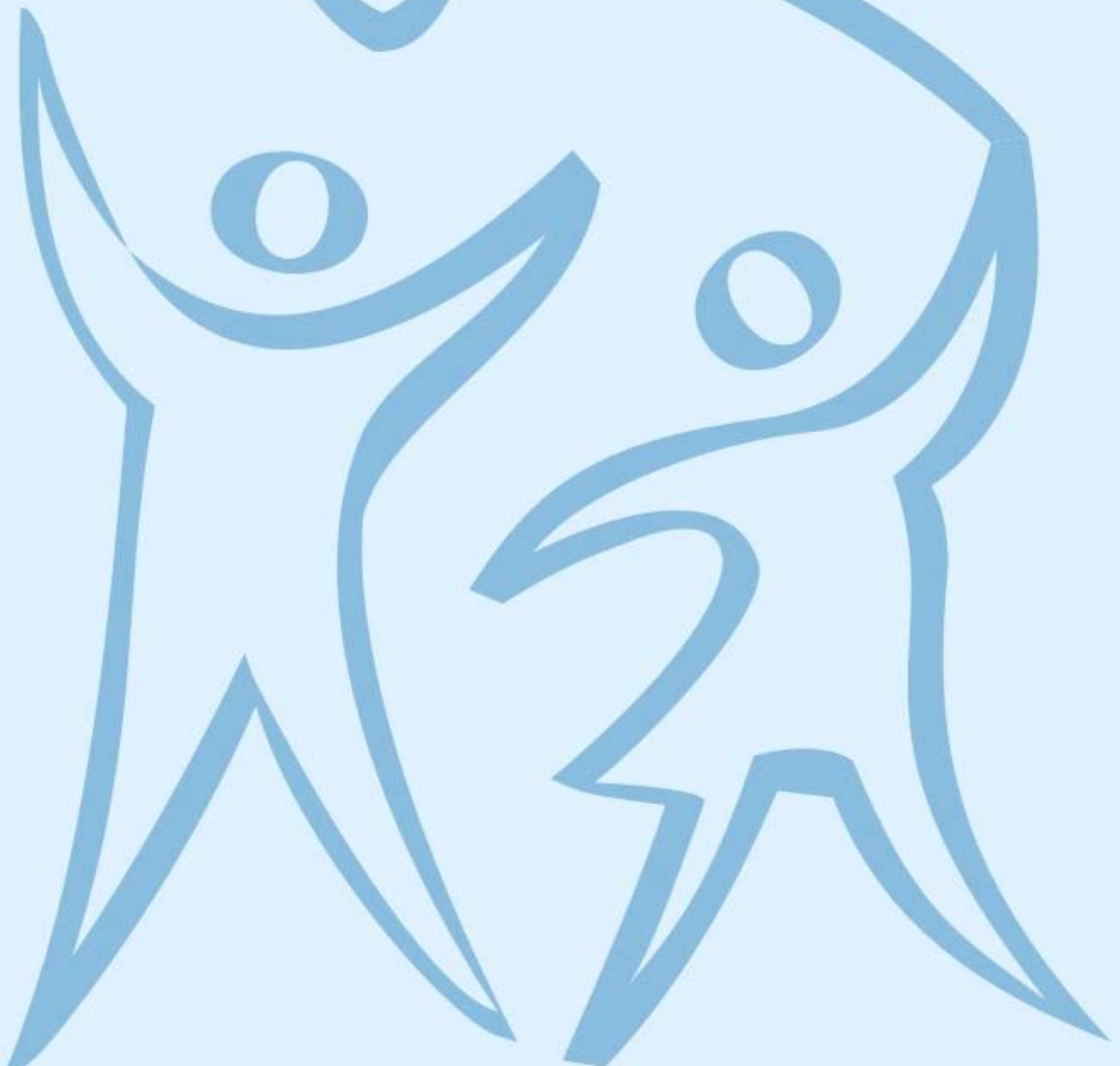


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Ali Bagherzadeh

Deputy Minister for General Education

Manager of EFA Plan Mid-Decade Assessment Report Project

Foreword

Pursuant to adoption of EFA Plan as a universal manifesto in 2000, all countries throughout the world committed themselves to sequence its goals. In Islamic Republic of Iran, in unanimity with international community and as a result of close affinity between goals of the approved plan and the aspirations of education system, a variety of policies have been adopted and pursued within cycle of educational planning to reach the goals of the plan. It should be noted that in the process of planning for education, the heavy reliance was placed on expert potentials and competencies available in the Ministry of Education. Also, due to the importance of the plan and its link with predicted goals of education system, EFA Plan was launched as a part of country's development planning system and required path-breaking measures were initiated to develop action plans and budgeting system. Therefore, EFA Plan was incorporated within the context of other national development plans and its orientations have been seriously followed up by education system.

All UNESCO member countries were urged to undertake the responsibility of adopting a national action plan for implementation of EFA Plan in compliance with their own educational and administrative systems and to carry out a national monitoring and assessment on achieving goals set in line with EFA general goals in an annual basis. Furthermore, UNESCO keeps an eye on fulfillment of EFA Plan within the context of its monitoring body specially UNESCO Tehran Cluster Office which we thank warmly for its continued support and contribution. This report features a comprehensive study on the process and progress of indicators specified in the plan within the past 7 years. It consists of two parts of thematic and statistical accounts. Thematic report deals with issues about the plan, its establishment, performance, and extent of realization of 6 goals in the form of main indicators. Statistical report is an aggregation of information based on Mid Decade Assessment model.

A brief study on national progress of EFA Plan shows a growing trend in the course of past 7 years. The achievements are indebted to supportive policies and the overall circumstances of education system that put the stress on realization of goals in the 3rd and 4th Economic, Social & Cultural Development Plans, leading to an increase of enrolment rate, enhancement of quality education, level of health and hygiene in educational environments, and improvement of educational syllabi and teaching methods.

This report has been developed in three chapters based on the model adopted by UNESCO Regional Office for Asia & the Pacific and the support of UNESCO Tehran Cluster Office. Chapter 1 is an analysis on historical, economic, social and educational state of the country. Chapter 2 includes a thematic report and a study on implementation of the plan for each six goals separately as well as education of children with special needs. Chapter 3 is a wrap up of discussions on this report.

The feedbacks of studies reveal a growth of all indicators during the period 2000-2006. For instance, the net intake rate of 92.8% in 2000 has reached 95.3% in 2006. The increase of transition rate (primary to lower secondary) from 94.11% to 97.4% and increase of survival rate (primary first to fifth grade) from 76.3% to 80.4% are some of the achievements illustrated in this report. Based on findings of this paper, literacy rate of population aged 15-24 has augmented from 94.33% to 96.65% and literacy rate of group aged 15 and over has reached from 76.52% to 82.33%. On the whole, most of other key indicators have increased during the past years, which are elaborated in Chapter 2, where the goals have been analyzed at national and provincial levels.

Ministry of Education

Introduction

In I.R. of Iran, EFA Plan is not only regarded as an international commitment, but it is high on agenda of education system of the country due to its coincidence with adoption of long-term National Outlook Plan of Development. This report, which was developed in the trust of national expertise and considering priorities of educational requirements, provided a road map that specifies timetables for national development achievements and the role that should be played by education system, besides timely identifying strong and weak points.

This report, the first assessment on implementation of EFA Plan, includes important facts and figures on executive issues of education sector development programs and the efficiency of policies during the previous years within the context of EFA National Plan and general policies of Ministry of Education. The aggregated information is a reference for future approaches and guidance to more enhancement of education sector. Meanwhile, on the threshold of adopting the Fifth Economic, Social & Cultural Development Plan, the information of this report, as a key basis of development trend of education system during the past 7 years, would highly back up future analysis and predictions.

This report, which is a genuine and sincere co-working of all experts in the "Ministry of Education" and "General and Technical & Vocational Education Department of Vice-President for Strategic Planning & Supervision", has reviewed and examined information on performance of education system in terms of EFA Plan during the period 2000-2006. It has been developed in a way that information could be put into practice by education policymakers and analytical model introduced by this report is a headway for accomplishment of provincial and districts analysis that should be enforced by education departments in provinces.

Although the authors of this account have focused on developing a methodical and comprehensive document, the next versions of the report would be enriched by valuable technical viewpoints of the concerned experts. We warmly welcome expert recommendations and critiques.

Ali Bagherzadeh

Deputy Minister for General Education

Manager of EFA Plan Mid-Decade Assessment Report Project



Chapter 1

GENERALITIES



1- A Review on Historical, Geographical Cultural, Political, Economic & Social Status and National Level of Development in Iran

Historical, Geographical, Cultural (Religion/Language), Political, Economic, Social Status in Iran

■ Historical Climate

Islamic Republic of Iran, located in the Middle East with a history of more than two thousand years, came into existence with the Median Empire and developed with the Achaemenian Kingdom. The latter initiated a ruler-ship based on firm principles of religious and lawful harmony and tolerance in terms of social justice and introduced a new model of governance to the whole world. Upon conquest by Alexander and historic battles, Iran witnessed the emergence of Sassanid Dynasty that continued up to the advent of Islam in the country. Iranians adhered to Islam as a redemptive faith. Persian language flourished with lots of Arabic words and Persian poetry was enriched with Arabic prosody. Few nations are endowed with a variety of magnificent works as beautiful as Persian poetry and poets such as Ferdowsi, Roudaki, Sa'di, Hafiz, Moulavi, Khayyam and many other eloquent writers.

During Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries, Iran was invaded by the Mongol which led to the outbreak of civil war; however, in Sixteenth Century, Iran regained its glory of Achaemenian and Sassanid period. During Safavid Dynasty, Iran recovered its integrated political, cultural and religious climate. Shah Esmaeil Safavi founded Safavid Dynasty and Shah Abbas brought glory and splendor to its rule. In mid-eighteenth century and during reign of Nader Shah, Iranian government had established even more supremacy than Safavid Kingdom. The succeeding Iranian governments emerged one after the other until Qajar Dynasty came to power; but since it was not a capable adversary for Russia and other colonial powers its rule declined by 1920, when Reza Shah grasped the power and laid the foundation of a new dynasty. He launched the so-called western reforms, succeeded by Mohammad Reza Pahlavi who followed his father's path. Finally, in February 11, 1979, by triumph of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, led by Imam Khomeini, Pahlavi Dynasty was ended after 50 years of rule. Now, 30 years after victorious revolution, Iran has witnessed three decades of political, social, cultural and economic developments, some of which are pondered hereafter.

■ Geographical Climate

Islamic Republic of Iran with a surface area of more than 1,648 thousand Sq.km in the southern hemisphere, north temperate zone between 25 to 29 degrees 47 minutes of north latitude of the equator and from 44 degrees 2 minutes to 63 degrees 20 minutes of north longitude from Greenwich Prime Meridian.

Iran average height is more than 1,200 m. above sea level. The lowest zone is 56 m. of height in Chaleh Loot and the highest zone is Damavand Summit with 5,610 m. height in the Mouth of Alborz at the outskirts of Tehran (the capital). The southern coastal line of the Caspian Sea is 28 m. lower the sea level. Its geographical boundaries are stretched in the north and east hemisphere and in southwest of Asia, in the Middle East. Iran's neighbors are Turkmenistan Republic, Caspian Sea, Republic of Azarbayjan and Armenia in the north, Afghanistan and Pakistan in the east, Sea of Oman and Persian Gulf in the south and Turkey and Iraq in the west.

Iran has 30 provinces, 336 cities, 889 districts, 1016 towns and 2400 rural districts and about 62,000 villages.

Hereunder, the map of Iran with its country divisions and international boundaries is illustrated.



▣ Population

The 2006 national census recorded a population of 70.5 million people for Iran, about 50.7% of which are men and 49.2% women, with a 103% gender ratio. 68.4% are city dwellers, and 31.6% live in villages. The population growth rate had been 1.4% within the past decade. This rate was 3.2% during 1976-86 and it decreased to 1.47% during 1986-96. The irregular population growth within the first decade of post Islamic Revolution era is considered a barrier to social progress and development. Therefore, determined efforts have been made during the past decade to decrease this rate. During 2000 to 2006, the population of Iran grew from 64.2 to 70.5 million, i.e. an average increase of about one million people each year.

Within the last decade, the urban population growth rate was about 2.5%, whereas the rural population showed a negative growth rate of 1.8% due to immigration and transformation of rural fabric, so as the 61.3% city residents of the year 1996 reached up to 68.4% in 2006.

Urban/Rural Population of Iran (2000-2006)

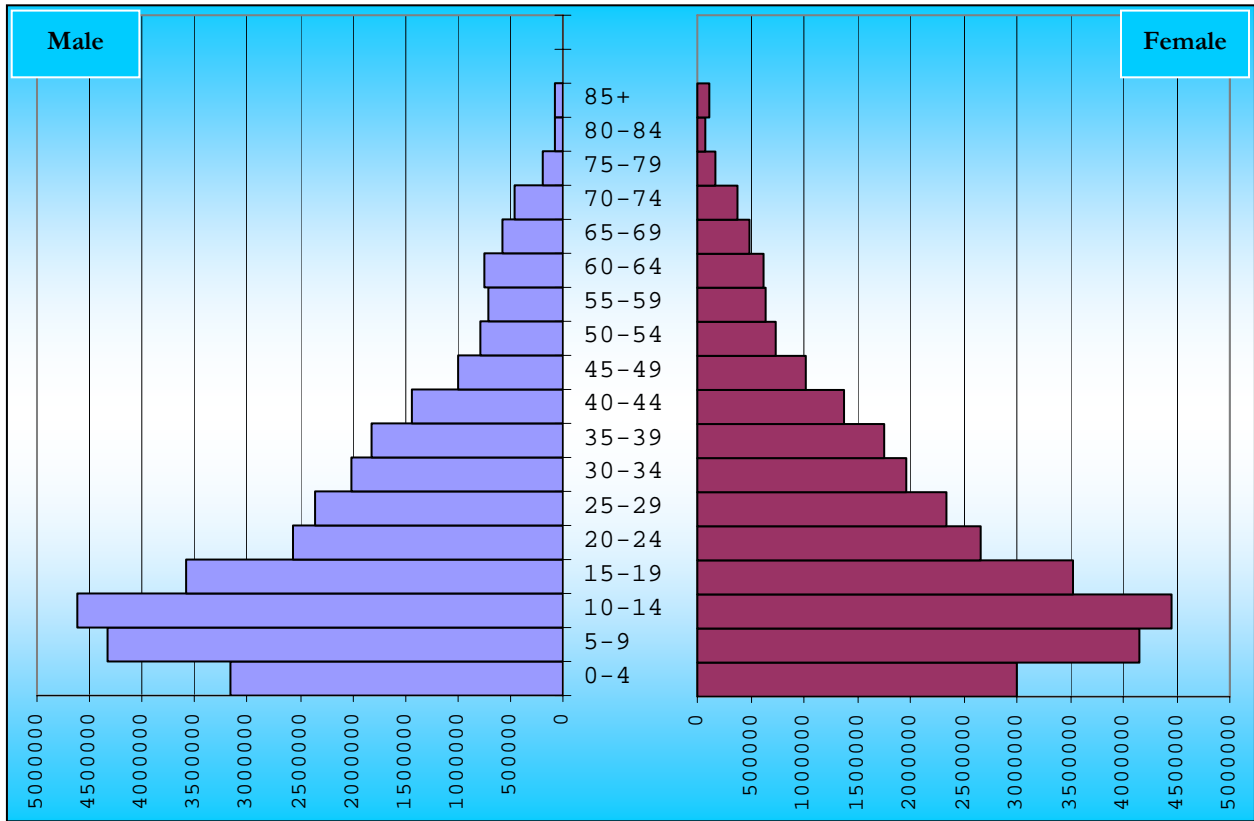
Category	Unit	1996	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Total population	Thousand people	60055	64211	65388	66416	67325	68449	69490	70496
Urban population	Thousand people	36818	41387	42556	43670	44795	45929	47074	48260
Rural population	Thousand people	23237	22924	22832	22746	22630	22520	22416	22236
Total population growth	%	1.47	1.6	1.8	1.6	1.4	1.6	1.5	1.4
Urban population growth	%	1.5	1.3	2.8	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5
Rural population growth	%	2	-1.5	-1.5	-1.4	-1.5	-1.5	-1.5	-1.8
% of Urban population	%	61.3	64.5	65	65.7	66.5	67	67.7	68.4
% of Rural population	%	38.7	35.5	35	34.3	33.5	33	32.3	31.6

Population & percentage of Age Group (1986-2006)

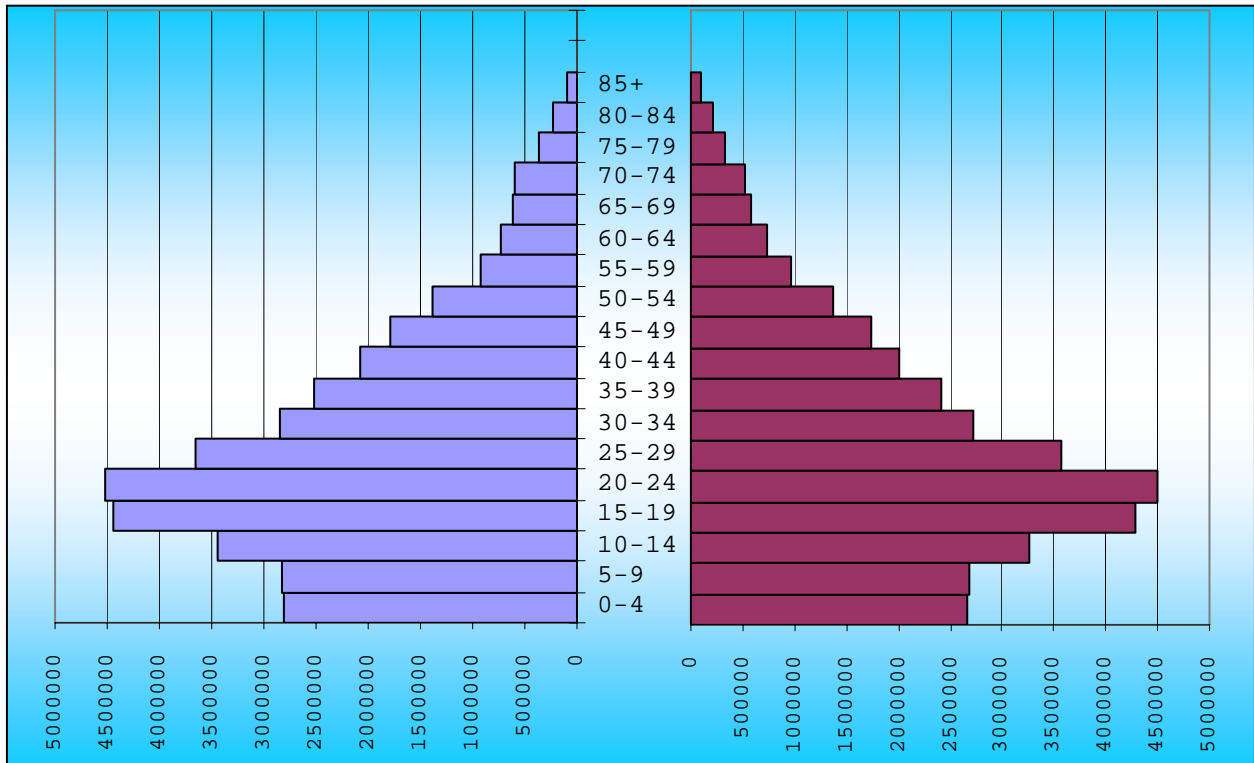
Year	Total Population (in million)	Annual Average Growth	Age Group 0-14	Age Group 15-64	Age Group 65 and over
1986	49.4	3.9	45.4	51.5	3.1
1996	60	1.47	39.5	56.1	4.37
2006	70.5	1.4	25	69.8	5.2

Population Pyramidal Chart of Iran during 1996 -2006

Year 1996



Year 2006



▣ Cultural/ Political Climate

Islamic Republic of Iran enjoys an ancient culture and civilization in which Iranian-Islamic identity was manifested upon the advent of Islam. Iranians are wonderfully endowed with cultural innovative and creative approaches. Ancient traditions are sustainable up to the present time, in such a way that they are still alive and practiced in most cultural aspects of national life. In the Tenth Century, Safavid rule was established with Shiite believers and continued until the foundation of Islamic Republic of Iran by Imam Khomeini in 1979. Due to the Islamic nature of administration, the legislative power is based on Islamic law.

According to the latest census of 2006, 99.43% of Iranian populations are Muslim, 0.16% Christian, 0.03% Zoroastrian, 0.01% Jewish and 0.37% are followers of other sects.

Persian is official language; however, Azari, Kurdish, Arabic and other languages are spoken by people of certain provinces. The government of Iran is Islamic Republic, founded through 1979 Referendum by a decisive majority of votes (98.2%). The supreme authority is the Religious Jurisprudent and the President is the head of government. The country constitutes of three Executive, Legislative and Judiciary Powers. The president and members of parliament are elected by people's vote for a period of 4 years.

▣ Economic Climate

The economy of country is studied through economic variables and macro indicators such as GDP, economic growth, per capita GDP, government national budget and its share in GDP, as well as other macro variables including unemployment rate, inflation rate, investment, national savings and relevant factors.

A- Gross Domestic Production

The GDP of country increased from 574,693 billion Rls. in 2000 (Third Development Plan of I.R. of Iran 2000-2004) up to 2,038,432 billion Rls. in 2006 with an average growth rate of 5.5% during the Third Development Plan. The economic growth rate has been 5.4% and 6.2% during 2004 and 2005 respectively. The per capita production mounted from 8,976 thousand Rls. in 2000 up to 28,916 thousand Rls. in 2006 with an average growth rate of 21.53% per annum.

Considering foreign currency parity rate, the per capita production augmented from US\$ 1,096 during 2000-2006 up to US\$ 3,198, i.e. three times as much.

Since within the same period, the GDP development has exceeded population growth rate on an average basis, the per capita development has also tripled, what implies improvement of economic welfare and capacities.

GDP & Economic Growth in Iran (2000-2006)

	Tile	Unit	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
1	GDP(at current price)	Billion Rls	574693	664620	917036	1095304	1384819	1687905	2038432
2	GDP(at fixed price of 1997)	%	320069	330565	355554	379838	398234	419706	445790
3	Economic Growth	%	4.9	3.3	7.5	6.8	4.8	5.4	6.2
4	Population	In Thousand	64219	65301	66300	67315	68345	69390	70496
5	Per capita GDP	Billion Rls	8976985	10177792	13831613	16271321	20262184	23324902	28915569
6	US Dollar Rate	US\$	8190	8009	8019	8325	8719	9026	9042
7	GDP (per capita US\$)	US\$	1096	1271	1725	1954	2324	2584	3198

The share of economic sectors in production and economic growth during this period is as follows:

Agricultural sector was responsible for about 13.8% of production. The share of industry and mine sector has been about 24% of production, oil and gas sector's share equal to 112% and the highest share belongs to service sector with a rate of about 51%. Also the ratio of fixed capital formation has been about 28% during the Third Development Plan (2000-2004) against 72% of personal consumption expenditures of which 10% is estimated as government consumption expenditures. Furthermore, the ratio of gross fixed capital formation to GDP increased from about 30% in the Third Development Plan (2000-2004) up to 35.7%, showing a rather favorable growth; the same ratio has been 35.7% and 36.2% in 2004 and 2005 respectively.

B- Government National Budget

Government budget, as the most important and comprehensive annual financial program, is a key instrument for implementation of monetary policies. The government plays both a direct and an indirect role in the national economy. The direct impact on economic growth is accomplished through supplying public goods and services including education, research, health care, social security, infrastructure and renovation, transportation and communication, which complement and lay the ground for presence of private sector. Its indirect role is practiced through boosting final product of private investment that provides required incentives for increasing investments and government expenditures supplement private investment.

Based on international standard classification of Government Finance Statistics (GFS), the government budget falls into categories of expenditure credits, (current credits)- ownership of capital assets (development credits) and financial assets ownership. The government national budget shows an average growth of 29.8% during 2000-2006, i.e. approximately 4.8 times as much within a period of six years. The ratio of current expenditures was 68%, development credits for 22% and about 10% for other expenditures. On the whole, government national budget constitutes 25% of GDP.

Within the past three decades, revenues from petroleum export had been a major resource of ensuring government budget. During 1981 to 2005, an average 47.2% of government's annual incomes have come from sales of crude oil, while national oil industry provides indirect income resources for the government. As a result, government reliance on petroleum supply was about 55%. Tax revenues amounted to about 26% of resources, and about 19% for other resources. Also, tax collections comprise 6% of the GDP.

Share of Tax & Non-Tax Incomes to Total Government National Budget

Resource \ Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Oil & Gas	55	58	44	48	62.5	54.3
Tax	33.5	32.5	22	25	25.7	28.5
Other Resources	11.5	9.5	34	27	11.8	17.2

Government National Budget
Categorized for Expenditure Credits- Capital & Financial Assets Ownership and Ratio to GDP

	Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
1	Government National Budget	124796	156394	262950	276172	335693	470989	597743
2	Expenditure Credits	85865	105272	147572	178255	231923	330884	407512
3	Capital Assets Ownership Credits	22451	24910	52776	73780	72306	117638	176147
4	Financial Assets Ownership Credits	16480	26212	62602	24137	31464	22467	14084
5	Ratio of Expenditure Credits to Total	68.8	67.3	56.1	64.5	69.1	70.2	68.2
6	Ratio of Capital Assets Ownership Credits to Total	18	15.9	20	26.7	21.5	25	29.5
7	Ratio of Financial Assets Ownership Credits to Total	13.2	16.8	23.9	8.8	9.4	4.8	2.3
8	GDP	574693	664620	917036	1095304	1384819	1687905	2038432
9	Ratio of Government National Budget to GDP	21.7	23.5	28.6	25.2	24.2	27.9	29.3
10	Government National Budget Annual Growth (%)	16.2	25.3	68.1	5	21.5	40.3	26.9
11	Growth in Expenditure Credits	26.2	22.6	40.2	20.8	30.1	42.7	23.2
12	Growth in Capital Assets	-17.5	10.9	111.8	39.8	-2	62.7	49.7
13	Growth in Credits of Financial Assets Ownership	----	59	138.8	-61.4	30.3	-28.6	-37.3

▣ Social Climate

The indicators of social welfare and income distribution, supportive measures, welfare facilities and social security in particular, and improvement of public welfare in general illustrate social climate of the country.

Social welfare developments are analyzed by Social Welfare Indicator. The figure of SWI has increased from 2,439 to 3,289 during the years 2000-2004 in terms of annual income increase and enhancing income distribution system. The SWI shows 5.8% of annual growth rate. Also, the ratio of the highest income deciles (the richest) to the lowest income deciles (the poorest) within the period of 2000-2004 records the figure 16.8, i.e. an annual 2.8% reduction rate.

The indicator diminished with 1.5% average rate in urban areas and 3.3% annual rate in rural communities. The ratio of the share of 20% wealthy social classes to 20% of low-income groups has increased from 10.1 in 2000 down to 9 in 2004. The Gini Coefficient has also shifted from about 0.43 to 0.417 during the same period. The variation trend is as follows:

Gini Coefficient during 2000-2004

Category	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Total	0.43	0.425	0.42	0.41	0.423	0.417
Urban	0.404	0.41	0.402	0.402	0.386	0.394
Rural	0.427	0.415	0.425	0.423	0.425	0.425

Source: Statistics Center of Iran

Some programs by Welfare Organization cover about 4.6 million people, such as organizing chronic mental patients and homeless children, conducting necessary trainings to prevent social harms and to reduce demand for illicit drugs and narcotics, supporting underprivileged households through constant financial, social and cultural assistance. Furthermore, health insurance supports 93.8% of population, about 21 million of which are villagers and almost 5 million of deprived local constituents receive health insurance services.

▣ General Review on Level of Development

1. HDI, MDG & Poverty

a. Human Development Index

Sustainable HDI is indicative of people's overall growth in achieving better living standards. Upgrading individuals' quality of life is a function of fundamental development of economic variables in terms of education and health. Nowadays, education plays a key role in human development. Economic and per capita income growths are determining factors in the progress of societies. In general, enhancement of human development depends on the capacity of acquiring knowledge, availability of living facilities, people's longevity and physical health. Iran has increased its HDI value from 0.725 in 2000 up to 0.77 in 2004. Currently, Iran is ranked among countries with a medium human development index and on the average, it has increased about one percent each year.

Study of Human Development Index, separately for each province, reveals that Tehran, Isfahan, Qazvin, Gilan, Fars and Yazd are classified in a higher position than other provinces in terms of privilege of better income, education and life expectancy indicators; whereas, Sistan & Balouchestan, Kordestan, West Azarbayjan, Lorestan, Ardebil, Kohkilouye & Boyer Ahmad have been placed at lower ranks. In general the education and life expectancy indicators are higher in the human development process of most provinces as compared to income indicator.

The low level of income in the provinces is an indicator of insufficient investment in various economic areas and poor living quality in those regions.

Components of Human Development Index in Iran 2000-2004

Year	GDP Index	Education Index	Life Expectancy Index	Human Development Index	Growth Rate of Human Development Index
2000	0.68	0.729	0.767	0.725	0.27
2001	0.687	0.77	0.73	0.729	0.55
2002	0.697	0.82	0.735	0.741	1.6
2003	0.719	0.825	0.738	0.761	2.6
2004	0.722	0.846	0.742	0.77	1.2

Source: Management & Planning Organization
Dep. For Macro Economic Planning & Management

b. Human Poverty Index

Deprivation in living standards or having a minimum degree of social protection and facilities are among human poverty indicators.

Scarcity of standards of life is reckoned by non-weight average of access to safe drinking water and at-birth under-weight children up to the age of five years and the number of people dying before the age of forty. In Iran of 2002, the access to safe drinking water was 98.8% and 87.4% in urban and rural areas and the mortality rate of children under five was 28.6 in thousand nationwide and 27.7 and 30.2 in thousand in urban/ rural regions respectively. Percentage of individuals with no access to safe drinking water is about 5.4% in total population of the country. Based on the above coefficient and average, the deprivation degree in living standards for the whole country was about 4.13% in 2002.

Also, there is an income gap between urban / rural areas and a regional imbalance due to non availability of public facilities for low-income social groups. In Iran, the ratio of high-income deciles (the richest) is 30% to the total revenues and the ratio of low-income deciles (the poorest) is only 2%, i.e. the ratio of low-deciles to high-deciles groups is 15 times as much. Estimations reveal that in 2003, the percentage of households below absolute poverty line (to supply a minimum of 2300 Kilo-Calorie) was 12% in urban areas and 10% in rural areas (MDG Report).

c. MDG Indexes

The latest report on Millennium Development Goals in the Islamic Republic of Iran (2006) features the situation for the 8 predicted goals as follows:

- The percentage of country's population with an income lower than one dollar and two dollars had a descending trend during the recent years and decreased from 0.9% and 7.3% in 1999 to 0.2% and 3.1% in 2005 in the whole society. Also, the ratio of poverty gap was 0.1% on one dollar and 0.6% on two dollars in 2005.

Therefore, the total number of individuals seeking much-needed social supports had a decreasing trend during this period. Moreover, the percentage of population below food poverty line has decreased from 13.5% in 1999 to about 7% in 2005.

In terms of access to General Education, currently about 97.8% of official primary-school age population are receiving formal education and drop-out rate diminished down to 6.6%. The literacy rate of men and women aged 15-24 has reached 97% and 96% respectively.

With regard to boosting the indicator of gender parity and women empowerment, the ratio of female to male values in primary, secondary and higher education has reached to about 94.3%. The ratio of literate women to literate men of 15-24 age groups is about 99% in 2006. The women unemployment rate is usually more than that of men. In 2005, the unemployment rate was 16.7% and 9.4% for women and men respectively.

The decline of mortality rate among children, which is a result of extending coverage of “public health cares”, is considered a rather remarkable breakthrough. In other words, the death toll of children under five per thousand births has reduced to about 28.6 cases. The mortality rate of mothers per hundred live births has also decreased to 24.6 cases in 2005 and the ratio of deliveries by skilled people has increased to about 97.3%.

Concerning the environment protection indicators, about 11.9 million hectares, equal to 7.23% of country’s surface area, was identified as regions under protection in terms of bio-diversity, which is planned to be extended up to 10%. Furthermore, per capita carbon dioxide emission has augmented to 5,425 Kg. in 2005 with a constant growth rate; however, consumption of Ozone layer destructive materials shows a significant reduction of 5,420 T. in 1991 to 4457.2 T. in 2005.

2. Economic-Social & Health Indicators

a. Economic Indicators

Trend of changes of economic indicators in the country during 2000-2006 is as follows:

The economic growth average during 2000-2005 was about 5.4%. The share of agriculture sector in GDP was 13.4%, oil and gas sector 11.5%, industry and mine sector about 23.3%, and service sector with the highest share of about 51.8% of GDP. Also, the investment ratio to GDP increased with an ascending trend of 29.8% in 2000 up to 36.4% in 2005.

The government’s public budget allocations constitute of approximately 20% of GDP and the share of tax revenue sources to GDP is about 6%. The social welfare index during 2000-2005 increased to about 5.8% annually. Growth of per capita income on the one side and better income distribution on the other side have boosted social welfare index.

b. Social & Health Indicators

Health is one of the most vital social sectors. The major alterations for health indicators are:

Life expectancy increased from about 70 years to about 71.7 in 2004. The key factor for such trend is reduction of mortality rate of children under five (about 28.6 per thousand births); the physician ratio to thousand people reached about 1.13; the dentist ratio per ten thousand people equals to 2. The index of population ratio to total hospital beds was 605 people nationwide, and the population ratio to hospital beds in use was 726 people. In general, each health care center, either governmental or non-governmental, provides services for 8,613 people on the average. The vaccination coverage rate for children aged under one, for whom four vaccines are administered by the end

of age one, is more than 95%. About 97.3% of deliveries are performed by skilled experts.

- The social insurance coverage is about 67.1% of the population and about 93.8% are under health insurance coverage, 21 million of which are villagers and about 5 million are underprivileged people.

The net enrolment rate is 95.3% for primary education and about 82.3% of adult populations (aged 15 and over) are literate. The number of adult illiterate exceeds to about 9.3 million. In Iran, the ratio of students to thousand populations is about 37.8. The researchers' population indicator in one million is about 346. The cultural indicators during this period show a promising growth rate, in a way that the ratio of copies of the published book to the population is about 2.4. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, extensive religious activities and services are being performed; however due to unavailability of comprehensive statistics and information, no precise indicator could be offered.

The number of the internet users is around 6,600 thousand people, with an 86% annual growth rate on the average. Certain development indicators during the period of 2000-2006 are categorized in the under table:

Development Indicators during 2000-2006

Category	Year									
	1990	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	
Human Development Index	0.65	0.693	0.725	0.729	0.741	0.761	0.77	-	-	
Growth Rate	-	-	0.27	0.55	1.01	2.4	1.2	-	-	
Research & Development Expenditures in GDP	-	-	-	-	0.38	0.5	0.47	-	-	
Unemployment Rate	-	-	14.25	14.2	12.8	11.4	12.4	11.5	-	
Life Expectancy	-	-	70.5	71	71.2	71.3	71.4	71.7	-	
Death Toll of Children Aged 5 ⁺	-	-	36	-	28.6	-	-	-	-	
Access to safe Water	Urban		86	-	87.4	-	-	-	-	
	Rural		-	-	98.8	-	-	-	-	
GDP Index in HDI	-	-	0.68	0.687	0.697	0.720	0.722	-	-	
Education Indicator in HDI	-	-	0.729	0.77	0.82	0.825	0.846	-	-	
Life Expectancy Indicator in HDI	-	-	0.767	0.73	0.735	0.738	0.742	-	-	
Death toll of children aged under 1 per 1000	-	-	28.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Adult Literacy Percentage	-	-	76.5	77.5	78.4	79.4	80.2	81.4	82.3	

Source: Economic Annual Report of Management & Planning Organization

2- An Introduction to Iranian Education System

2-1- Education Development Process in Iran

2-2- Policies, Regulations, & Legislation of Compulsory Education

2-3- Education Structure (Formal & Non-Formal)

2-4- Education Financing

2-5- EFA Coordination Assessment

2- 1- Education Development Process in Iran

2-1-1- History of Education Development in Iran

2-1-2- National Education Progress since Jomtien Meeting

2-1-3- Government Policies on Financing Various Groups of Learners

2-1-4- ICT Application in Education

2-1-5- Education for Special & Vulnerable Groups:

- Education for Women & Girls**
- Children with Special Needs**
- Immigrants & Refugees of Crises and Incidents**
- Children Infected with HIV**



2-1 Education Development Process in Iran

2-1-1- History of Education Development in Iran

Education is the process designed for learning knowledge and skill as well as for teaching them. Education started since the creation of mankind on the earth, gradually evolved, and today it turned to be one of the fundamentals of societies' development. The role of Iranians in development of education is remarkable, in a way that Islamic civilization owes its prosperity to a great extent to Iranian instructors and teachers.

In prehistoric era, the younger used to learn ceremonies and traditions by following the grown-ups. The former could learn hunting and planting skills while accompanying the latter on work. In ancient civilizations, the priests and clerics used to receive special educations and teach others as well. In addition to knowing how to read, write and perform religious rituals, they were master in medicine and astronomy.

During Achaemenid period, formal education was specific to Zoroastrian priests, princesses and statesmen. However, in Zoroastrian religion, education is considered as important as life; therefore Iranian nationals used to teach ethics and practical skills to their children, following wisely words of Zoroaster. In those days fire-temples were used for formal education and Zoroasterian priests taught spiritual subjects as well as medicine, mathematics and astronomy.

In Sasanid period, Iranian culture and civilization were extended to the east and the west, but still for certain social groups. In that era, Jondi-Shapour University was established in Jondi-Shapour city as the most notable academic and educational center. Founded by Shapour Sassani, the city was prosperous by 4th Century after Islam. This university was a place for academic practice and discussions of Iranian scholars besides Indian, Greek and Roman scientists. When school of Athens was closed in 529 A.D, many Greek scholars immigrated to Jondi-Shapour. Also a hospital was constructed in the city at the time of Khosrow Anooshirvan, as a result of which Iranian, Greek and Indian medicine flourished in the country.

Upon triumph of Arabs over Sassanid army, the Sassanid Dynasty was overthrown and formal education was no longer monopolized by the rich accordingly. It was the start of a new era when Islamic education substituted for Zoroastrian instructions. Teaching of Koran, Arabic language, and norms and ramification of new jurisprudence became prevalent in the mosque. Little by little, Pahlavi handwriting and language replaced with Arabic language. The books in Pahlavi, consisting of produced and collected knowledge from various civilizations in Jondi-Shapour were translated in Arabic. Muslims initiated building schools besides mosques. Examples of such schools built after 3rd Century A.H, were still working for centuries later in Neishapour, Balkh, Herat and Bukhara. Education was gratis in those schools and even the trainees could receive some sorts of grants.

During Safavid Rule, Education and training was overshadowed by religious ideology and beliefs that was the most powerful factor for cultural unity. A few children aged 7 to 12 were able to study in old-fashioned schools. They could then continue their studies in other schools, offering higher education. Usually, this involved leaving home and family, what was almost impossible for most children of average social classes. However, as it was put earlier, fine arts and works of arts, including carpet weaving, gold embroidery, tile-works, architecture, wood and metal works, gilding and calligraphy were more in vogue than in the past. They were taught through teacher-student system, since there was no technical and vocational schools for formal training of such skills.

Establishment of school of Dar al-Fonoon (Adobe of Arts) in 1268 A.H, i.e 13 days after assassination of its founder, Amir Kabiir, is considered an effective step taken in development of new Iranian system of education. It should be acknowledged that foundation of such school at secondary and higher education stages and financing its establishment, maintenance and management by federal government was unprecedented in the history of our ancient education. Since then, the federal government of Iran made its utmost effort to promote education and training.

The beginning of Constitutional Government and the Legislative Power was a start for state-run and private schools to be established by the government and the ratification of Compulsory Education Act. Furthermore, General Education in urban / rural areas was underscored by approval of a set of regulations. Consequently, development of education system was based on legislation and experienced different stages.

- In 1911, the Education Constitution was passed by the second parliament. The above Act was the country's most comprehensive legislation on education within the Constitutional Government, included 28 Articles. Due to its major role in enhancement of education and development of schools at the time, some of its Articles are mentioned here:

Article 1: School is an institution designed for scientific, moral, and physical education of children and young persons.

Article 2: The Ministry of Culture is in charge of defining the curriculum of schools.

Article 3: Primary education is Compulsory for all Iranian nationals.

Article 5: It must be emphasized that all parents are obliged to urge their children to primary education by the age of seven, either at home or at school.

Article 8: Schools are classified into two official and non-official institutions. Official refers to schools established by government and non-official schools by private founder.

Article 18: The Ministry of Culture is obliged to specify educational degrees and to issue certificate for each degree through examinations, since serving at governmental organizations is subject to holding an education certificate.

Article 20: It should be emphasized that one or several primary and secondary schools must be established in cities and villages based on demographic trend, requirements and financial capabilities.

Article 21: Higher education institutes must be established in Tehran and major cities.

Article 24: The expenditures of non-gratis governmental schools are financed from tuition fees paid by students and the remaining portion, if any, is ensured by the government.

Article 28: Physical punishments are forbidden in schools.

- In 1921, the Act of Culture Supreme Council was ratified by the parliament. It was assigned with adopting schools' affairs including educational planning, conducting examinations and issuing certificate. Since then, the responsibility of running all cultural organizations and drawing up educational programs were transferred to the Ministry of Culture and Culture Supreme Council.
- In 1928, the Act of Dispatching Students to Overseas Universities was approved, based on which one hundred students, every year for 6 consecutive years could study modern sciences and technologies in various majors such as natural, engineering, mathematical and medical sciences; to this end, the Ministry of Education could select top graduates of higher secondary education. The approval of this Act was an important move to train expert and educated workforce for technical, scientific and cultural needs of the country.
- In March 1934, the Teacher's Training Act was approved, by virtue of which 25 colleges for training primary teachers were established all over the country. To enact this law, the government formally assumed the duty of teachers' training. Besides that, since the Culture Constitution had stipulated that teachers must hold official certificate from Ministry of Culture (now Ministry of Education), Tehran Teachers' Training College initiated training high school teachers. The Act deals with teachers' recruitment method, their promotion and retirement systems, and refers to teachers as official service providers of the country.
- In 1934, the University Establishment Act was approved. Based on the 2nd Article of this Act, all education centers, later called faculty, would constitute a university.
- In 1943, the Act of Compulsory Education was passed by the then National Consultative Parliament, on the strength of which the primary education was introduced within two years to the whole country on a compulsory and public basis.
- In 1949, the Primary Four Year Plan was approved by Culture Supreme Council. Based on this plan, primary course was designed in four years for villages and in six years for cities.
- In 1951, primary education was designed in six years for both rural and urban areas with the school entrance age of full six years.
- During 1948-1955, i.e. the First Development Plan, all primary and secondary programs were revised.

The amended program refers to 6-year primary education as follows: The education system for children must be designed for their physical strengthening, acquisitions of good manner and nice habits, right judgment, discipline and order in thinking and expression. The educational materials should be selected and adopted in a way that satisfy the future and basic needs of students as well as develop their intellectual and mental powers.

During the years of study, the secondary education curricula titled as “Public Secondary Education” have been revised. Such studies aimed at acquiring one branch of knowledge and public information or skills that could help the graduates of secondary education in one way or another.

- In 1957, the technical and vocational education received special attention by the Second Development Plan; particularly, since the beginning of the Third Development Plan, the educational planning was considered on a gradual basis. At the time, education was based on a non-integrated planning process. There were a few educational activities, specially on long-term program basis. Finally, under impression of global development, the issue of adopting long-term economic-social development programs and consequently, educational planning was no longer a need but a necessity.
- In 1960, by virtue of Technical Teachers Employment Act, the government was authorized to recruit graduates of agriculture teacher’s colleges and technical schools with a teaching grade and agricultural and industrial engineers with a high school teaching grade; furthermore, to consider special privileges in order to attract educated manpower.
- In 1962, Primary Education General Office and Training Research Center of Ministry of Education developed a long-term educational plan under title of “20-Year Plan for Public & Compulsory Primary Education in Iran”, which was presented in Bangkok Conference. Ministry of Education committed itself to accomplish the plan and to initiate preparatory measures.

In October 1962, in order to supply the required primary school teachers, particularly in rural areas, the government was obliged to assign draftees of military service to teach in the villages. The plan was named Literacy Corps. It was rather a success in quantitative development of education, particularly at primary level in the underprivileged and rural regions; however, due to the multiplicity and diversity of villages, prevalence of illiteracy and lack of basic living facilities for young teachers within these areas, finally the unfair budget allocation for primary education, the children of the deprived social classes, particularly the villagers, as country’s wealth generator of those years, were denied of needed facilities of education.

- In 1966, with the establishment of Technical & Vocational Education Coordination Council, composed of representatives from Ministry of

Education, Ministry of Labor & Social Affairs, Social Services Organization and National Oil Company, serious efforts have been taken to develop technical schools and vocational institutions.

- In December 1964 and February 1967, by virtue of two legislations on dissociation of Ministries, the Ministry of Culture was divided into three Ministries:

- 1) Ministry of Education assumed the duty of General Education,
- 2) Ministry of Science & Higher Education was assigned to higher education and scientific research, and
- 3) Ministry of Culture & Art undertook protection and development of cultural heritage (fine arts, archeological, historical and national works, libraries and museum). Furthermore, the affairs relating to endowments and physical education were delegated to an organization, affiliated to the Prime Minister's Office. New education plan was adopted and upon approval, it was implemented in the Education Supreme Council. Based on this, the structure, goals, principles and contents of education were revised and renovated, the major transformations of which are as follows:

- A) The new Education Plan specified six social, economic, political, cultural, and spiritual as well as intellectual and physical training goals as public and general goals of education. For each educational course, and based on mental maturity conditions, and individual and social requirements of students, special goals have been set.

- B) General Education, within the context of new education system, was extended from six up to eight years. This period, in turn, was categorized into two five-year and three-year education programs, namely the primary education and lower secondary education. Also, under the plan a four-year upper secondary education was developed. As an internal classification, this level of study was divided into theoretical and technical (practical), both including pre-defined programs, being implemented on a parallel basis. Every student, successfully completing three-year lower secondary education, was eligible to promote to upper secondary course, while choosing one out of two Educational branches.

Technical (practical) upper secondary Education, consisting of three "Industries", "Services" and "Agriculture" fields of study, was assigned to train workforce needed by various sectors of industries, agriculture and rural crafts, as well as administrative and technical services.

Theoretical upper secondary education divided into two fields of “Sciences” and “Literature & Humanities” since the first year and the last three years of the field of sciences divided into two fields of “Physics” and “Experimental Sciences”, whereas literature & humanities divided into two other fields of “Culture & Literature” and “Social & Economic Sciences”.

C) In the new educational curriculum of 1965, modest transformations were happened to make education system comply with modern sciences and techniques and to reflect them in the curricula in order to maximize outputs, as compared to the formal curriculum. Changes limited to increasing school working hours and study activities or including certain topics (sciences, social knowledge, art and hand-made objects) in the primary curricula or prolonging hours of teaching mathematics and sciences to ensure much of the requirements for specialized material in upper secondary education programs. As a result, the curricula were unable to satisfy needs of society or to establish a harmony with social, economic and technical requirements. Therefore, the education system failed to play the role of a social pioneer or as a reform instrument for the whole country to enhance public welfare.

- In 1966, the Act on Establishment of Supreme Council, comprising (9) Articles and (5) Notes, was passed by the Legislative Power, and upon developing its by-law and executive arrangements, it entered into force in 1968, upon effect of which, all the approvals by Culture Supreme Council (established by virtue of the Law of 1921 and worked until 1967) were in force as long as not amended by Education Supreme Council. The key approval of the council was to develop school programs within the scope of responsibilities of Ministry of Education. These programs included ratification of school general by-law, examination by-law, educational institutions' articles of association, determining schools' tuition fee, verification of textbooks with approved educational syllabi, and permit issuance for establishment of private schools.
- In 1969, the Act on Regional Education Council was approved. It is considered the first step towards decentralization of certain educational affairs. The act charged Ministry of Education with the duty to provide people of each region with education-related financial and administrative facilities through establishment of regional education council.

- The beginning of 1970's witnessed an increase on education budget and credits, aiming at illiteracy eradication, developing schools, primary and lower secondary schools in particular, and expanding specialized educational branches within technical and vocational schools and universities.
- In 1971, correspondence distance learning was initiated for the first time at higher education level. To this end, Faculty of Correspondence Learning was established in University of Abou Reyhan Birouni, offering four majors.
- In 1973, the second university was established on a distance learning basis, "Iran Open University", a replica of Open University in UK. The objective was to promote distance learning and to augment admission capacity by higher education system to train qualified educated manpower.
- In 1974-1975, upper secondary education was classified into three branches: 1) Theoretical upper secondary, 2) Technical & Vocational upper secondary, and 3) Comprehensive upper secondary.
- In 1975, primary education general office developed a plan on formation of one-year nursery classes, what required conducting one-year infant and toddler development courses to train nursery teachers. Nursery classes gradually developed in various parts of the country, particularly in bi-lingual regions; since then, they turned to be an effective instrument in preparing children for school education.
- In 1979, by victory of Islamic Revolution, extensive studies and brainstorming were commenced to find solution for education problems, whereby numerous amendatory plans were recommended on goal, structure and content of education system. Secretariat of Education Supreme Council made some efforts during 1979 and 1980 so as to pave the ground for implementation of such plans.
- In December 1984, Cultural Revolution High Council was formed in the early post revolution era, recruiting its membership full capacity; it started adopting principles, goals and country's major educational, cultural, research and academic policies.
- In February 1985, National Planning Supreme Council was established. It consists of 8 Planning Groups, 68 Thematic Committees, 45 Sub-committees and 5 Standing Commissions with more than 570 official members. The council undertook the duty of educational and research planning at higher education level and in all university programs and various fields of study, as well as reforming, amending and revising education and research programs, regulations and provisions, criterion on recruiting faculty members and students, developing new educational and research fields and courses in the universities.
- In 1985 after a period of monitoring and assessment, Ministry of Education suggested the "Council of Education System Fundamental Reform" to be assigned to carry out necessary studies and to present

education system fundamental plan, based on the Constitution of Islamic Republic. In February 1988, after two years of studies and reaping the benefits of international experiences on empowering an efficient education system, the council prepared the plan on generalities of education system, conducted a survey from country's academics in 1988, and submitted it to the Cultural Revolution Supreme Council for examination and approval. The plan includes five sections as follows:

- The first section examines fundamentals of Islamic education and training;
- The second section explains general goals of Islamic education and training;
- The third section studies governing principles of education system;
- The fourth section presents new structure and organization of education system; and
- The fifth section introduces executive modes of education system plan.

According to the plan above, the educational levels based on pattern $2+5+2+3=12$ are as follows:

1. General Education program for a period of 9 years, consisting of three levels of basic, fundamentals and guidance.
2. Inclusive applied-scientific education program, the term of which varies according to the field of study; here, the former is divided into two major orientations:
 - a) Inclusive upper secondary branch for a full time three-year period.
 - b) Vocational branch, the duration of which is decided in terms of type and degree of skills. Such educations aim at training workforce for manufacturing, industrial and service sectors as technicians and skilled workers.
 - In 1989, Cultural Revolution Supreme Council obliged Minister of Education to establish a team of education and training experts to adopt detailed plans on changing education system. The team presided by Minister of Education and delegated the following seven technical commissions to draw up mentioned plans:
 1. Pre-primary & Primary Commission;
 2. Lower Secondary Commission;
 3. Inclusive and Technical-Vocational Upper Secondary Commission;
 4. Recruitment & Human Resource Training Commission;
 5. Administrative & Organizational Commission;
 6. Planning & Development Commission;
 7. Training Activities Commission.
 - In 1991, the experimental plans of upper secondary education new system were implemented. In 1992, the first grade of all upper secondary branches was performed on a trial basis. 1993, the same plan was practiced for all branches and fields of study and in 1994, the new upper secondary education continued its pilot project for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades of all branches. During 1995, 1996, and 1998, the new upper secondary plan was gradually completed everywhere. Finally, in 1998, the pre-university course, the extended associate

degree course and generalizing General Education program were launched in the country.

In 2002, upon proposing Educational Reforms Engineering Plan, a group of education and training experts and professionals initiated an on-going study to develop the plan. In 2007, pursuant to the remarks by Supreme Leader on necessity for evolving Education system, the Fundamental Development Headquarters was established in Ministry of Education.

2-1-2- National Education Progress since Jomtien Meeting (1990) to Dakar Meeting

Since Jomtien Conference, Islamic Republic of Iran has made real efforts to accomplish the commitments of Education For All Plan. The achievements during the years of program have contributed to ascending trend of indicators for each target groups.

In **Pre-Primary Education**, the percentage of first grade students who have completed one-year pre-primary program shows a drastic increase; i.e. the above indicator reached from 15.2% in 1991-92 to 18.4% and 43.5% during school years 2000-01 and 2006-07 respectively. Among factors for such increase are:

- Developing one-year nursery centers by community participation and non-for-profit contributions;
- Exploiting vacant places in primary schools for children at nursery programs;

In **Primary Education**, trend of accessibility indicators is promising too. The net intake rate for the first grade of primary education grew from 91.2% in 1991-92 up to 92.8% in 2000-01 and 95.3% during 2006-07. Also, the gross intake rate for the first grade of primary education reached from 119.2% in 1991-92 up to 107.9% in 2000-01 and 112.2% during 2006-07.

The net enrolment ratio increased from 95.7% in 1991-92 up to 95.9% and 97.8% during 2000-01 and 2006-07 respectively. The gross enrolment ratio shows a descending trend; i.e. from 109.4% in 1991-92 decreased to 108.7% in 2000-01 and 104% during 2006-07.

The percentage of female students from total grew from 46.6% in 1991-92 up to 47.6% in 2000-01 and 48.4% during 2006-07.

The figures reveal a favorable trend of accessibility indicator for primary education during the years of plan, the reasons of which are:

- Holding classrooms in the underprivileged, remote and inaccessible areas;
- Launching programs to enroll out-of-school children at school age, particularly girl population;
- Developing free educational services such as stationery, textbooks and clothing for students in need;
- Carrying out promotional activities to enhance the awareness and culture of parents;
- Amending examinations' by-laws to extend students' survival rate.

The pupil-class ratio shows a decreasing trend from 30 pupils in 1991-92 down to 25.19 and 20.9 pupils during 2000-01 and 2006-07. The causes of such decrease are explained by a negative population growth rate, shrinkage of student population, development of educational spaces and private schools.

The pupil-teacher ratio has also decreased from 35.5 students in 1991-92 to 25.16 in 2000-01 and 21.8 students in 2006-07. The indicator of teachers with university qualifications has remarkably increased due to measures taken during the recent years to promote teachers' educational degree

so as from 22.1% in 1991-92, it reached up to 43.79% and 61.36% during 2000-01 and 2006-2007. The main reasons for such increase are attributed to facilities provided by Ministry of Education in the form of in-service courses as well as bachelor's degree programs.

In **Lower Secondary**, the trend of indicators kept growing during the years of plan so as the accessibility indicator recorded a noticeable growth. The net intake rate increase from 55.26% in 1991-92 up to 78.4% and 84.9% during 2000-01 and 2006-07. Also the gross intake rate increased from 79.05% in 1991-92 to 103.6% in 2000-01 and 98.7% during 2006-07. Ratio of girls to total population increased from 42.1% in 1991-92 up to 45.3% and 46.66% during 2000-01 and 2006-07 respectively.

Generally, the improvement of accessibility indicators for lower secondary Education is a result of developing schools (boarding schools, central-village schools, and central dormitory), organizing primary schools' annexed classes, briefing and promotional activities to enhance parents' awareness and level of culture.

The pupil-class ratio and pupil-teacher ratio shows favorable trend during the years of plan. The average of pupil per class from 32.5 students in 1991-92 decreased to 29.5 students in 2000-01 and 23.9 students in 2006-07. Furthermore, the average of pupil per teacher shows a decreasing trend of 29.2 students in 1991-92 down to 27.5 and 21.8 students during 2000-01 and 2006-07 respectively.

To encourage teachers to upgrade their educational degrees during the years of plan, important policies have been implemented, so as the indicator of teachers with university qualifications significantly increased and the percentage of teachers holding associate degree grew from 88.4% in 1991-92 to 97% in 2000-01 and 98% in 2006-07. Meanwhile, the percentage of teachers with bachelor's degree and higher reached from 27.04% in 2000-01 up to 48.55% in 2006-07. The main reason for such growth lies in facilities available for continuous studies of teachers.

In **theoretical upper secondary, pre-university, technical & vocational and Kar-o-Danesh (work & Knowledge) (Kar-o-Danesh) education**, indicators suggest a promising and favorable situation in terms of gross enrolment ratio for theoretical upper secondary and pre-university increasing from 68.7% in 2000-01 up to 60.9% in 2006-07. While the indicator for technical & vocational and Kar-o-Danesh (work & Knowledge) programs were 28.35% and 22.90% during 2000-01 and 2006-07 respectively.

The ratio of female students per total for theoretical upper secondary and pre-university reached from 44.75% in 2000-01 up to 50.30% in 2006-07. The same indicator for technical & vocational upper secondary and Kar-o-Danesh (work & Knowledge) programs increased from 36.89% in 2000-01 to 37.76% in 2006-07.

The percentage of teachers with academic qualifications at theoretical upper secondary and pre-university shows a rather desirable growth so as increased from 89.73% in 2000-01 up to 92.80% in 2006-07.

The pupil-class ratio for theoretical upper secondary and pre-university course was favorable and from 30 students in 2000-01 decreased to 23.5 students in 2006-07. The same situation exists for pupils-teacher ratio with 29.3 students in 2000-01 down to 21.6 students in 2006-07.

The Literacy and Adult Education were received special attention. Literacy indicators increased during the years of study, owing to effective measures by Literacy Champagne Organization with the collaboration of other organizations and institutions. The literacy rate of population (aged 15 and over) increased from 65.2% in 1991-92 up to 76.52% and 82.33% during 2000-01 and 2006-07 respectively. Also the literacy rate of population (aged 15-24) grew from 86.6% in 1991-92 to 94.33% in 2000-01 and 96.65% in 2006-07.

On the whole, the Islamic Republic of Iran strengthened its national resolve to accomplish Dakar Commitments (implementation of Education For All) by Ministry of Education and all relevant organizations and ministries, the manifestation of which is appreciated in growing indicators of the plan during the years of study, manifesting national will and efforts of all stakeholders in achieving the goals.

2-1-3- Government Policies on Financing Various Groups of Learners

Education For All up to the end of upper secondary education is recognized as a public right by Islamic Republic of Iran and the Government is duty bound to guarantee free education for all. This issue has been stipulated in Articles (3) and (30) of the Constitution. Furthermore, the goals and duties of Ministry of Education, in Para (6) of the Law underscores ensuring free Education for all Iranian nationals up to the end of upper secondary Education. The Ministry of Education has also been assigned with the duty to help the least-able individuals with impaired capacities and other groups with special needs with developing and reinforcing school for special children. Undoubtedly, the government's arrangements at the first phase are to ensure free Education for all, regardless of gender, regional, ethnical and language background. Since the government finances almost 95% of total expenditures on education of various courses, its role and share in covering public expenditures on education is quite evident.

Primary schools are constructed in almost all urban /rural areas for children of isolated and poor regions with government financing arrangements. Also, boarding schools, central-village schools and/or central dormitory have been established to develop lower and upper secondary education for rural and nomad students. Generally, the education system of Islamic Republic of Iran has adopted different means and ways to facilitate access of all school-age population, proportionate to the circumstances governing in each region, while covering expenditures on education with full capacity. Another incentive to increase education intake and access rate is one serving of free food for more than 3 million underprivileged children.

Moreover, textbooks and certain required materials for study, including stationery and clothing are provided for the deprived regions. Over 15 million students, since the first grade of primary to upper secondary education, receive low-price textbooks, cheaper than market prices. In other words, the government pays enormous amounts of textbook and stationery subsidies for students; furthermore, supportive organizations including Welfare Organization and Imam Khomeini Relief Committee make generous donations to unattended children each year to make education more accessible.

2-1-4- ICT Application in Education

Pursuant to enforcing EFA strategies, in line with educational general policies, I.R. of Iran Ministry of Education, adopted ICT Strategic Plan, to launch Electronic Government, while developing educational programs for teachers and MOE employees on IT skills and to initiate these programs in the education departments of provinces. Consequently, the ICT seven skills education, within the context of 7 educational programs has been conducted within 130 hours for MOE teaching staff and educational personnel since 2003, utilizing internal feasibilities and external facilities of educational institutions. Also, parts of trainings by these schools are web-based education since the establishment of more than 216 distance learning centers, in line with EFA Plan. Granting permit for awarding of ICDL certificate is specially designed to this end. Statistics reveal that more than one million MOE teachers and employees attended ICDL training

courses since January 2005. The above trainings are continuous to provide required computer skills for all directors, teachers, experts and employees.

Heads of education general offices in provinces also benefited from various training courses to accomplish its policies, MOE initiated equipping schools with labs and computer facilities, leading to supplying teachers' training colleges with computer sites in order to render educational services to students as well as MOE teaching staffs and educational personnel. At the ministerial level, various plans such as Organizational Informatics Architecture Plan, Integrated Portal, and web-based environment design for integrating and facilitating information exchange have been carried out at ministerial, provincial and district levels.

Fulfilled Plans & Programs

❑ Short-Term Virtual In-Service Training Courses

The teachers' in-service training courses on virtual basis was an important MOE agenda item due to relative increased number of personnel and dispersion of work and living places on the one hand, and provision of ICT facilities on the other hand. Since 2003, part of virtual in-service trainings has been conducted.

❑ Electronic Educations Development by Teachers

To train experts of e-content production, special training programs have been developed for teachers and instructors. Upon completion of the course, each province has at least a 4-member team of instructors, capable of producing e-content.

❑ Teachers' Distance Learning Aides by I.R. of Iran Broadcast Organization

MOE has prepared educational programs, "Teaching Methods", as distance learning program for teachers and started its distribution through national education TV channel since 2003.

❑ Web Site

All education departments have launched their web sites, as well as Local Area Network for all provinces, while MOE implemented various relevant projects such as:

- Computer information database of Roshd Magazine: www.roshdmag.org
- Computer information database of Roshd Educational Reviews: www.Samanketab.com
- Electronic Education system with over 14 subjects of upper secondary course and Olympiad Websites of mathematics, physics, chemistry, computer and biology.
- Teachers' Virtual Club

❑ National Schools Network (Roshd Website)

- Ever-increasing development of modern technologies such as computer and communication networks in Education. The high frequency of computer applications (including: high capacity data saving, high speed data analysis, powerful search engine and data retrieving in real-time, too much flexibility of computer programs, student-to-student or student-to-teacher communication via electronic mail) facilities in Education and more and better learning by trainees.
- Launching and developing Roshd Website including a Central 200-Phone-line System, an exclusive internet 64-phone-line service

system for MOE directors, providing 19 districts with Roshd Website, connection to Roshd central site and launching VPN in 19 districts, launching Roshd central website in provinces of Boushehr, Yazd, Fars, Kohkilouye & Boyer Ahmad, leading to start up of a broad information network in www.roshdmag.ir.

■ Mobile Technology Plan in Tribal Areas

With regard to deprivation of tribal areas to have access to educational facilities and integrated theoretical and practical education programs, the mobile technology plan was designed to offer equal educational and training opportunities, and to make lab, workshop, and audio-visual materials available for students. The plan consists of a well-equipped vehicle with audio-visual, lab and workshop facilities, along with an education manual. It refers to school, within a predicted timetable and assists students to take advantage of educational materials and equipments in better learning subjects and to some extent, compensating the absence of educational facilities in teaching-learning process by teacher.

2-1-5- Education for Special & Vulnerable Groups

■ State of Education for Girls & Women

Underlining Article (30) of the Constitution, I.R. of Iran education system believes that all Iranian children have the right to enjoy education up to the end of upper secondary program. Therefore, Ministry of Education is obliged to make education available for all children and young people. The rules, regulations, policies and strategies adopted in the field of compulsory education, lay great stress on fair and equal access of girls and boys to education. Through entry into force of such rules and policies, and by investigating the performance during the period of study, it is reviewed that the gender parity index in the intake rate, net and gross enrolment rate, transition rate from primary to lower secondary and to upper secondary education, survival rate by primary first grade to fifth grade for literate adults aged 15-24 and 15 years of age and over shows an increasing trend, indicating favorable situation for girls and women to enroll and to continue their studies. (The increasing trend of gender parity rate is fully defined in the Fifth Goal “elimination of gender disparity”. The main reasons for such increasing trend are allocation of female teacher for girl classes, separation of mixed classes to independent girl and boy classes as much as possible, setting up central-village schools, boarding schools, central dormitory, introducing flexibility in teaching methods and covering school-age individuals by distance learning method, correspondence education and media education. As far as literacy education is concerned, incorporating applied knowledge and basic life skills into literacy education in Community Learning Centers (CLC) have been effective in growing women’s literacy rate. As per national census of 2006, 82% of the total population aged 15 and over are literate, with 87% male population and 77% female population. The gender parity index of literacy rate is about 89%.

■ Children with Special Needs

In order to take care of children with special needs, the Ministry of Education established “Special Education Organization” as an autonomous body to enroll and educate trainable children and teenagers with special needs. The children classified in seven groups of blind, visually impaired, deaf, hearing impaired, mentally handicapped, learning-disabled, physically handicapped, behaviorally disordered and children with multiple disabilities are enrolled in pre-

primary, primary, lower and upper secondary education. As a result, MOE covered a population of more than 67,882 students at special Education in 2006. Also, through implementation of integrated-inclusive education, part of special students has been covered by ordinary schools and classrooms (19,693 students in 2006).

Special Education Organization has designated and accomplished several plans to identify, enroll and prolong school life expectancy, as well as quality and quantity enhancement of special educations, some of which are explained briefly in the chapter of special children.

■ Flow of Immigrants & Refugees of Crises & Incidences

▷ Iran at the Risk of Various Incidences(Natural Disasters & Instable Neighboring Countries)

Islamic Republic of Iran, stretched in an area of over 1,648,000 Sq.Km (17th country of the world by measure) with a population of 70,495,000 located in the Southwest of Asia, the Middle East Region. The total length of Iranian boundaries extending to about 8,865 Km., of which 2,810 Km. is marine border and 6,055 Km. land border. The boundaries of the country marks the limits with Turkmenistan Republic, Caspian Sea, Azarbayjan and Armenia Republic in the North, Afghanistan and Pakistan in the East, Sea of Oman and Persian Gulf in the South, Iraq and Turkey in the West. Iran shares 9 joint frontiers, including marine borders.

Based on the latest country divisions in January 2007, Iran has 30 provinces, 336 cities, 889 districts, 1,016 towns and 2,400 villages.

The geographical map of Iran shows 13 provinces of the country possessing joint land borders with neighbor countries.

Long joint borders on the one hand and outbreak of 5 major wars, civil conflicts and clashes in some neighboring countries during a period of 3 decades have brought about hundreds of thousands refugees seeking shelter and protection in Iran.

Moreover, the natural and ecological particulars of the country, and being placed on a seismic belt, contributes to incidence of frequent devastating earthquakes and ravaging floods in parts of the country. The world seismology map shows that earthquake is a frequent occurrence in certain regions of the globe, known as seismic regions or active seismic belt on the globe. The most important active seismic belt on the globe are the edges of Pacific Ocean, Alp seismic belt in Himalaya, extended on the world youngest mountains of Alp, Alborz, Zagros and Himalaya.

The same data reveals that most parts of Iran are under threat of very strong or with average severity earthquakes. From 1977 to 2006 (during the past 30 years), at least 10 horrific earthquakes measuring 6.2 to 7.7 on the Richter scale happened in Bandar Abbas, Tabas, north of Qa'en, Kerman, Roudbar, Qa'emat, Ardebil villages, Bam and Lorestan. Other natural calamities such as flood in Golestan, Mazandaran, Balouchestan and... during the past decades should not be disregarded too.

The country sustained heavy irreparable losses of human assets, damages on the economy, devastation of scientific, cultural, historical and educational infrastructures, a situation demanding enormous resources for renovation and reconstruction.

▷ Crisis Management Headquarters

To encounter crisis and phenomena such as refugees and earthquakes, extensive measures have been introduced by governmental and non-governmental organizations and institutions; however, the vast range of losses, adding further complication to the situation, urged the government to establish two specialized centers at national level to encounter and manage such crises.

* Unexpected Disasters' Headquarters was the first center launched in the Ministry of the Interior to study, measure the extent of vulnerability, to prevent, rescue, reconstruct and renovate regions stricken by unexpected catastrophes such as flood, earthquake, drought, fire... This move was followed by establishment of other similar headquarters at the center of provinces, as well as Crisis Prevention & Management Organization of Tehran in the Municipality. Pursuant to these measures, and by developing about one thousand urban crisis management bases for prevention of calamities, emergency services are also followed as an ongoing move in other metropolises and cities of the country.

* To centralize and regulate the aliens' affairs (refugees, immigrants and foreign citizens, holding passport) on the issues of entry into country, settlement, expulsion, employment, education, health and treatment, and international relations, the "Alien Coordination & Administration Council" was established on strength of provisions 180 of the Law on the Third Economic & Social Development Plan (2000-2004), chaired by Minister of the Interior and membership of Ministers of Education, Intelligence, Foreign Affairs, Labor & Social Affairs, Health, Treatment & Medical Education, Head of Plan & Budget Organization, Secretary of National Security Council, Commander of Disciplinary Forces, and Chairman of the Red Crescent Society, and its executive by-laws were prepared and notified to the concerned ministries and organizations. Since then, crisis control and management and other events such as entry of refugees, earthquake, flood and ... are being addressed by the two above entities.

From 2000-2006, tens of thousands of refugees, seeking asylum and occurrence of terrible earthquake in the city of Bam, have been the two major incidences in the country. Therefore, the measures taken for these two cases are included in this report.

▷ **Iran & Refuge Seekers**

Outbreak of internecine warfare of Afghanistan in 1979 and reckless offence of the then Iraqi administration against people of north of Afghanistan towards the end of Iran-Iraq war in 1989 explains the movement of tens of thousands of refugees to Iran.

Right after this, the region witnessed several major conflicts including invasion of Iraq against Kuwait, Persian Gulf clashes, and assault of some countries mounted against Afghanistan and Iraq under pretext of September 11 terror attack, as a result of which, unprecedented number of Afghani and Iraqi refugees entered the country.

Based on existing documents, the key reasons for such huge wave of immigration are:

Abundant job market and variety of occupations, extended joint borders easy to frequent, common religion, culture and language (in some cases), mixed marriages of Iranians with the nationals of the above countries, and supports of Iranian Government and its Muslim nation for war refugees and victims as one of its major duties and commitments.

▷ **International Organizations & Issue of Refugees**

Islamic Republic of Iran has never sought supports of international organizations for refugees since 1982, whereas it continued the policy of welcoming refugees to the country. But the burden of refugees, particularly on economic structures, has been doubled and has confined the capacities of development and infrastructures for sustainable economic prosperity, since refugees are entitled to utilize most of I.R. of Iran's subsidized services of health care, education, basic food stuff, water, electricity, transportation and... quite identical to Iranian citizens. This helped

them to fully mingle with Iranian society and to freely choose the place of domicile across the country. The officially registered refugees receive Refugee ID card with education and work permit. All this drew the attention of the world community to the issue of refugees in Iran and launching emergency aids such as food and tent for refugees in Iran. UNHCR adopted programs for helping refugees in 1985. It basically supplemented Iranian Government's plan for refugees, and most importantly, to back up refugees relief projects and to upgrade their living standards. Until 1983, Iranian Government received no assistance from international community to support refugees. From 1983 to 1986, UNHCR developed programs for attracting foreign aids, and since 1986, after performing an assessment on various needs of refugees, the Local Settlement Plan was adopted to help refugees with health care, education, safe drinking water, income generation and so on, basically focusing on rural areas and refugees over-crowded provinces of the country. Within the past 3 years, UNHCR has accomplished the following measures, within the framework of a contract with Ministry of Education:

- 1- Construction of 10 schools for Afghan students in Tehran, Sistan & Balouchestan, and Khorasan provinces;
- 2- Medical examination of Afghan and Iraqi students, based in refugee camps within a period of 5 consecutive years;
- 3- Providing Afghan and Iraqi students with stationeries for the past 4 years;
- 4- Equipment of classrooms for Afghan and Iraqi citizens (in and out of refugee camps);
- 5- Conducting technical and vocational trainings for 2000 Afghan nationals in Khorasan and...

Although the efforts by UNHCR to support the programs of Iranian Government and aids by other UN agencies and NGO's to supply emergency and long-term needs of refugees have been effective so far, the size and extent of international aids are neither proportionate to the wide range of needs by refugees nor the amount of expenditures sustained by Iranian Administration for such a long stay of refugees in the country. Even in 2000, the UNHCR announced 2001 as the closing date of refuge-seeking and since then minimized its contributions or cut them in cases like education.

▷ **MOE & Refugees**

Because of various phenomena mentioned in the above paragraphs, a host of refugees immigrated to the Islamic Republic of Iran by the end of 90s and early 20s. Among them, a great number of school-age and illiterate children urged the Ministry of Education to fulfill its humanitarian and moral duty, while feeling sympathy for Afghan and Iraqi immigrants, assume the responsibility of organizing education of a considerable number of students from Afghanistan and Iraq through integrated policies on education and training and based on teachings of Islam. MOE provided extensive educational services for immigrants and foreign citizens, particularly 'Afghan and Iraqi immigrants, with similar quality and quantity of education for Iranian nationals.

Since 1995, MOE undertook responsibility of educational policy making, implementation of programs and providing services for alien students in Iran. With the collaboration of education departments in provinces, it has rendered vast and valuable educational services to educate and train tens of thousands of refugee students, specially Afghan and Iraqi citizens.

▷ **Intake Rate & Education Indicator of Afghan & Iraqi Students in Iran**

Table 1. Statistics of Afghan & Iraqi Students Studying at Iranian Schools (2000-2006)

School Year	Afghan Students	Iraqi Students	Total Students	Growth Percentage
2000-01	156786	26139	182925	0
2001-02	167065	25535	192600	5.29
2002-03	157914	28245	186159	-3.34
2003-04	145603	20253	165856	-11
2004-05	62712	12452	75164	-54.68
2005-06	150050	12399	162449	33.16
2006-07	199346	12971	212317	32.85

The above Table on population growth of Afghan and Iraqi students reveals that primarily, the students population decreases from 182,925 in 2000 to 75,164 in 2004. However, it shows an ascending trend for the next years up to 212,317 students in 2006; i.e. the number of students for the last year, increases up to 2.8 times as much compared to 2004.

- The two main reasons for sudden population reduction of the above students during 2002 to 2004 are:
1. MOE's circular for mandatory tuition (about 80% of ordinary students' per capita expenditures) collectable from these students in (2002-03). Hence, a great number of immigrants decided not to enroll at schools. To recover unwanted aftermaths of such decision, the circular was revised for the next year, so as they had to pay only a small portion of expenditures (20%). As a result, the enrolment rate of foreign students got back on track with a growing trend in the next year.
 2. Serious decisions of Government to organize aliens, particularly issuance of residence permit and ... made so many foreign students and their parents to refrain from enrolling in public schools for fear of being identified. It contributed mostly to the descending trend of foreign students.

Table 2. Afghan & Iraqi Students Population, Excluding Pre-University (per Gender) (1991-2005)

Afghan		Iraqi		Total		Total	Girl's Ratio per capita
Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy		
847670	1066040	169943	177429	1017613	1243469	2261082	45

▷ **Bam Earthquake & People's Hardship**

The horrific earthquake of Bam in Dec. 26, 2004, measuring 6.5 on the Richter scale was an unexpected and devastating incidence. Tens of thousands lost their lives the very first minutes and thousands others were left injured and handicapped in the hospitals. Besides Bam, so many other neighboring districts and villages around Bam were destroyed. Major educational, health, cultural and economic centers were totally destructed or were no longer usable. Thousands of houses leveled to the ground, only a few buildings remained intact and usable.

Based on existing information about 26,000 killed, 30,000 injured and 75,000 homeless were the irreparable losses of the earthquake. Unfortunately, more than 8,000 out of 62,500 students and 1000 of education staffs of Bam and districts of Narmashir, Fahraj and Rigan lost their lives.

About 2,200 children were left unattended or lost one of their parents. Also, most of schools were destroyed or are in a very bad condition.



It was such a profound disaster that first the people, and then the Red Crescent Society and the armed forces mobilized to help victims.

Upon request of the government for help, provincial and local authorities rushed to help besides vast community contributions, rescue teams, international organizations such as Red Cross and UNICEF. In addition to invaluable role of people, the contribution of the above organizations had been so efficient in helping the victims, organizing children and students to prevent from education long stoppage.



Also, extensive measures have been accomplished by MOE with the collaboration of other organizations, particularly the Red Crescent Society, Ministry of Health, Welfare Organization as well as UNICEF, the main important of which are mentioned here.

▷ Action Taken for Children & Students of Post Earthquake Period (2003-2006)

All the actions taken since the occurrence of Bam earthquake could be classified in 3 stages: First stage: Urgent rescue operations- Second stage: Reconstruction and recovery period including provisional services, shelters, classrooms- and Third stage: Transition to the period of stability and performing long-term activities.

First stage: Although MOE, with the collaboration of concerned organizations, acted urgently to help victims, sending a number of students to the schools of farther towns and villages with the help of their relatives, key measures are categorized under next stages of reconstruction and provisional services and transition to stability period.

1. Provision of 34 tent classrooms, reconstruction of 190 schools and about 1,170 classrooms by October 2004, of which 620 classrooms were organized in prefabs and 300 others were repaired or new classrooms were constructed by charity people and NGOs.
2. Enrolment of 363 children from 7,562 children of the region in Bam nurseries.

3. Enrolment and more than 22,000 students in the schools at primary, lower/upper secondary and pre-university educations since the school year of 2004-2005.
4. Psychological-social supports for 1,200 teachers.
5. Conducting short-term educational workshops and courses as well as briefing sessions for more than 800 teachers and school personnel in the fields of health, computer, teaching method, consultation and psychology, life skills and librarianship.
“Crisis Interfering Workshop” and “Image Therapy” with the collaboration of UNICEF and UNESCO were among important workshops.
6. Implementing Child Friendly Schools Plan.

Besides training workforce, the following measures have also been performed:

- 6-1- To equip 116 primary, lower and upper secondary schools with computer, classroom facilities, lab, workshop and library.
- 6-2- To construct or complete tens of sanitary disposal washrooms and hygienic services in the nurseries, primary, lower and secondary schools;
- 6-3- To enroll out-of-school children and to conduct training workshop for them;
- 6-4- To make provision of 7,500 hygiene packages and to distribute them among schools;
- 6-5- To distribute textbooks, educational pamphlets and CDs of various subjects among teachers and other MOE staffs in the cities;
- 7- Celebration of December 20 as the day of “Neat Student- Healthy City” in all schools in order to remind the importance of health of environmental and cleanness of schools, and distribution of health badges among students;
- 8- Making the arrangements for visit of about 1000 children aged 10 to 12 (mostly the girls) to recreational and cultural centers;
- 9- Provision and equipment of primary schools refreshment stands for students;
- 10- Organizing various family education sessions for more than 3,480 family members;
- 11- Provision and distribution of 120 hygiene supplies (waste basket, disinfectants, liquid soap, chlorometer kit, hand broom, mop, floor cleansing detergent,...) with the collaboration of UNICEF;
- 12- Organizing Central Health Committees at the city level as well as sub-committees with the cooperation of UNICEF;
- 13- Education of individual, environmental and water health to more than 5000 students, holding exhibition of student works and organizing student camp;
- 14- Setting up emergency telephone line to send the child and employing 80 social workers;
- 15- Looking after the absolute majority of children by Welfare Organization with the collaboration of UNICEF (only 120 children are under care of residential centers). Also more than 2,610 children were adopted by a parent or legal guardian.

■ Children Infected with HIV

HIV/ AIDS, as one of the biggest challenges of the Third Millennium, rapidly spread throughout the world. The young people are mainly under the risk of becoming infected with HIV. The disease kills the affected person at the most important period of life, causes public health, economic and social challenges, and on the whole, it threatens development of communities. Based on WHO report, although incidence of HIV/AIDS was not a big concern for East

Mediterranean countries, the ever-increasing trend of contamination by disease during the recent years, has placed these countries in a critical situation.

Islamic Republic of Iran is also situated in a very risky geographic position. Currently, the highest speed of HIV incidence is reported in the north region of Iran, the east of Asia and east part of Mediterranean region. On the other hand, the eastern neighbor of Iran, Afghanistan, is the major producer of narcotics; therefore, Iran is being used as a route for trafficking illicit drugs. I.R. of Iran, in coordination with 188 UN member states, committed itself to prevent and control HIV/AIDS and has made substantial and valuable contribution to this end, praised and recognized by international organizations. This Chapter deals with some of these efforts in brief, with a focus on the issue of education and training.

The first case of HIV incidence in the I.R. of Iran was reported in 1986, attacking a child with Hemophilia. In 1995, the prisons of the country were identified as places for the most cases of transmission of the disease with an ascending trend. The statistics reveal that until 23rd of September 2006, about 13,702 HIV positive individuals have been identified in the country, of which 94.5% are men and 5.5% are women. The age group with the highest incidence of HIV positive belongs to the younger adults aged 24-35 (40.7%). The main reasons of its transmission in order of prevalence are the people with frequent injection and needle sharing (64.6%), insecure sexual behavior (7.4%), mother-to-child transmission (0.5%), and through transfusion of blood products (1.8%). Also, the means of transmission is unknown for 25.8% of the infected people. While the unknown way of transmission is constantly augmenting during the recent years, the shame and disgrace of being accused of illegal sexual relations is somehow believed to be the reason of a part of such increase. At present, the HIV rate of incidence in the I.R. of Iran has shifted from Low Level to Concentrated Level. (Reported by Ministry of Health, Treatment & Medical Education, 2006)

Policy Making & Planning

In the Islamic Republic of Iran, the high ranking officials make their utmost efforts to encourage prevention and control of HIV/AIDS. To this end, the HIV Planning High Council of the country was established, attended by Vice-President, representative of the Head of the Judiciary and some of the Ministers, to make the relevant policies. The highest authority of the concerned organizations, governors and a group of other officials as members of HIV/AIDS Control & Prevention Committee attend the meetings and set the required guidance for implementation of HIV programs. Monitored and directed by policymakers and planners, tens of programs, bylaws and directives have been adopted. At this time, with the advocacy of policymakers, the political supports for HIV/AIDS programs are rather promising.

Organizational Structure

Prior to launching HIV/AIDS Control & prevention Plan, the Ministry of Health, Treatment and Medical Education was exclusively responsible to deal with the issue; however, by developing the above plan and encouraging organizations, ministries and NGOs to participate the plan, an appropriate organizational structure, using matrix organization methods with Functional and Structural type of communication Channels for each unit, was designed at national and provincial levels. The AIDS High Council, National Committee and technical committees were established at national level. National Committee convenes with the chairmanship of Minister of Health, Treatment & Medical Education and the highest officials of relevant organizations. Technical committees consist of five committees: “Education & Information”, “National

Committee of Care & Treatment”, “National Committee of Damage Mitigation”, “Committee of Protection & Assessment”, and “Committee of Social Supports”. The Higher Council, specifying the general orientations, consists of Vice-President, representative of the Head of the Judiciary and some Ministers. At provincial level, the provincial committees are chaired by the governor and universities of medical sciences’ vice-chancellor for health as the secretary of the committee. In each organization and ministry, a special structure has been established, proportionate to the entrusted duties.

HIV/AIDS Prevention & Control National Program

In 2002, the National Program on HIV/AIDS Prevention & Control was adopted. It incorporates 11 strategies, 65 special objectives and 278 master projects, each could be regarded as a main goal for developing action plan. Preliminary measures initiated by Ministry of Health, Treatment & Medical Education for adopting strategic plan; then other organizations including Ministry of Education participated in finalizing the plan. Various domains such as education and information, securing blood supplies, Epidemiologic Data System, thorough surveillance for health providers, Voluntary Counseling & Testing, and ...have been taken under advisement. The strategic plan comprising of an executive program with preset goals, verified by officials and organization concerned with HIV/AIDS prevention and control. Also, the attention of many countries and international organizations was directed to this plan and I.R. of Iran was encouraged for its adoption and implementation. Partnership of all relevant organizations, institutes, NGOs, civil society, and the affected people as well as being community-oriented are all among particulars of the strategic plan. The assessment of this plan uncovered that the measures taken to control HIV/AIDS from 2002 to 2004 were almost successful despite existing barriers and challenges.

The five-year plan had been adopted for the period of 2002-2006 and the Second National Five-Year Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS Control & Prevention is being drawn up with a totally feasible approach and will be implemented from 2007.

The Government public budget basically finances the HIV/AIDS prevention and control activities and UN agencies have also undertaken to finance about 3% of the total HIV/AIDS expenditures. The total budget allocated for HIV/AIDS prevention and control by the government in 2004 amounted for Rls. 119 billion. It is worth motioning that all social groups, particularly high-risk groups and prisoners are under special attention while allocating the budget and no restriction is exerted in terms of gender, race, religion, occupation, age and so on.

During the past several years, the tendency to put the plans and services of NGOs into operation for HIV- related activities has been increased; consequently, certain civil institutions have significantly developed their activities to control HIV/AIDS.

Currently, some NGOs are active on the issue of HIV/AIDS; also a number of affected individuals formed certain groups and participate in carrying out the programs.

The National Education & Information Committee on HIV/AIDS was established with the membership of all concerned stakeholders and organizations, directing predicted programs. As far as education and information is concerned, spiritual leaders, clerics and religious teachings have always played a key role in prevention of AIDS as well as organizing Peer Education Circles. Reaping good results from supports of concerned officials in mitigation of HIV losses, the importance of supports by policymakers for conducting educational courses on life skills and sexual issues was underscored.

In the Islamic Republic of Iran, the youth education has always been a priority in education and information programs. A special strategy was designed at high school and lower secondary schools to enhance AIDS-related educations on public health, fertility and sexual health to the younger adults; for instance, in the first grade of high school, a 6- hour syllabus is designed for HIV/AIDS awareness educations. About 11.2% of high schools in the country take advantage of a well-trained teacher in the field of HIV/AIDS and 90% of students at upper secondary level receive such educations. Furthermore, Ministry of Education has so far accomplished the following measures in line with education and information strategy:

- Developing an educational package on AIDS preventive measures for instructors' training;
- Developing a supplement to biology and health textbooks titled "HIV/AIDS Prevention for Student of High School First Grade";
- Developing book of "HIV/AIDS Prevention Based on Life Skills Education for Teachers";
- Developing book of "HIV/AIDS Prevention Based on Life Skills Education for Teenagers";

Also, for the sake of education and information, various media capacities (Radio & TV, Press), and other means of communication such as publications, meetings, forums and educational workshops have so far been exploited.

Moreover, "Applied Research Capability Building" is always a key agenda item, one of the eleven strategies of HIV/AIDS Prevention & Control National Plan. Other activities are based on HIV mitigation, care and treatment strategies.

Social and economic supports for HIV-afflicted people, their families and other high-risk individuals have been included in the national plan, emphasizing on patients' privacy protection and their human rights. So far, some circulars have been issued on prohibition of pre-employment HIV test and on prohibition of HIV/AIDS corporal expulsion in the national plan by First Vice-President, also on HIV positive students' compulsory enrolment at schools by Minister of Education. Some other programs have also been designed for changing the society's discriminatory attitude towards afflicted people; on the whole, high ranking officials of the Judiciary and other authorities have been quite supportive with regard to social issues and their encouragements were extremely efficient in this regard.

- 2-2- Policies, Regulations & Legislation on Compulsory Education**
- 2-3- Education Structure**
 - Formal**
 - Non-Formal**
- 2-4- Education Financing**
- 2-5- EFA Coordination Assessment**

2-2- Policies & Legislations on Compulsory Education

As per Law on Compulsory Education, approved in July 28, 1943 and its amendment of June 19, 1971, the Ministry of Education has been assigned to make necessary provision of compulsory and free-of-charge educational services for all school-aged children at primary and lower secondary courses.

Moreover, by virtue of Article (30) of the I.R. of Iran Constitutional Law, the government is obliged to make the requirements of free education available for the entire nation up to the end of upper secondary, and to bring the country in total self-sufficiency in free higher education.

The Fourth Economic, Social and Cultural Development Plan has underlined the issue of education and compulsory education for all school-aged nationals.

Para (A) of Article (52) of the Fourth Plan places too much stress on provision of required means of Education For All and Para (13) of the same Article lays great emphasis on compulsory education up to the end of lower secondary (8-year General Education course).

In Para (J) of Article (52), the adoption and entry into force of National Literacy Strategic Plan in terms of geographical, environmental, social and cultural specifications of various country's regions has been taken into consideration, aimed at encouraging NGOs and community participation, based on which, at least all individuals aged under 30 would be literate by the end of the Fourth Development Plan.

Para (O) of Article (52) of the Fourth Development Plan underscores the need for provision of appropriate facilities to eradicate educational deprivation through developing boarding schools, central-village schools, central dormitories, distance learning, e-learning, nutritional supplies, conveyance and health facilities and other financings for boarding schools, developing educational, proportionate training and sports environments, bearing in mind student gender issue, as well as conducting required programs for extension of pre-primary and nursery education, particularly in bi-lingual regions.

To put the EFA into operation and to provide legal grounds to facilitate the realization of the plan, approval No. H27833T30519 dated Aug. 25, 2003 was issued by the Cabinet of Ministers, according to which, the Ministry of Education shall assume the responsibility of forming EFA National Task Force attended by representatives of concerned organizations and ministries.

Pursuant to this approval, the Ministry of Education with collaboration of Management & Planning Organization initiated adoption of EFA Plan. The plan was approved by the Cabinet of Ministers and was notified under No. 31113/21933 dated Dec. 17, 2004 to the administrative organizations for more coordination with the Ministry of Education.

Based on the above legislations, the most important of which were recalled here, the Government of the I.R. of Iran and Ministry of Education are eagerly after full enrolment and provision of compulsory and free-of-charge educations for all school-aged children and adolescence.

2-3- Education Structure

A- Formal Education

The education system of the I.R. of Iran comprises of two formal and non-formal educations. Formal education, in turn, falls into two stages of pre-university and higher education with the following programs:

1. Pre-Primary Education

Pre-primary is an optional program in the education system of the country and parents may enroll their children in pre-primary centers upon personal wish.

Ministry of Education, Welfare Organization, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Labor & Social Affairs, Municipality and NGOs sponsor the educational and training services of this course.

The course is designed by MOE for children aged 4 and 5, as a one-year optional pre-school education on voluntary-basis, conducting special educations for children.

2. Primary Education

The first formal program of education system for students aged 6-10, includes five grades from first to fifth. To enter the course, children must have at least 6 years of age. Maximum age of enrolment at the primary first grade is 9 for urban and 11 for rural and tribal areas. Under rules and regulations, the students may continue their studies at this course by the age of 15 at most.

A 24-session weekly curriculum, totally for 800 sessions is predicted for this program. The educational units of primary education are called School.

3. Lower Secondary Education

The primary fifth grade graduates comprising the incoming population of lower secondary. This course of study bridges primary education and upper secondary education together. Lower secondary is a three-year program, including three grades from first to third. As per schools executive by-laws, maximum enrolment age for students at the three grades in the urban areas is 15, 16, and 17 respectively, and for rural and tribal areas is 17, 18, and 19 respectively.

The educational units of lower secondary education are called Lower Secondary School.

4. Upper Secondary Education

It takes 3 years to complete upper secondary education and subjects are presented on credit-basis. The required credits for obtaining high school diploma are 96.

The upper secondary education is classified into three branches of Theoretical, Technical & Vocational, and Kar-o-Danesh (work & Knowledge) (Kar-o-Danesh).

– Theoretical Upper Secondary Branch: It consists of 4 fields of study in Mathematics-Physics, Literature & Humanities, Experimental Sciences, and Islamic Knowledge & Education.

In all these fields of study, 52 credits of the subjects are common and mostly presented in the first and second grades. Exclusive subjects of this branch consist of about 44 credits, mostly presented in the third grade. The educational units of this branch are called High School.

– Technical & Vocational Upper Secondary Branch: It consists of 3 fields of Industry, Agriculture and Services, with special subjects for each field. In all these fields of study, 58 credits of the subjects are common. Exclusive subjects consist of about 39 credits for each field. The educational units of this branch are called Technical School.

The title of subjects for each field of study are as follows:

- Field of Industry: General Drawing, Manufacture & Production, Metal Industries, Vehicle Mechanics, Installations, Wood & Paper Industries, Electronics, Electro-techniques, Metallurgy, Chemical Industries, Textile Industries, Ceramics, Mine, Cement, Construction, Surveying, Navigation, Naval Engines Mechanics, Marine Electronics & Tele-Communications.

- Field of Services: Graphics, Designing & Tailoring, Architectural Drawing, Handicrafts, Painting, Drama, Cinema, Music, Hand Print, Accounting, Commerce, Childcare, Computer, Physical Education, Family Planning, Restoration of Cultural Works.

- Field of Agriculture: Livestock, Farming & Horticulture, Agricultural Machineries, Food Industries.

– Kar-o-Danesh (work & Knowledge) Upper Secondary Branch: It consists of 3 fields of Industry, Agriculture and Services, each field falls into some groups and each group into one or some major fields and each field presents one or more skill subjects.

In all skill fields of this branch, 53 credits are designed as general and selective subjects and about 43 credits as skill subjects. The educational units of this branch are called Kar-o-Danesh (work & Knowledge) Technical School.

5. Pre-University Education

Graduates of three- grade theoretical upper secondary education have to attend pre-university course in order to continue their studies at higher education level.

The syllabi of this course are presented on credit-semester-basis. In a credit system program, each subject is evaluated with the number of its credit and the student's pass or fail is considered for every subject, irrelevant to other subjects. The curriculum for every academic year is performed on two semesters, 18 weeks each. Pre-University's fields of study consist of Mathematical Sciences, Experimental Sciences, Human Sciences, Art, and Islamic Knowledge & Education. There are three modes of study in pre-university course: 1- Studying at daily pre-university centers (for students aged 21 and lower by September 22 of each year, observing provisions and conditions), 2- Studying at adults pre-university centers, 3- Studying as free candidates (sundry).

6. Higher Education Programs

Higher education includes Associate Degree program (2-3 years), Bachelor's Degree program (4-6 years), Master's Degree program (2-3 years), and Doctorate Degree program (2-4 years).

Formal Educations' Authority

In the Islamic Republic of Iran, three Ministries are responsible for formal educations:

- A. Ministry of Education is in charge of pre-primary, primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education. In addition to MOE, different governmental and non-governmental organizations and institutions are active including Welfare Organization, Ministry of Labor & Social Affairs, Municipality and NGOs;
- B. Ministry of Science, Research & Technology is in charge of University and higher education;
- C. Ministry of Health, Treatment & Medical Education is in charge of university and higher education in medicine.

Meanwhile, various other governmental and non-governmental bodies such as Ministry of Agriculture Jihad and Ministry of Culture & Islamic Guidance take part in conducting formal educations.

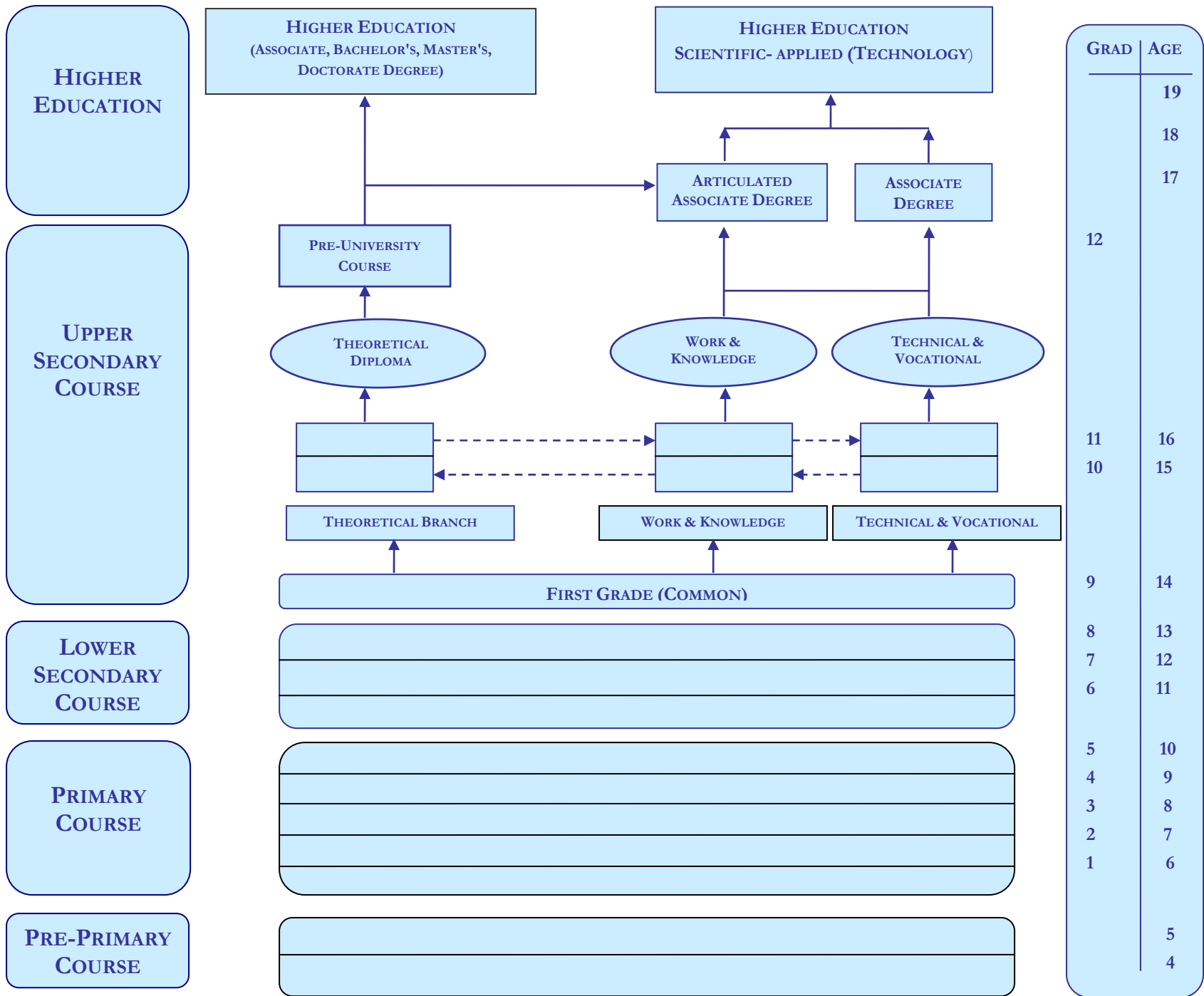
B. Non-Formal Educations & Responsible Authorities

In the I.R. of Iran, several ministries and governmental and non-governmental organizations assume the responsibility of non-formal education. The basic non-formal education or literacy programs are performed by Literacy Movement Organization. The latter conducts a preliminary course for illiterate people to educate them; the program is linked to further formal education at primary level through a non-formal course (equivalent to primary third grade), a final course (equivalent to primary fourth grade), and primary fifth grade for the adults to assure sustainable learning.

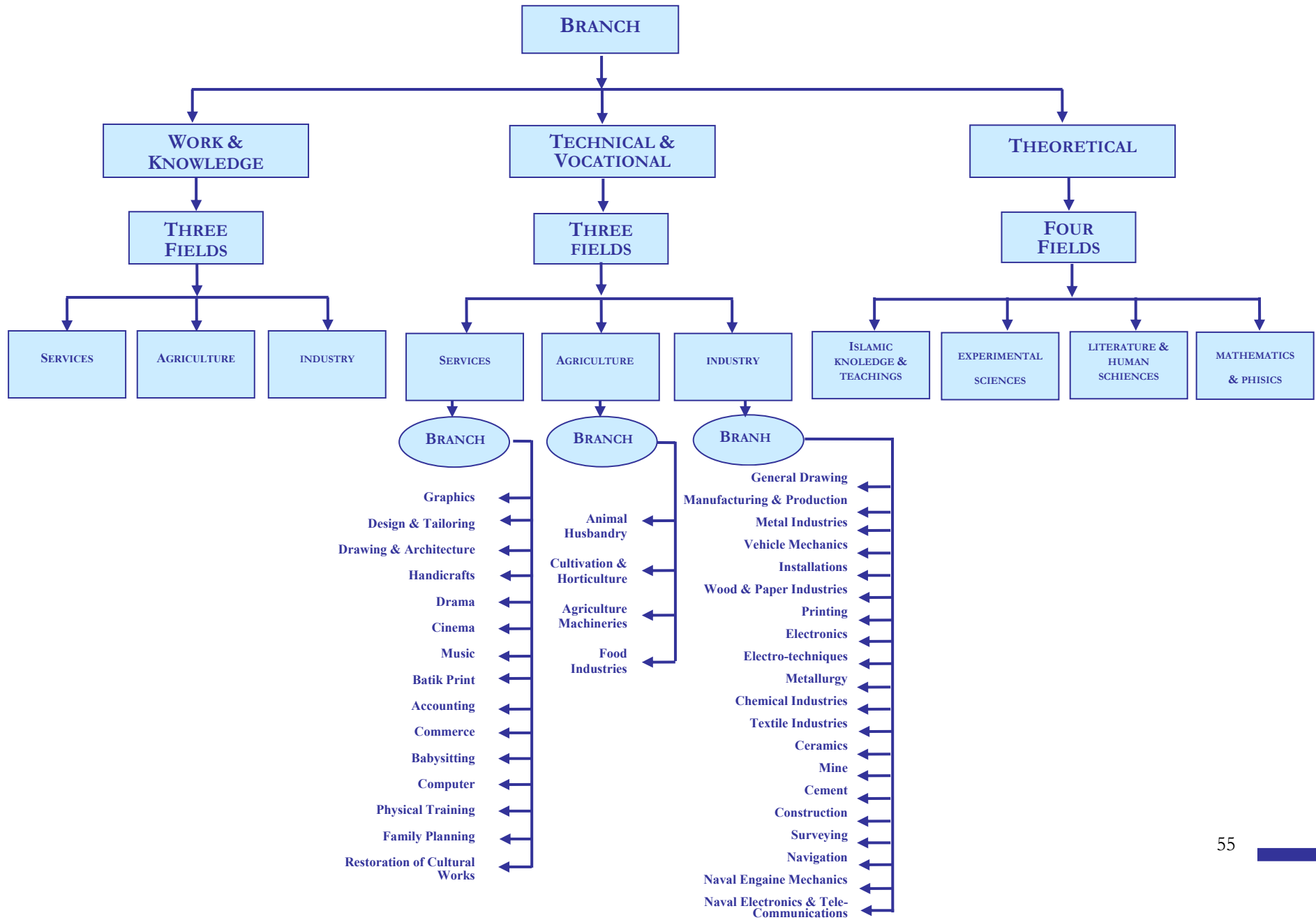
Technical, vocational and skill education is another type of non-formal education conducted by Technical & Vocational Education Organization (affiliated to the Ministry of Labor & Social Affairs). It includes 300 to 900-hour (or more) short term training courses. Upon completion of courses, a 3rd, 2nd and 1st Degree Skill Certificate is awarded to trainees.

In addition to the above forms of education, certain short term and modular training courses are conducted by most ministries and governmental organizations as initial or in-service educations aimed at promoting knowledge and professional skills of personnel. Skill short term courses are also developed by open private schools, focusing on skills such as art, music, crafts, culture, foreign languages, family planning, computer, accounting, hairdressing, tailoring, embroidery and so on. All private schools shall obtain a license from Technical & Vocational Org. and/or concerned authorities for their skill courses.

CHART OF FORMAL EDUCATION STRUCTURE



UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION



2-4- Education Financing

1- Education Financing Structure

In the Islamic Republic of Iran, education is free of charge up to the end of upper secondary education, i.e. major part of educational expenditures is financed by the government. It accounts for more than 95% of educational expenditures; whereas only 5% of the expenditures are ensured by people through school tuition. It is of course other than those educational expenditures, financed indirectly by households. Therefore, almost a great part of educational expenditures are financed by the government, as current and capital credits allocated for all educational programs. Furthermore, expenditures relating to literacy campaign, non-formal educations and short term technical and vocational educations are also undertaken by government. Based on MOE administrative structure, the country is divided into 30 provinces with an education department in each province. Tehran province, as a metropolis, is classified under two administrative departments working at provincial level, with independent current and capital budget, i.e. the educational expenditures are allocated to the provinces. Also, a number of central organizations and institutions enjoy separate credits. In this organizational structure, about 90% of budget is allocated to provincial organizations and the remaining 10% of credits to organizations and institutions affiliated to the government, in centralized basis. The required mechanism for financial resources and their allotments is specified in public budget on a yearly basis and inserted in annual budget law. These financial resources are allocated to central and provincial organizations within three-month intervals to be enforced in a decentralized manner.

2- MOE Budget Quota in GDP

As mentioned earlier, almost 85% of the total expenditures on education are financed by the government, which amounts to about 95% by the end of upper secondary education. In other words, share of non-governmental sector in provision of expenditures on education accounts for about 5% by the end of upper secondary course; whereas, share of government in financing educational expenditures for higher education and non-formal technical & vocational education reaches to about 50%, and the remaining is provided by people in the form of tuition. The amounts allocated by people and non-governmental organizations are not included in education budget quota from GDP.

During a 6 period time from 2000 to 2006, the MOE budget quota from GDP have been 4.9% on the average; nevertheless, by adding the 15% non-governmental expenditures on education for all educational level, the MOE budget quota from GDP exceeds to 5.7%.

However, the variation trend of government budget ratio per education in the GDP has increased from about 4.4% to 5.3%, i.e. the growth of government expenditures on education during this period accounts for gross production growth for the most part.

The ratio of expenditures per each formal educational course from GDP has augmented from 4.29% up to 5.1%. On the average, 1.47% of GDP has been allotted to expenditures on primary education, 1.06% on lower secondary education, 1.28% on upper secondary education, 0.88% on higher education¹, and 0.17% on non-formal educations.

¹ - For higher education, this quota from GDP is merely attributed to the government expenditures. By adding people's financing, the quota amounts to 1.75%.

3- MOE Budget Quota in Government Public Budget

The education budget quota from government public budget was 19.2% during 2000-2006. The quota fluctuated during this period; however, it never reduced from 17% and never exceeded 21% of government budget. On the average, share of primary education from public budget reaches to 5.8%, share of lower secondary education to about 4.1%, share of upper secondary education to about 5%, share of higher education to 3.4%, share of non-formal technical & vocational education to about 0.37%, share of literacy campaign to about 0.2%, and share of pre-school education to 0.16%. In other words, nearly 15.4% of government public budget are allocated to formal education by the end of upper secondary level and 0.57% to non-formal educations of literacy activities and short term technical & vocational courses; only 3.4% of the public budget are allocated to higher education.

Expenditure Rates on Each Educational Program from Public Budget (2000-2006)

Category \ Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Pre-Primary Education	0.16	0.19	0.16	0.15	0.2	0.3	0.16
Primary Education	6.54	6.65	5.22	6.02	6.03	5.07	5.8
Lower Secondary Education	4.36	4.47	3.69	4.32	4.36	3.98	3.74
Upper Secondary Education	4.73	5.13	4.38	5.25	5.34	4.69	5.14
Higher Education	3.97	3.91	2.9	3.06	3.04	3.81	3.4
Non-formal Technical & Vocational Education	0.52	0.56	0.38	0.5	0.53	0.47	0.37
Literacy Campaign	0.21	0.2	0.17	0.17	0.19	0.18	0.2
Total	20.5	21.1	16.9	19.5	19.7	18.5	17.9

4-Expenditures Ratio on Each Educational Programs Per Total Educational Expenditures- Per Capita Shares from Per Capita GDP

Expenditures on education are divided into two main current and capital expenditures. The ratio of current expenditures per total expenditures on education gets to about 91% and about 8% of expenditures on education are categorized as capital expenditures.

The ratio of expenditures on primary course per total expenditures on education during the 7-year period (2000-2006) is about 30%, lower secondary education 21.5%, upper secondary education 25.9%, pre-primary education about 0.9%, higher education 18%, non-formal technical & vocational education 2.5%, and literacy activities is about 1%.

Another index that has been used for allotment of expenditures on education is student (school/university) expenditures ratio at various educational level to per capita GDP. The index for the period 2000-2006 shows a rate of about 15.7% in primary education. This rate was shifted from 11.8% in 2000 to about 18.8% in 2006.

The above rate for lower secondary education has been about 16.8% in the period 2000-2006, showing an increasing trend from 12.7% in 2000 to 20.9% in 2006.

As for upper secondary education, the student expenditure ratio to per capita GDP reaches from 15.6% in 2000 up to 28.1% in 2006, i.e. an average rate of 21.8% for a period of 7 years.

University student expenditures ratio to per capita GDP has been about 80%, with at least a 60% to 100% variation.

School/University Student Expenditure Ratio to Per Capita GDP (2000-2006)

Category \ Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Primary Education	11.8	14.1	14.7	16.1	17	17.4	18.8
Lower Secondary Education	12.7	14.6	15.2	16.6	17.6	19.8	20.9
Upper Secondary Education	15.6	18.8	20.8	22.6	23	23.7	28.1
Higher Education	96.3	101.2	87.5	73.6	67.2	73.3	60.8

5- Government Financial Incentives for Special Groups

In the Islamic Republic of Iran, the entire expenditures on education of underprivileged and vulnerable social groups are financed on a free-of-charge basis. However, certain financial incentives, like scholarship, are granted to guardian-less families by supportive organizations. Moreover, certain budgets are exclusively allocated for all groups of special children including the mentally-handicapped, physically-disabled, blind-deaf, learning-disordered, and so on. These allotted credits include expenditures on their rehabilitation, life insurance and costs of conveyance plus expenditures on their education.

The students of deprived regions, exceeding to more than 3 million children, are provided with one free healthy meal. Also, all special children are provided with textbooks through government subsidies and with prices lower than final cost. Certain other subsidies are directly given to these students by the government for stationeries and other required items.

Total Budget

amounts expressed in million Rls.

Educational Level	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Formal education	24652593	31817434	42992107	51921050	63693611	84018279	103876863
Pre-primary education	198900	290463	410902	427099	687324	1392900	953683
Primary education	8157507	10396803	13727799	16626939	20245339	23893184	29570185
Lower secondary education	5443124	6990486	9706194	11921136	14622319	18722044	22327396
Upper secondary education	5897604	8027938	11520113	14486031	17939492	22075053	30725046
Higher education	4955458	6111744	7627099	8459845	10199137	17935098	20300553
Non-formal education	920420	1195374	1428788	1837895	2418141	3064556	3406635
Technical & vocational education	652624	880561	993288	1376148	1783062	2232314	2182124
Literacy campaign	267796	314813	435500	461747	635079	832242	1224511
Total	25573013	33012808	44420895	53758945	66111752	87082835	107283498
Government Public budget	124796000	156394000	262950000	276172000	335693000	470989000	597743000
GDP (market price)	574693000	664620000	917036000	1095304000	1384819000	1687905000	2038432000
Total share from GPB (%)	20.5	21.1	16.9	19.5	19.7	18.5	17.9
Total share from GDP (%)	4.4	5.0	4.8	4.9	4.8	5.2	5.3

Education Quota from Government Public Budget

figures in %

Educational Course	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Formal education	19.76	20.35	16.35	18.80	18.97	17.85	17.39
Pre-primary education	0.16	0.19	0.16	0.15	0.20	0.30	0.16
Primary education	6.54	6.65	5.22	6.02	6.03	5.07	4.95
Lower secondary education	4.36	4.47	3.69	4.32	4.36	3.98	3.74
Upper secondary education	4.73	5.13	4.38	5.25	5.34	4.69	5.14
Higher education	3.97	3.91	2.90	3.06	3.04	3.81	3.40
Non-formal education	0.73	0.76	0.55	0.67	0.72	0.65	0.57
Technical & vocational	0.52	0.56	0.38	0.50	0.53	0.47	0.37
Literacy campaign	0.21	0.20	0.17	0.17	0.19	0.18	0.20

Education Quota from GDP

figures in %

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Formal education	4.29	4.78	4.69	4.74	4.61	4.98	5.11
Pre-primary education	0.03	0.04	0/04	0.04	0.05	0.08	0.05
Primary education	1.42	1.56	1.50	1.52	1.46	1.42	1.45
Lower secondary education	0.95	1.05	1.06	1.09	1.06	1.11	1.10
Upper secondary education	1.03	1.21	1.26	1.32	1.30	1.31	1.51
Higher education	0.86	0.92	0.83	0.77	0.74	1.06	1.00
Non-formal education	0.16	0.18	0.16	0.17	0.18	0.18	0.17
Technical & vocational	0.11	0.13	0.11	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.11
Literacy campaign	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.04	0.05	0.05	0.06
Formal education							

2-5- Education For All Coordination Assessment

To accomplish Dakar commitments by the Islamic Republic of Iran, the EFA Follow-up Headquarters was established by Ministry of Education, Educational Deputy Office in 2001. It assumed the responsibility of implementation, coordination, follow-up and assessment of measures taken under provisions of EFA Statement.

Towards the end of 2001, upon partition of Public, Theoretical and Skill Education Deputy Offices, the General Education Deputy was delegated with the duty to follow-up EFA progress. Also, a special credit line was opened on the national budget law with the collaboration of Management & Planning Organization to further assist implementation of EFA.

Pursuant to the above actions and for provision of EFA directive legislations and its executive structure, the Minister of Education submitted a report on EFA progress from 1990 through 2002 to the President; thereupon the EFA issue was included in the agenda of the Cabinet.

The investigations of the Cabinet of Ministers resulted in an approval based on which the EFA National Task Force (National Council) was established under Ministry of Education and membership of representatives from following ministries and organizations:

Minister of Education, concerned deputies from Management & Planning Org., Ministry of Science, Research & Technology, Ministry of Health, Treatment & Medical Education, Ministry of the Interior, I.R.I Broadcasting Org., representative of Statistics Center of Iran, heads of Welfare Org., Youth National Org., Women's Participation Center of the President's Office, UNESCO National Commission based in Iran, UNESCO Cluster Office, a representative from relevant NGOs (nominated by Minister of Education).

The delegates unanimously agreed upon Chairmanship of the Minister of Education and Deputy of General Education as Secretary of the Task Force.

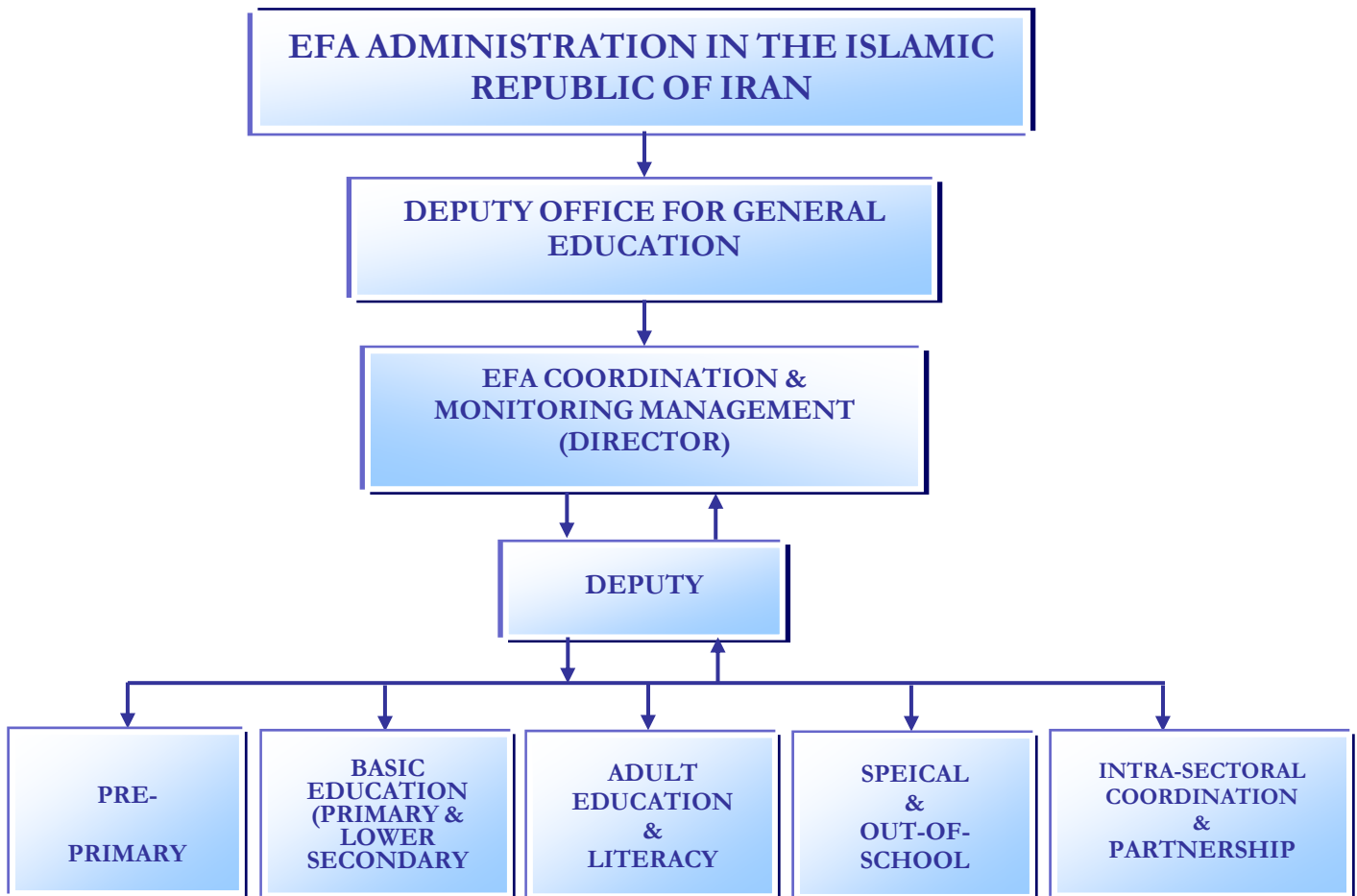
National Council on EFA Plan monitors and organizes related basic guidelines and general policies through its meetings (within the context of EFA goals). It has further explored to minimize major problems and concerns on the way, proportionate to its trans-sectoral capacities and structure. However, the absence of some delegates from member ministries and organizations and irregular convening of the meetings are among challenges that National Council is currently facing.

To put the National Council's approvals into operation, a secretariat was organized in the General Education Deputy Office, under supervision of National Council, prior to formation of EFA Coordination & Monitoring Management in November 2004. The Secretariat had been assigned to plan, organize, coordinate and undertake all EFA-related affairs, the most important of which are:

1. To define the status and importance of EFA in education system of the country;
2. To adopt EFA National Plan.

Pursuant to adoption of EFA National Plan and its approval by the Cabinet of Ministers that met with remarkable achievements within first two years of implementation, education system's policymakers and officials expressing their viewpoints in favor of the plan, the EFA Coordination & Monitoring Management was established in 2004 in the Ministry of Education. This move has laid the ground for better management and supervision of the plan on the one hand, and more tangible efficiency of the plan in the sectors and sub-sectors on the other hand, which, in turn, contributed to the enhancement of objectives.

Organizational Chart of EFA Management, including a director, a deputy and five expert committees is demonstrated in the following chart:



EFA Experts Committees formed on the basis of identified target groups in the country. Each committee is responsible to make required coordination and supervision to materialize predefined goals in the sectors (deputy offices and MOE departments) and sub-sectors (provinces and educational districts), taking into account the related target group. Also, it would make any interaction and cooperation deemed necessary with concerned ministries and organizations.

The policymakers and officials of the I.R. of Iran have emphasized the importance of EFA Plan, with regard to the goals it follows, so as it has been given a special place in the planning system of the country and incorporated in the Fourth Development Plan. (Para A of Article 52)

EFA Plan, at the core of implementation process, is fully compatible with education development plans at national and sub-sectoral level (in provinces and educational districts). In other words, the policies, strategies and goals of EFA Plan are being followed up through national and provincial development plans of action.

On the whole, the recognized legal status of EFA Plan in the national documents on development issues has speeded up the realization of EFA goals and elimination of problems and concerns.

EFA Monitoring and assessment are among top agenda items, focusing on the two following activities:

1. Launching EFA plan
2. Materializing goals

The first activity basically deals with arranging administrative and organizational structure within the first two years of initiating the plan, focusing on the following issues:

- Quality of activities by EFA National Council
- Evaluation of EFA management efficiency in directing the plan
- Appraising the role of other organizations and ministries (partners to the plan) in realizing the plan goals
- Examining structural and organizational links between plan and provinces/educational districts

To monitor qualitative and quantitative progress of goals, which is more important than the first activity, the 6 goals of Dakar Plan of Action, also the policy recommendations and quantity goals on national plan will make the basis of activities. For this purpose, the followings have to be accomplished:

- Upgrading programs through conformity of national and provincial plans with goals, strategies and policies of EFA Plan;
- Revising executive plans and programs in the implementation process of EFA Plan by means of constant reporting, field visiting and receiving feedbacks;
- Appraising the result (quantity & quality) of performances through examining checklists and monitoring tables, and studying its impact on qualitative indices of the plan in order to identify the qualitative changes on each index and to specify the extent of quality goals realized in the EFA National Plan.

Therefore, monitoring and assessment process would be feasible on a short-term (three-month), mid-term (one-year), and long-term (five-year) basis.



Chapter 2

AN ANALYSIS ON EFA 6 GOALS

GOAL 1

**EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE &
COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION FOCUSING ON
THE MOST DISADVANTAGED & VULNERABLE
CHILDREN**

Goal 1

To promote and upgrade health care and comprehensive education for children at the early stage of life, particularly for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable children.

A. Definition & Analysis of Goal

1-1- An explanation of pre-primary cares and educations in the I.R. of Iran:

The ECCE (early childhood care & education) programs are applied to those activities that ensure children's life, health, and growth in physical, cognitive, sentimental and social aspects.

1-2 Duration of ECCE (early childhood care & education) in the education system of I.R. of Iran and its age group:

It includes mothers' care and education programs, pre-marriage, pre/in/post-pregnancy period, up to age 8; systematic and official education of infants at pre-primary centers from age 3 up to school entrance age at 6.

Therefore, the pre-primary target group in EFA Plan consists of nursery children aged 5, for whom goals have been set on the EFA National Plan.

B. Background of Goal

As per rules and regulations, the infants care programs shall be organized and implemented by Ministry of Health, Treatment & Medical Education, Ministry of Welfare & Cooperation, and Welfare Organization.

Whereas, pre-primary educational and training services are planned, implemented and supervised by several authorities including Ministry of Education, Welfare Org., Ministry of Labor & Social Affairs, Municipality and NGOs.

Based on provisions of Pre-Primary Articles of Association approved in 2003 by Education Supreme Council, the Ministry of Education is the authority for issuing license, and controlling all pre-primary centers, either governmental or non-governmental, that present educational and training services for children aged 4-5.

There are some exclusive legislation for ECCE (early childhood care and education) at national level as follows:

Legislations on Educational Programs

- 1- Approval of Cultural Revolution Higher Council of 1998 on strength of which the entire pre-primary issues shall be regulated by Education Supreme Council.
- 2- Pre-Primary Articles of Association approved by Education Supreme Council in 2003. Based on this, pre-primary is applied to a two-year training course that enrolls children aged 4-5. A pre-primary is established as a governmental school with community participation and as a non-governmental center in accordance with the rules and regulations.

By virtue of provisions of this Article of Association, all pre-primary schools that enroll children 4-5 are duty bound to obtain license from Ministry of Education.

- 3- Based on Article (26) of the Law on drawing up part of Government's financial regulations, Welfare Organization is responsible to issue Activity Permit for applicants of establishing a nursery center upon receiving expert opinion on their job plan.
- 4- One of the practicable strategies of the Third Five-Year Economic, Social & Cultural Development Plan is to develop one-month nursery classes in bilingual or multi-lingual regions of the country, with a priority to rural areas, through collaboration of Ministry of Education, also conducting one-year nursery courses (pre-school) by non-governmental sector under supervision of Ministry of Education.
- 5- Para (A) of Article (52) of the Fourth Five-Year Economic, Social & Cultural Development Plan refers to provision of necessary grounds for implementation of EFA Plan, and pre-primary education as one of Plan's target-groups.
Para (O) of this Article stresses on adoption and implementation of required programs for developing pre-primary and nursery education, particularly in bilingual regions to eradicate educational poverty.
- 6- Article (78) of I.R. of Iran Labor Law
By virtue of this Law, the workshops in which women labor forces work with 5 children and more, are obliged to establish a labor nursery; the workshops in which this number of children is less than 5, the employer has to compensate a part of children's day-care and education expenditures for the labor family.

Legislation on Child's Care Programs

- 1- The Law on Accession of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Child Right Convention was approved in February 1994. The articles and paragraphs of the above law make a direct reference to the right of children to enjoy caring supports such as protection, highest health standards, needed facilities for curing diseases and rehabilitation, good nutrition and security.
- 2- The Law on Protection of Children & Adolescent approved in Dec. 16, 2002. It defends the right of children and younger adults against all forms of vexation, molestation, sale and purchase, exploitation and taking advantage of them for committing offences.
- 3- Article (4) of executive by-law of the Law on Securing Unattended Women & Children approved in Aug. 2, 2005. It includes the following issues:
 - A. Financial supports such as provision of facilities for self-sufficiency or a pension in cash in a periodical or continuous basis
 - B. Cultural and social supports such as educational and training services
 - C. Taking care of children, daily or round-the-clock... in Welfare Org. centers, or delegation of children/women's guardianship to eligible persons
- 4- By virtue of Article (3) of the Law on Promotion of Breast Feeding & Supporting Nursing Mothers approved in March 1996, those mothers with breast-fed infants who work in governmental or non-governmental sectors are entitled to enjoy a 6-month paid leave of maternity. Based on the Note of the Article above, upon restarting the job, in case of nursing the child up to the age of 20-month at least, the mother may use one-hour paid leave per day.

C. Executive Programs for Implementation of Goals

C-1- Early Childhood Care Programs

A number of protective programs that have basically been carried out in rural and underprivileged regions of the country with a multi-sectoral intervening approach are as follows:

❑ Adoption & Implementation of Participatory & Supportive Children's Nutrition Enhancement Program

Since 1996, the program was implemented in three cities with inter-sectoral partnership to reduce the rate of malnutrition among rural children. The intervening activities of the programs are:

- Theoretical and practical training of mothers on child nutrition;
- Education of low-literate women with health and nutrition issues;
- Creating little green gardens at home and at schools;
- Reinforcing child growth monitoring services
- and ...

In 2001, the nutrition supportive activities were extended to children aged under 6, generalizing the program up to 14 provinces and was further developed throughout the country since 2005. Currently, 40,000 children are under supportive umbrella by Ministry of Health, and with the collaboration of Ministry of Welfare & Social Security, and Imam Khomeini Relief Committee they receive monthly food baskets valued at Rls. 100,000. So far, 150 cities, 7,400 health houses, 1,555 health care centers have been involved, and about 2 million children have benefited from nutrition enhancement program.

In this program, other sectors concerned with development and social welfare played their crucial roles in realizing goals, including Literacy Movement Organization through upgrading mothers' literacy, Ministry of Agriculture Jihad with publicizing the culture of consuming more fruits and green groceries by families, Welfare Organization and Ministry of Education by involving teachers and instructors in educational programs.

Some of the measures taken are as follows:

- Organizing 300 training workshops for health care-treatment personnel and other relevant sectors
- Equipping 1400 health houses with local kitchens for practical training of supplementary nutrition to mothers
- Launching 80 nutrition consulting centers to help children with malnutrition
- Creating more than 14,000 little green gardens in health houses, homes and schools with the collaboration of Ministries of Agriculture Jihad and Education
- Supporting more than 40,000 children with protective program of Imam Khomeini Relief Committee and distributing food baskets among them
- Marking the contents of food baskets by Community Nutrition Enhancement Department in conformity with nutritional culture of the region, access to food stuffs and... assisted by experts of nutrition and Relief Committee of the province

- Conducting 15,000 continuous educational classes with the subject of health-nutrition issues for mothers
- Studying indicators of children's physical inspection in different cities by 14 universities in order to identify the regions in need of intervening programs
- Organizing more than 2000 classes for new-literates with the collaboration of Literacy Campaign
- Monitoring and assessment of Plan

(Source: Report of Ministry of Health, Treatment & Medical Education Nutrition Department, 2007)

❑ **Disadvantaged Pregnant & Nursing Women Nutrition Support Program**

Since 2006, pregnant women nutrition support program has been initiated in 11 provinces of the country. Based on this, needy pregnant women under protection of Welfare Organization are nominated so as their dietary condition is being reported, and upon confirmation of a malnutrition condition by the center, they will be introduced to regional welfare compounds to receive food baskets. The program covers 2000 pregnant women and their families in 11 provinces of Tehran, East Azarbayjan, Ardebil, Boushehr, Khoozestan, Kerman, Hormozgan, South Khorasan, Sistan & Balouchestan, and Kohkilouye & Boyer Ahmad.

In 2007, with cooperation of Ministry of Welfare & Social Security and Imam Khomeini Relief Committee, more than 10,000 pregnant and nursing women (with per capita of Rls. 1,500,000 for each person yearly) have been covered by nutrition support programs nationwide.

Some of the accomplished tasks are as follows:

- Organizing 150 educational classes on standard dietary principles during pregnancy for supported women
- Educating proper nutritional programs during pregnancy to the staffs of Welfare Organization
- Reinforcing nutritional health care during pregnancy of women under support
- Verifying the conforming of the designed food basket with dietary culture and habits of the region by university nutrition experts
- Distributing more than 5000 food baskets among people
- Monitoring and assessment of the program

❑ **Provision of One Warm Healthy Meal in Village Nurseries**

In order to help the poor and rural children aged under 6 with good nutrition and education, the program of a warm meal for children aged 3-6 was launched in village nurseries. It has been implemented in more than 5000 village nurseries, covering 140,000 children. (*ibid*)

❑ **Children's Diseases Care Development program**

The program incorporates guidelines to train mothers how to help their children to recover and to take disease preventive measures such as proper nutrition of the child, on-time vaccination and... It is an integrated child health program, and not merely a disease-oriented activity; it focuses on treatment methods as well as disease basic preventive services to involve the entire household in the curing process of the child, so as to minimize the factors of being contracted or negligence from risky symptoms of a disease. Since it coordinates care programs of children aged under 5

through which the quality of services and efficacy of cares would be enhanced and the costs of services would be diminished, the program is a strategy by itself. The program deals with infant diseases, standard ailment control and treatment, infection of respiratory and central neural systems, dysentery and vomiting, growth and nutrition disorders in a disease, fever, convulsion, coma, shock, vaccination and administering supplements for children referred to health centers supervised by Ministry of Health, regardless of their gender.

❑ **Well Child Care Program (WCC)**

The program seeks to separate a healthy child from apparently healthy children or those prone to be inflicted who have not yet developed the symptoms of a disease. In fact, the program aims at standard screening system of caring children aged 0-8 and the implementation of the system.

Under this program, all children aged under 8 are inspected for their general condition, diet, weight, height, head circumference, sight, growth, vaccination and drug supplement, whenever they are taken to a health center. The examination process is accomplished through questioning parents and observing symptoms. The answers and the results of medical examinations will determine the need of the child for administering an emergency measure. If needed, and prior to transferring the child to health care centers, required advices and explanations would be given to the mother. If the child is needless of referring to a health center, mother will be provided with the following consultations:

- Best method of child treatment at home (how to use drugs, food and beverages)
- Recognizing a symptom that would help mother to take her child to the treatment center as soon as possible
- Evaluating modes of child nutrition such as breast feeding
- Mother's health.

Under this program, all data about health and growth condition is inserted on Child's Health ID Card. Besides physical condition, the parents' required information on vaccination, how to act in case of an accident, a disease, how to take care of the teeth and mouth, as well as information on growth stages are provided in the ID card. It is submitted to the families as child's health and treatment record.

(Source: Report of Ministry of Health, Treatment & Medical Education Child Department, 2007)

❑ **Florid Therapy Program**

Since the year 2000, all children at primary level in urban/rural areas, including first and second grades (7-8 years old) receive a bottle, containing 250 cc of florid, free of charge on a yearly basis.



❑ **Tooth 6 Insurance Program**

Since 2005 as the year of launching this program, first permanent teeth of all children aged under 12 are examined with a preventive and educational approach, and if needed, cost effective reparative services will be rendered; the major part of expenditures (70%) is undertaken by the government and the remaining 30% by families. If students are not covered under insurance services, they will be insured by Tooth 6 Insurance Program to benefit from inexpensive services.

❑ School –Based Dental Sealant Program

Under this program, and if the educational center has a health instructor, students' teeth are checked and if the ridges are deep, they will be referred to tooth and mouth headquarters so as dental material are applied to the pit-and-fissure surfaces of teeth to prevent decay.



❑ School Milk Program

Based on the approval by the Cabinet of Ministers, all new entrants of pre-primary and students of primary, lower secondary levels as well as personnel of these courses shall receive 2 to 3 servings of pasteurized and homogenized milk per week, each serving for 200 to 250 cc. The pilot plan started in the year 2000 in 14 cities and was later generalized all over the country.

❑ Health ID Card for Primary, Lower & Upper Secondary First Grade Students

In order to organize, scientifically develop and making health care of students cost effective, in line with creating school health comprehensive disaggregated information system, the student's health ID Card has been issued and completed since 2002. The ID Card included information on holder's particulars, medical records, preliminary examination of student as a new entrants (physical and mental fitness measurement), immunity, height, age, weight charts of boys and girls, health-related sports tests, questions and general medical examination. The student's health ID Card is kept in the school.

❑ Accident Insurance for All Pre-Primary New Entrants & Urban/Rural Students

C-2- Pre-primary (Nursery) Educational Programs

❑ Adoption of Pre-Primary Articles of Association

In post Islamic Revolution era, for the first time in 2003, the pre-primary articles of association was adopted and approved by Education Supreme Council. It was a big step towards recognizing this course of study and its position in the country's education system. The articles of association underlines general goals of the course, and an advanced curriculum proportionate to the cultural, local and ecological specifications of various parts of the country, with an emphasis on the deprived regions.

❑ Curriculum Guidebook for Nursery Education- Provincial Committees

Developing teaching-learning activities through the following principles:

- a. Conformity of goals with the goals of primary education
- b. Importance of local and regional conditions in developing educational materials
- c. Taking into account the flexibility of educational subjects according to the circumstances and the need of learners
- d. Developing curriculum with the collaboration of educational districts
- e. Variety of educational products instead of single production
- f. Integrity of curriculum (in place of disintegrated and separate fields of study)
- g. Provision of educational kits (instructor's guidebook, stationeries and materials, work papers and...)

❑ Development of Village Nurseries

These centers, established through private investments and cooperation of Islamic council at the center of district and village, deal with education of children aged 3-6. Currently, about 5000 village nurseries exist in the country.

❑ Nursery Classes Annexed to Public & Private Schools



One of the programs that was extremely effective in boosting gross enrolment ratio of children at pre-primary centers (nurseries) is developing nursery classes annexed to governmental and non-governmental schools. These centers are basically run by community participation. Prior to delegation of this course to private sector, the Ministry of Education was responsible for supplying needed educational environment, most part of manpower and equipments of the public sector (government educational centers); other expenditures on education were undertaken by parents and in some rural areas, it was totally free of charge. At present, the expenditures on education in the poor rural areas are quite cost effective and affordable by all villagers.

❑ Conducting One-Month Nursery Classes in Bilingual Regions

The above classes are organized during every summer time, in which children who will start primary first grade within one month, enjoy an average 100 hours of pre-primary programs (game, story, poem, painting and...). The expenditures on education of this course are ensured from governmental budget.

D. Achieved Goals & Examining Indicators at National & Provincial Levels

D-1- Care Programs

- The outcomes of three sets of studies at national level during 1995, 1998, 2004 on prevalence of malnutrition among children aged under five in terms of certain indicators of length-for-age (nutritional stunting/shortness), weight-for-age (underweight) and weight-for-length (thinness) are shown in the table below:

Nutritional Stunting/Underweight/Thinness 1995-1998-2004

Region	Year	Length-for-Age (nutritional shortness) in %	Weight-for-Age (underweight) in %	Weight-for-Length (thinness) in %
Urban	1995	12		
	1998	11		
	2004	3		
Rural	1995	25	19	
	1998	22	14	
	2004	7	6	
Urban/Rural	1995		17	7
	1998		11	5
	2004		5	3.7

Studies reveal that, based on the nutritional status indicators, malnutrition trend of Iranian children aged under 5 has significantly reduced during the years of study. The prevalence of thinness in children aged under 5 has diminished from 7% in 1995 to 5% in 1998 and 3.7% in 2004. The incidence rate of average and intense nutritional stunting has reached from 12% of urban areas in 1995 down to 11% in 1998 and 3% in 2004. The indicator for rural areas in the years of study has been 25%, 22%, and 7% respectively that shows a considerable reduction. Also, the prevalence rate of underweight in the rural regions declined from 19% in 1995 to 14% in 1998 and 6% in 2004. The indicator for the whole country at the first year of study has been 17% with an increase of 11% and 5% during 1998 and 2004 respectively. Carrying out multi-sectoral intervening programs and involvement of all concerned sectors in enhancement of children's growth and nutrition including Ministries of Health, Agriculture Jihad, Commerce, Education, Literacy Campaign, Welfare Org. and Imam Khomeini Relief Committee are among major factors for reduction of children's malnutrition rate as well as upholding and enhancement of children's growth rate in the country. On the whole, nutritional stunting indicator as one of the indicators of malnutrition in the rural and urban areas has drastically declined.

The feedbacks from studies confirm that implementation of breast feeding promotional programs were effective in reducing the national costs of milk powder purchase from \$ 100 million to \$ 15 million.

Percentage of Children under Well Child Care Program

Title	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Percentage of Supported Children	8.6	21.6	38.03	65.9	67.2

The results of examinations show that percentage of children under free-of-charge well child care program has increased from 8.6% in 2002 up to 67.2% in 2006.

- Percentage of students at the first and second grades of primary course enjoying mouth and tooth health care educations during academic years of 2005-2006 and 2006-2007:

Studies prove that, on the whole, a remarkable number of students at primary first and second grades in urban/rural regions of the country have received educations on mouth and tooth health care; however, this rate had a descending trend, i.e. in 2005, 92% of first grade students and 93% of second grade students were trained; whereas, in 2006, this figure for both first and second grades decreased to 89%. The declining trend is considerable in certain provinces like north Khorasan, Golestan, Gilan, Markazi, Hormozgan, and Khoozestan.

The following table illustrates these changes:

Percentage of Primary First & Second Grade Students under Mouth & Tooth Health Care Educations

Province	Grade Year	First Grade		Second Grade	
		2005 (%)	2006 (%)	2005 (%)	2006 (%)
North Khorasan		98	66	100	66
Golestan		100	53	100	53
Gilan		85	71	89	71
Markazi		94	39	93	41
Hormozgan		90	74	100	61
Khoozestan		100	41	100	37

Among the main reasons of declining trend of children under mouth and tooth health care services are rises in the price of consuming items (mouthwash liquid), not increasing the credits for this program and shortage of health instructors.

Notwithstanding this, a number of provinces such as west Azarbayjan, Ardebil, Zanjan, Semnan, Sistan & Balouchestan, Tehran and cities of Tehran, Qazvin, Qom, Lorestan, Hamedan, and Yazd recorded 100% coverage of the program during the years in study and for the above grades; other provinces were also successful to a great extent in improving the indicator as shown here under:

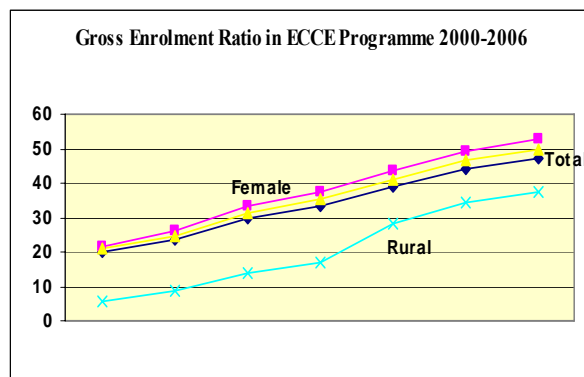
Province	Grade Year	First Grade		Second Grade	
		2005 (%)	2006 (%)	2005 (%)	2006 (%)
Kerman		75	84	77	83
Kermanshah		44	90	39	100
Mazandaran		79	100	76	100

D-2- Educational Programs

● Gross Enrolment Ratio of Pre-Primary Education (Nursery)¹

Table & Char t of Pre-Primary Education Gross Enrolment Ratio (Nursery)

Year	Pre-Primary Gross Enrolment Ratio				Gender
	Boy	Girl	Total	Rural	
2000	20.2	21.4	20.8	5.7	1.1
2001	23.6	25.9	24.7	8.8	1.1
2002	29.7	33.2	31.4	13.9	1.1
2003	33.4	37.5	35.4	17.1	1.1
2004	38.9	43.6	41.2	28.1	1.1
2005	44.3	49.4	46.8	34.5	1.1
2006	47.0	52.6	49.7	37.7	1.1



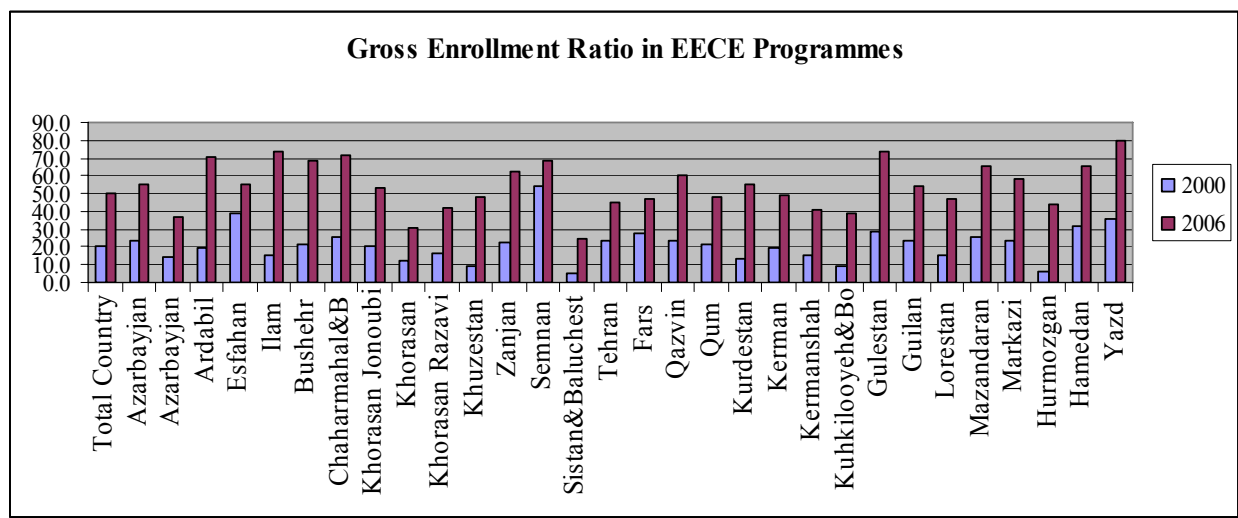
¹- Statistics of part D-2 are related to Ministry of Education only.

The information on the above table shows that the pre-primary gross enrolment ratio had an ascending trend at national level, i.e. from about 21% in 2000 increased to 50% in 2006.

The enrolment ratio for the plan mid-year period, 2003, was 35.4%. The indicator shows growth in the rural areas too. In the year 2000, only about 6% of the rural children benefited from pre-primary educations. But in 2006, the rate grew up to 37.7%.

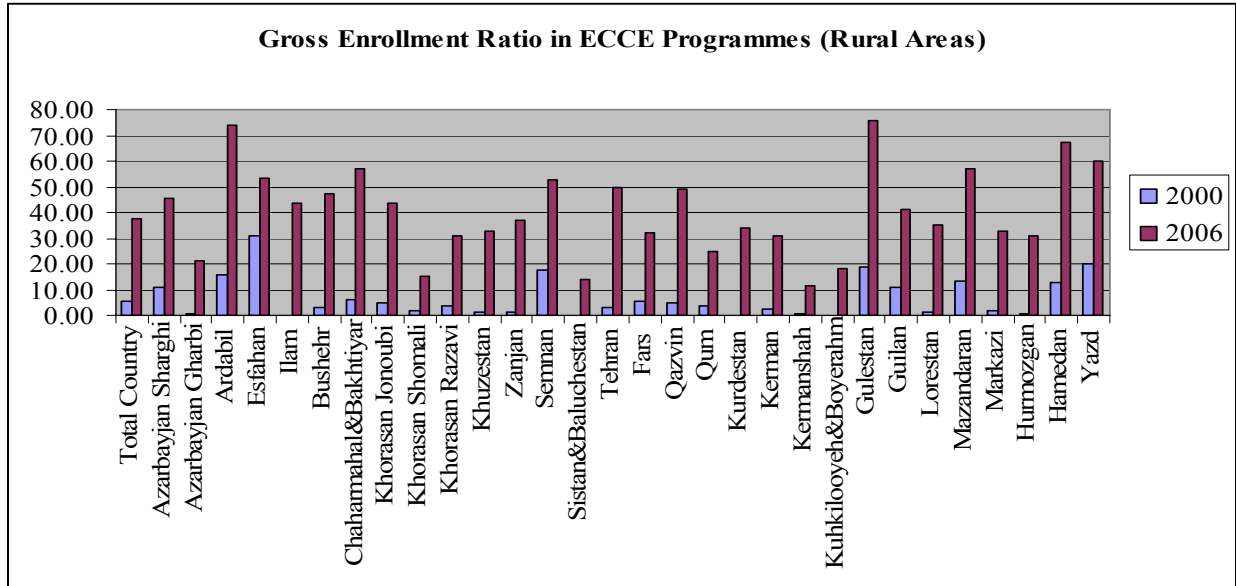
Children's access to pre-primary educations shows a remarkable growth for the whole country. However, the children in urban areas had been more fortunate in using educational opportunities than rural children.

Moreover, the studies reveal that the enrolment ratio of girl new entrants at the first year of the plan (2000) had been 21.4% that increased up to 52.6% in 2006. However, the boy's enrolment ratio during the above years has reached from 20.2% to 47%. It shows that while both girls and boys' enrolment ratio increased, the girls had always benefited more pre-primary educations than same-age boys.



The above chart shows that the provinces of Semnan, Esfahan, Yazd, Hamedan, Golestan, Char Mahal & Bakhtiyari, Ardebil, and Ilam had been successful provinces with greater pre-primary gross intake rate than national average rate. Among them, Ardebil and Ilam are provinces that speeded up nursery growth rate through carrying out special programs.

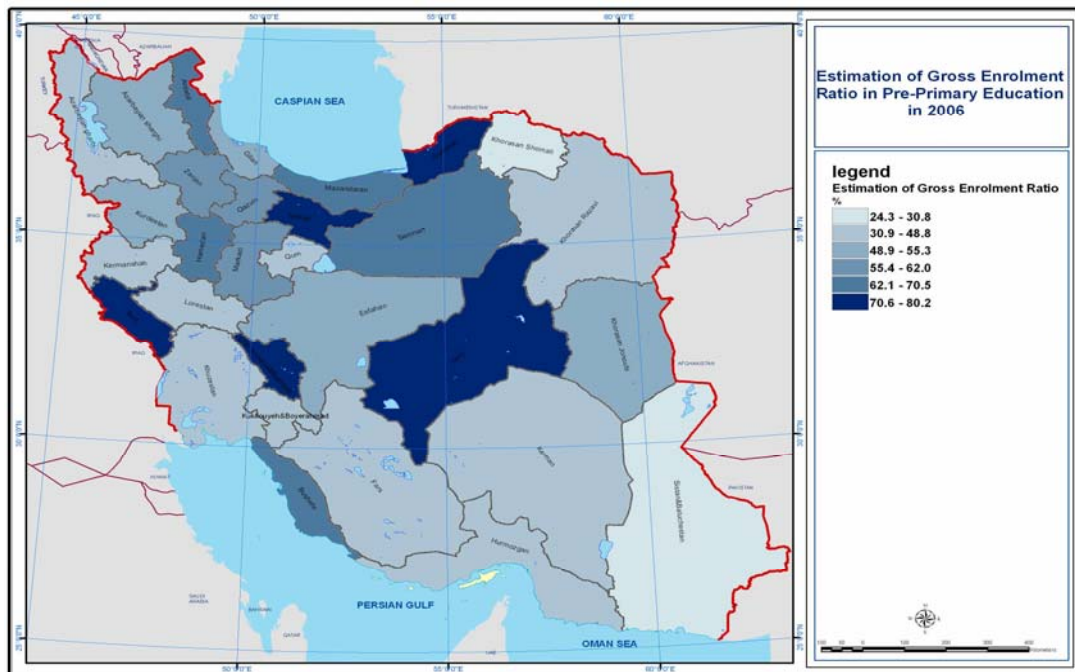
In contrast, provinces of Sistan & Balouchestan, Kohkilouye & Boyer Ahmad, Hormozgan, north Khorasan, Kermanshah, Lorestan, and Khoozestan had a lower pre-primary enrolment ratio as compared to national norms, showing special care and planning are required for these provinces to act more successfully.



The above chart shows that the provinces of Esfahan, Yazd, Golestan, Semnan, Ardebil and Hamedan succeeded more than other provinces in rural children intake in the pre-primary education during the years of plan. Whereas, provinces of Kohkilouye & Boyer Ahmad, Ilam, Lorestan, Sistan & Balouchestan, Kermanshah, north Khorasan, and east Azarbayjan are in an unfavorable situation as compared to national average and urgently need special help.

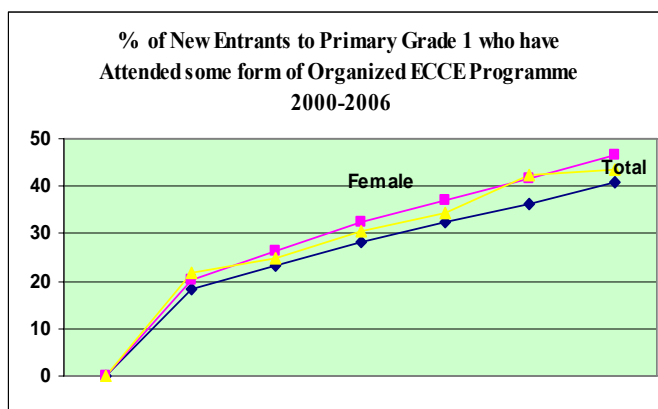
Based on existing statistics and information, about 50% of children aged 5 enrolled by Ministry of Education affiliated centers in 2006. This figure had been 22.7% for centers under Welfare Org. and 14.4% for religious and spiritual centers. On the whole, 87% of Iranian children have enjoyed pre-primary educations prior to entering primary course of study. The reasons for such growth are attributed to taking advantage of primary human resources and excess educational space with regard to the negative growth rate of student population during the recent years, development of nurseries, particularly village nurseries and more participation of parents as well as development of religious and spiritual centers.

The following chart illustrates pre-primary gross enrolment ratio for school year 2006-2007.



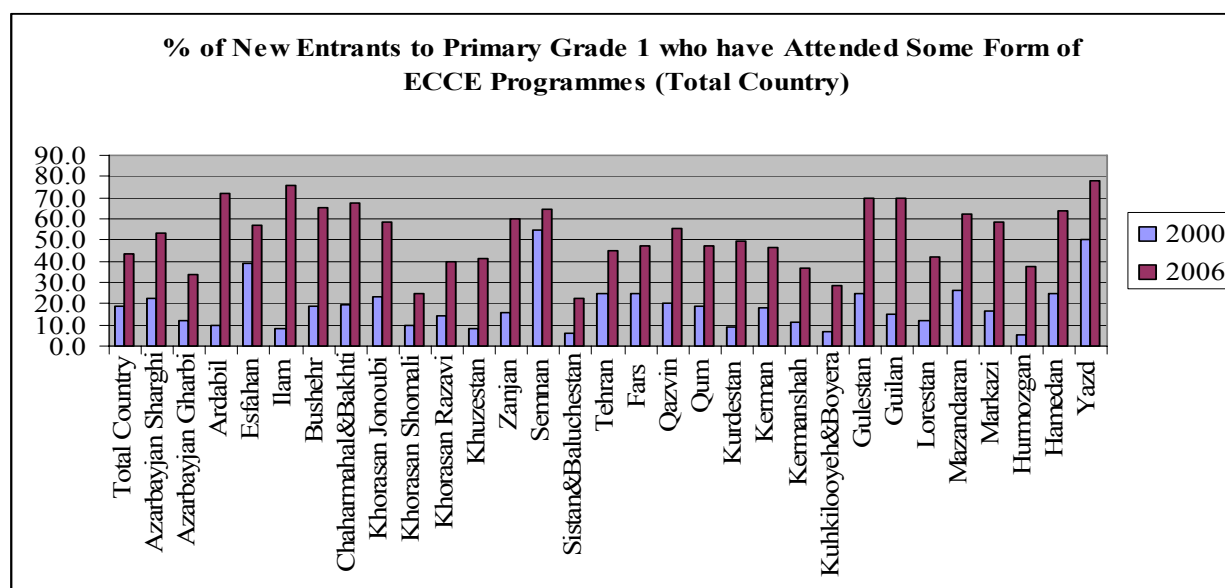
Percentage of Students at Primary First Grade with Pre-Primary Record in Terms of Year, Gender and Village

School Year	Girl	Boy	Total	Rural
2000	18.9	18	18.4	3.5
2001	20	18.1	21.9	5.7
2002	26.2	23.3	24.7	9.1
2003	32.6	28.3	30.4	14
2004	37	32.3	34.5	18.5
2005	41.8	36.3	42.2	27.8
2006	46.5	40.8	43.5	34/3



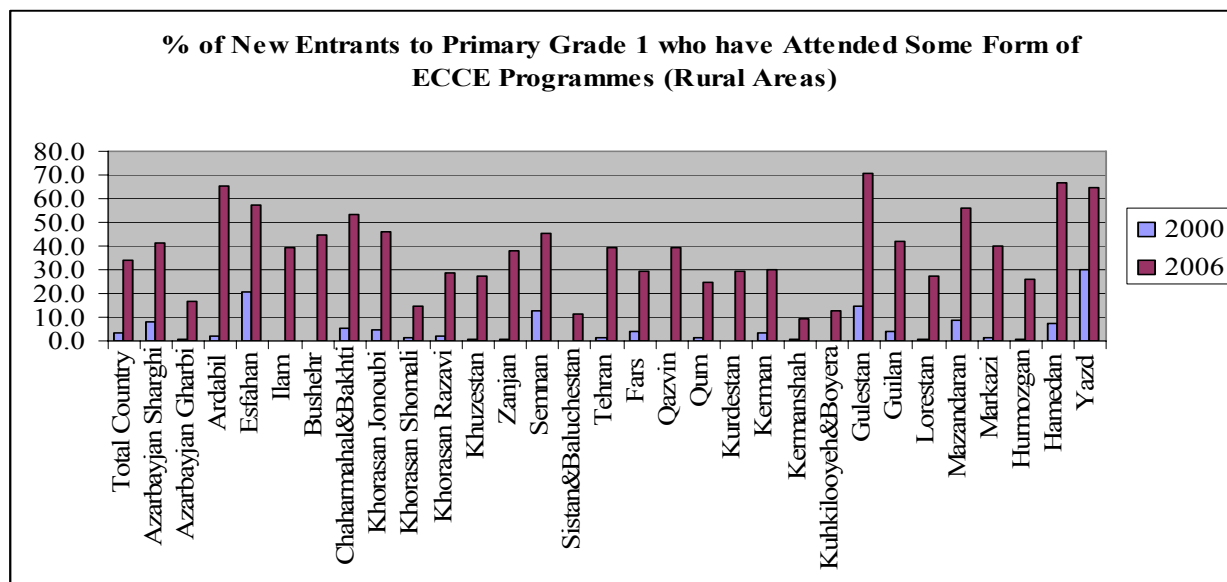
As shown in the above chart and table, percentage of students at primary first grade with a pre-primary background had an increasing trend in the country so as it boosted from 18.4% in 2000 up to 43.5% in 2006. Percentage of girls' students had been more than boys for the indicator, i.e. the number of girls at primary first grade with pre-primary educations exceeded the population of same-age boys. This is an ascending trend for rural areas with an increase from 3.5% in 2000 up to 34% in 2006.

The provincial status of indicator is shown in the following chart:



Based on the above chart, percentage of primary first grade students with pre-primary backgrounds at provinces of Semnan, Yazd and Esfahan has always been more than other provinces. Furthermore, provinces of Mazandaran, Tehran, Char Mahal & Bakhtiyari, Golestan and Gilan succeeded to rank higher than national average for this indicator during the years of study. It is worth mentioning that, Ilam province recorded a leap in increasing the indicator so as from bottom line of the list of provinces during 2000 and 2001, it upgraded to the third rank province in 2006 for its rates being higher than national average.

In contrast, provinces of Sistan & Balouchestan, Kohkilouye & Boyer Ahmad are among provinces with the lowest rate of the indicator during the years of study, and other provinces like Khoozestan, north Khorasan, Lorestan, and kermanshah are placed at the same rank, what necessitates more and exclusive care for these provinces.

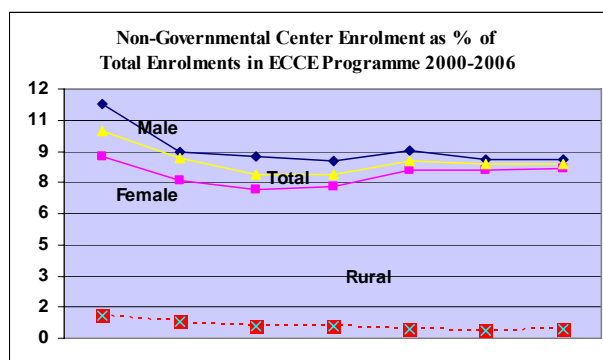


The above chart shows that provinces, in which the percentage of their primary first grade students with pre-primary record had been higher or lower than national average in urban/rural areas, are facing a similar situation in rural regions.

● **Percentage of Enrolment Ratio at Private Centers from Total Pre -Primary (Nursery) Enrolment**

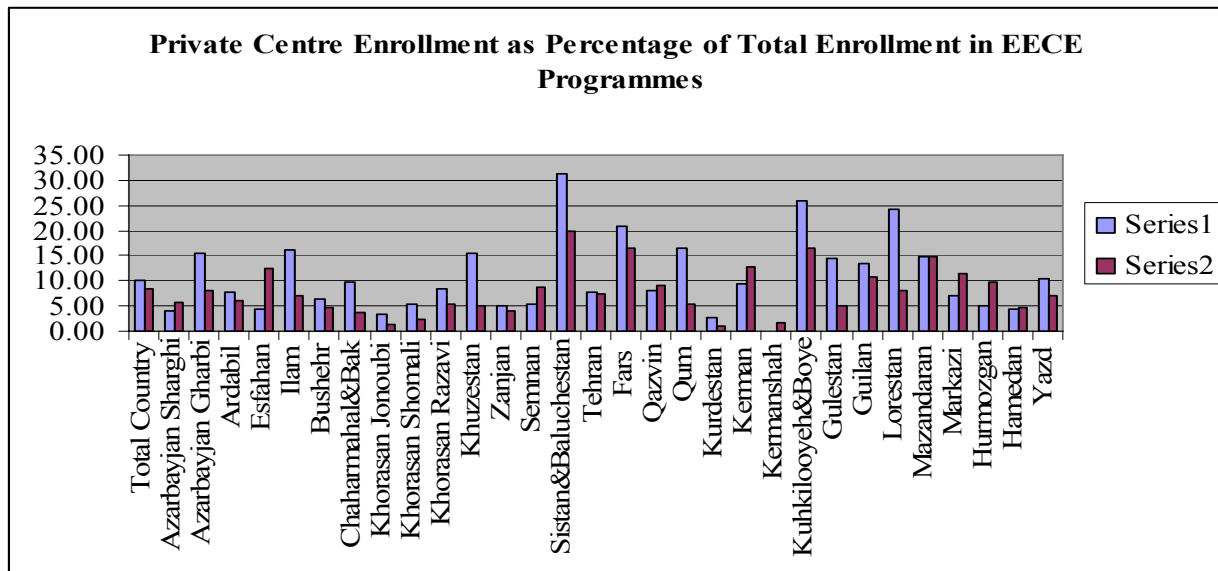
Percentage of Enrolment Ratio at Non-Governmental Centers by Gender 2000-2006

School Year	Girl	Boy	Total	Rural
2000	8,8	11,3	10	1,1
2001	7,6	8,9	8,6	0,8
2002	7,1	8,8	7,9	0,6
2003	7,3	8,5	7,9	0,6
2004	8,1	9	8,5	0,4
2005	8,1	8,6	8,3	0,4
2006	8,2	8,6	8,4	0,5



The studies indicate that the enrolment ratio by non-governmental centers form total percentage of new entrants' enrolment ratio at nursery program had been higher for the first year of study than the succeeding years; however, not a remarkable variation has been reported for this indicator. The same trend exists for rural areas with minor difference between girls and boys.

It is important that the enrolment ratio by non-governmental centers is much lower than public centers. Provincial condition is illustrated in the following chart:



The studies reveal that provinces of Kohkilouye & Boyer Ahmad, Lorestan and Fars have recorded the highest enrolment ratio at pre-primary private school during the years of study, and the provinces of Hormozgan, Kerman and west Azarbayjan are placed in an almost similar situation. For provinces with the lowest rate of such indicator, Kermanshah, Kordestan, south Khorasan, north Khorasan, Khoozestan and Hamedan could be named. It should be mentioned that provinces with the highest enrolment ratio at nursery program, show the lowest enrolment ratio at private nursery centers.

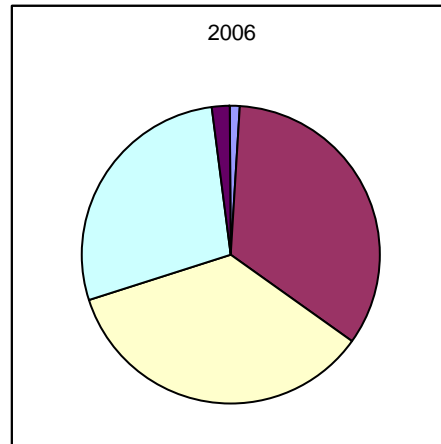
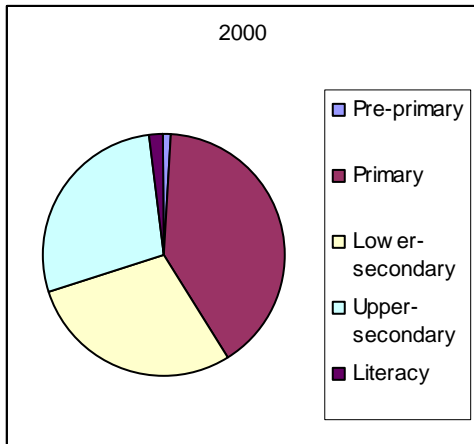
● **Percentage of Eligible Instructors at Pre-Primary Education (Nursery)**

Since an eligible instructor for pre-primary program in the Ministry of Education is applied to those instructors with a related educational degree in terms of dealing with children, all pre-primary instructors (100%) are regarded as qualified for the job due to possessing such degree.

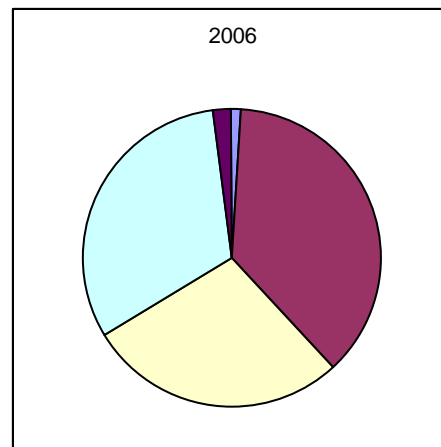
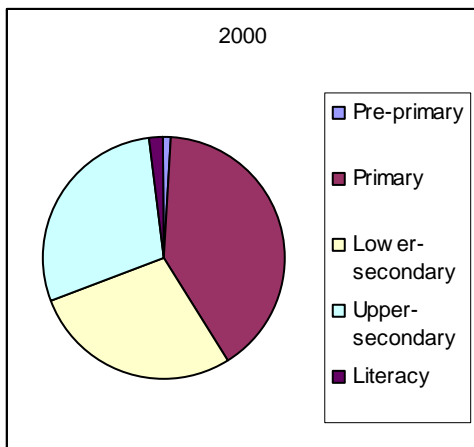
● **Share of Pre-Primary Education from Total Public Budget, GDP & Total Expenditures on Education**

The last indicator studied at this section is the share of educational programs from total public budget, GDP and total expenditures on education. This share is illustrated by pie charts for pre-primary program during 2000 and 2006.

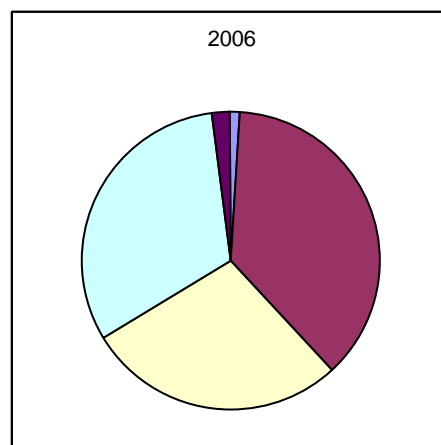
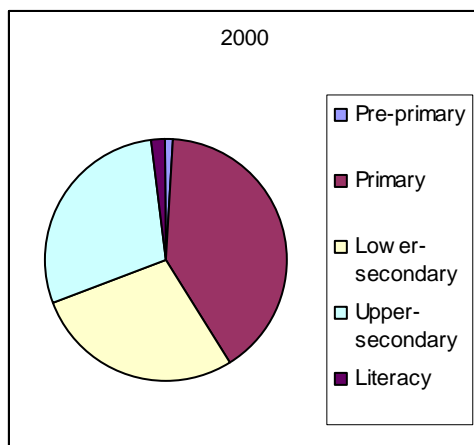
PUBLIC EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE



PUBLIC EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION AS PERCENTAGE OF GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT (GNP)



PUBLIC EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL EDUCATIONAL EXPENDITURE



E. Selected Success Stories

1. Conducting nursery classes annexed to public and private schools:

With regard to negative growth rate of student population at primary education, the excess manpower and spaces were allocated to develop nursery programs.

2. Development of village nurseries:

Such nursery centers are established by real entities through private investment and in collaboration with Islamic Council at the center of districts and villages.

3. Conducting nursery classes during holiday periods of rural schools:

In certain villages where two-shift school work (morning and afternoon) and it is normally closed on Thursdays, the space of school is used for nursery classes during holidays. Children in those villages may utilize pre-primary educations at least one day per week.

F. Challenges & Concerns

There are certain problems, obstacles and challenges on the way to develop early childhood caring and educational programs:

1. Insufficiency of required budgets and credits for full implementation of programs
2. Shortage of expert manpower in the deprived regions
3. Ineffectual communication and coordination required between organizational internal and external sectors providing infants' caring and educational services
4. Limited resources, facilities, manpower and... for educational services required for children aged under 5
5. Nonexistence of basic skills in cognitive, physical and social aspects and ambiguity of national and provincial norms in terms of such skills for pre-primary curriculum
6. Improper educational and training spaces for pre-primary program with regard to teaching-learning nature of this course
7. Geographical diversity and economic poverty of households in rural and poor areas; scarcity of public supportive mechanisms for development of educational programs at rural level
8. Unsustainable caring and educational policies and strategies for small children due to instable management
9. Inefficient continuous supervision and monitoring system for assessment of programs and activities of various departments responsible for planning and implementation of infants' caring and educational services.

G. Strategic Priorities for Achieving Goals by 2015

G-1- Early Childhood Comprehensive Care

Certain general policies on early childhood comprehensive care, prioritizing rural children, children living at the city outskirts and children being cared at institutes other than home, are as follows:

1. Reducing mortality rate of children under one (IMR), total and by gender
2. Reducing mortality rate of children under five (U5MR), total and by gender
3. Reducing preventable physical disabilities
4. Reducing children's nutrition and growth disorders
5. Reducing the impacts of diseases
6. Increasing access of children under 8 to healthy child standard services

G-2- Early Childhood Education:

1. Utilizing capabilities of cultural-social institutions to enhance public awareness on pre-primary education and their sensitizing about children's rights
2. Working with required mechanisms to promote participation of private sector and civil society in developing this program
3. Developing quality and comprehensive pre-primary education for a greater population of children through flexible methods and extending nursery services, particularly in the poorer regions and infants poverty eradication
4. Promoting awareness and professional skills of instructors, directors and experts of pre-primary education
5. Promoting awareness of parents about the importance of infants integrated growth and development
6. Enhancing quality caring, training and educational services of nurseries and pre-primary centers
7. Creating more coordination between methods and executive policies, and integrity among organizations responsible for pre-primary education.

GOAL 2

TO ASSURE THAT BY 2015, ALL CHILDREN, PARTICULARLY THE GIRLS, CHILDREN LIVING IN HARDSHIP, AND CHILDREN OF MINORITY GROUPS HAVE FULL ACCESS TO QUALITY COMPULSORY PRIMARY EDUCATION.

Goal 2

To assure that by 2015, all children, particularly the girls, children living in hardship, and children of minority groups have full access to quality compulsory primary education.

A. Definition & Analysis of Goal

In Iran, General Education incorporates two formal courses of primary and lower secondary education. Primary education is the first formal program in the country's education system.

Minimum entrance age for primary first grade is full 6 years of age and maximum age for enrolment in primary education is 14 years in urban areas and 16 years in the rural and tribal areas.

Although standard age for primary education is 6 to 10, by virtue of the above rule as well as regulations on educational promotion, younger and older children may also enroll at this program.

The second formal program of education system is lower secondary that enrolls students aged 11 to 13. This program consists of three grades from first to third. The subjects of the course include Koran and Religion, Arabic, Foreign Language (except Arabic), Persian Literature, Experimental Sciences, Mathematics, Sports, Art, Social Sciences and Vocation & Technique. The students have to attend classes for an average of 33 hours per week to study the above subjects. As per Para (B) of Article (52) of the Four Economic, Social & Cultural Development Plan, and its By-law (approved by the Cabinet meeting dated Aug 25, 2005) education is compulsory up to the end of lower secondary.

Furthermore, the executive By-law of schools approved by Education Supreme Council stipulates that maximum age for enrolling in lower secondary school is 17, 18, and 19 for urban, rural and tribal areas respectively. Therefore, as far as a student is eligible to study this course, no obstacle shall hinder his studies at schools. In other words, schools are not entitled to deprive students of study with the excuse of school financial supply and asking for mandated fees.

The third formal program of education system is Theoretical and Skill Upper Secondary Education that enrolls students aged 14 to 17. The upper secondary education consists of 3 grades of study from first to third.

This program falls into three branches of Theoretical, Technical & Vocational, and Kar-o-Danesh (work & Knowledge) (Kar-o-Danesh), and each branch, in turn includes some fields of study.

The Theoretical Upper secondary includes fields of Mathematics-Physics, Literature & Human Sciences, Experimental Sciences and Islamic Knowledge & Education; the two other branches consist of 3 fields of Industry, Agriculture and Services.

Education at this program is conducted on a yearly-credit basis. It is a 3-year program, and the number of credits needed for obtaining high school diploma is at least 96 credits. It is worth mentioning that those students who graduated from upper secondary and would like to participate in university entrance examinations have to complete a one-year pre-university course before passing such examinations.

Education is free of charge in upper secondary program. Based on regulations, maximum age of enrolment at the first, second and third grades are full 18, 19 and 20 respectively.

B. Background of Goal

Several rules emphasize on enrolment and survival of all school-age population at General Education (primary and lower secondary) such as Article (30) of I.R. of Iran Constitution and 20-Year Outlook Plan of the country based on which Ministry of Education is duty bound to provide free-of-charge education for all children up to the end of upper secondary education, particularly for the deprived and less developed regions.

Para (A) and (O) of Article (52) of the Four Development Plan stresses on implementation of education for all and compulsory education up to the end of lower secondary course as well as supplying proper means for eradication of educational poverty. Executive By-law on compulsory education up to the end of lower secondary approved in Aug. 30, 2005, has assigned the Cabinet of Ministers, all concerned ministries and governmental organizations to cooperate with Ministry of Education in identifying, enrolling and making survival of all school-age population aged 6 to 13 possible up to the end of lower secondary.

In the existing legal provisions, one of the key issues of supporting children and younger adults is to provide them with the right of education. In strength of Article (4) of the Law on Protection of Children & Adolescent approved in Jan. 1, 2003 by Islamic Consultative Assembly (verified by the Guardian Council), avoiding children from education is considered a crime and the offender shall be sentenced to cash fine and prison. Although, based on regulations and the latest relevant approval (Para B of Article 52 of the Fourth Development Plan) education is compulsory up to the completion of lower secondary, there are still certain obstacles on enrolling and survival of all school-age children.

Boosting public investment to supply educational facilities, assuring full access to equal educational opportunities, particularly in the less developed regions, expanding knowledge, skill, enhancing human capital productivity, specially among the girls, and quality and quantity development of General Educations are some of basic policies of the Government and education system of the country. In this context, provisions of Article (143) of the Third Five Year Economic, Social & Cultural Development Plan of the Islamic Republic of Iran (2000-2004) and provisions of Article (52) of the Fourth Development Plan (2005-2009) has underscored implementation of EFA and compulsory education up to the completion of the lower secondary education.

C. Executive Programs for Implementation of Goal

For the purpose of identification, enrolment and survival of all school-age children at primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education, several programs have been implemented, including:

1. Implementing Plan on Enrolment of the Out-of-school Girls carried out with the collaboration of Ministry of Education and Women's Participation Center of President's Offices in certain provinces. During two years of the plan, about 12,000 school-age and out-of-school girls in the deprived regions were enrolled with a priority of rural and tribal areas;
2. Implementing Plan on Girls' Education in the less developed provinces;
3. Development of Tribal Education: The access to education and enrolment rate of tribal students has been enhanced, exploiting all legal, financial and human resources. Establishment of new nomad schools, organizing mobile manpower and teachers proportionate to migration of nomads, as well as the Plan on Upgrading Tribal Education

resulted in enrolment and survival of a significant number of school-age rural population within the nomads;

4. Development of Private Schools: In order to extend culture of participation and to enhance quality education, special attention was given to development of private schools;
5. Promotion of Non-formal and Extra-curriculum Activities: Promotion of teachers' role and integrating training programs in educational activities during the years of study has been placed top on the agenda of Ministry of Education. Education of life skills are particularly taken into consideration in the extra-curriculum activities;
6. Empowerment of Educational and Training Groups and Organizing Teaching Models Festival: To promote the quality of education and teachers' partnership in the process of educational and training planning, and to review programs, to discover and train creativities and professional qualifications of teacher at school, educational districts and MOE departments, educational groups were established with the active participation of teachers. One of the key issues for educational groups is to study how to use teaching models and methods. To this end, Teaching Model Festival was organized at the level of school, district, province and MOE, whereby, valuable experiences of teachers have been documented;
7. Keramat (Dignity) Project: It was successfully implemented aiming at deepening moral, social, spiritual beliefs and encouraging dynamic participation of students in teaching-learning process;
8. Utilizing the capacities of boarding, rural, tribal and exemplary public lower secondary schools, central-village schools, central dormitories, rural annexed classes in the poor regions, under-populated and tribal villages;
9. Development of distance learning institutes and semi-face-to-face education in the areas with no access to public and private education centers;
10. Development of lower and upper secondary schools that need much more urgent care and attention;
11. Training students and parents with life skills;
12. Revising by-law on appraisal of lower-secondary education progress: It mainly focuses on variety of monitoring and assessment means and methods, as well as using types of evaluation systems (like group activity evaluation, performance test, self-appraisal and...), students keenness, defining a 50% share of evaluation point from total points gained by students, school and teacher's autonomy in the evaluation process, and individual differences.
13. Extending student guidance and consultation services to reduce educational downgrading and to prevent social and mental failures of students;
14. Developing and strengthening student organizations and encouraging students' participation in the process of decision making and running the schools;
15. Taking advantage of organizational internal and external capacities such as city and village Islamic councils, parents and teachers association and ... to identify and enroll out-of-school children;
16. Extending vocational and knowledge & work educations to greater number of deprived and less developed regions;
17. Implementing Descriptive Evaluation Plan for primary education;
18. Implementing Plan on Enhancement of educational progress in lower secondary education;

19. Conducting workshops on identification, enrolment and survival of girl population within education system, focusing on their mental health issues;

It should be mentioned that most of the above programs have been institutionalized in the provinces, being implemented as strategic projects on a yearly basis.

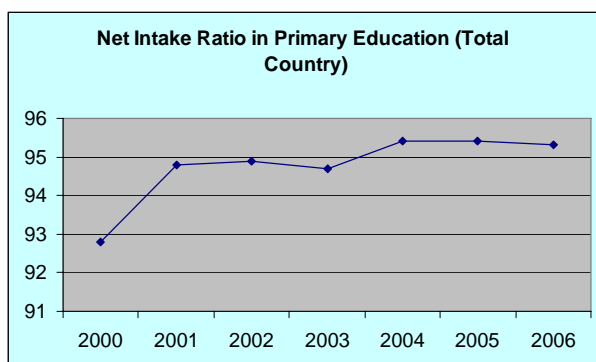
D. Achieved Goals & Examining Indicators at National & Provincial Levels

Accomplishment of several plans on intake and survival of school-age population at primary education resulted in improvement of intake rate, enrolment ratio and gender parity index. To define the extent of achievements in terms of intake rate at the first grade of primary education requires examining enrolment ratio for primary, lower and upper secondary courses, repetition rate by grade and survival rate at primary education.

● Net & Gross Intake Rate at Primary First Grade

The net intake rate at primary first grade increased from 92.8% in 2000 to 95.3% in 2006. Although 2.5% was added to the above rate during the years of study, it is still far from favorable situation. Currently, 4.7% children aged 6 have no access to frequent a school.

The highest net intake rate in 2000 was reported from provinces of Tehran, Mazandaran and Semnan (97.9%, 96.8% and 96.6%) and in 2006 for provinces of Tehran, Mazandaran and Ardebil (99%, 98.8%, and 98.7%), and the lowest rate in 2000 for provinces of Sistan & Balouchestan, Hormozgan, and Kohkilouye & Boyer Ahmad (82.3%, 86%, and 88%) and in 2006 for provinces of Sistan & Balouchestan, Kohkilouye & Boyer Ahmad and Hormozgan (83.3%, 89.6% and 91.9%).

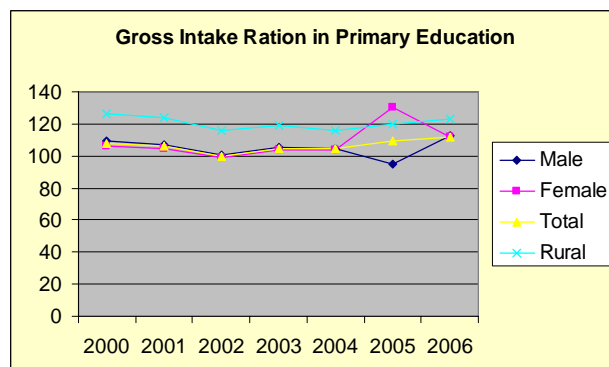


Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Net Intake Rate (%)	92.8	94.8	94.9	94.7	95.4	95.4	95.3

The gross intake rate at the first grade of primary education increased from 107.86% in 2000 up to 112.19% in 2006, while the same rate for rural areas decreased from 126.58% to 122.91%. As per rules, maximum enrolment age at the first grade of primary education is 9 for urban regions and 11 years for rural and tribal areas. The growth of gross intake rate indicates that more children aged over 6 have been enrolled in education system at urban/rural areas.

The following table and chart illustrate gross intake rate:

year	GIR at Primary First Grade				Gender Parity Ratio
	Boy	Girl	Total	Rural	
2000	109,42	106,23	107,86	126,58	0,97
2001	107,04	104,92	106,01	124,22	0,98
2002	100,55	99,25	99,92	115,99	0,99
2003	105,54	103,85	104,71	118,86	0,98
2004	104,73	103,95	104,35	115,74	0,99
2005	95,31	130,08	109,43	119,51	1,36
2006	112,82	111,52	112,19	122,91	0,99



● Net & Gross Enrolment Ratio at Primary Education

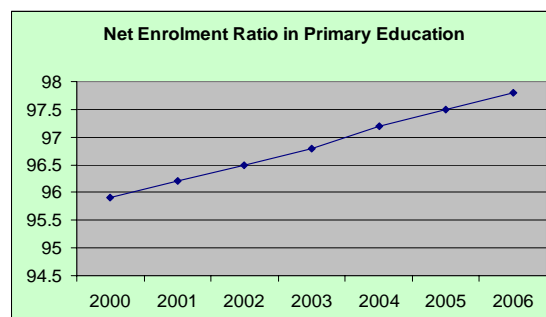
The estimations on net enrolment ratio at primary education for the whole country shows that it has increased from 95.9% in 2000 up to 97.8% in 2006 with a 1.9% growth of net enrolment ratio for primary education. The highest net enrolment ratio for primary education in 2000 belongs to the provinces of Tehran, Mazandaran, Semnan and Yazd respectively (98.7%, 98.3%, 98.2% and 98.2%) and in 2006 for the provinces of Hamedan, Tehran and Mazandaran (99.8%, 99.7% and 99.6%). Study on net enrolment ratio at primary education in 2006 shows that 13 provinces are under national average (97.8%). The lowest rate in 2000 is reported from provinces of Sistan & Balouchestan, Hormozgan and Khoozestan (87.4%, 92.2% and 93.7%) and in 2006 for provinces of Sistan & Balouchestan, Kohkilouye & Boyer Ahmad and Khoozestan (89.9%, 95.1% and 95.7%).

Gross enrolment ratio reached from 109% in 2000 to 104% in 2006 and in rural areas from 126% to 109%, i.e. the growth of net enrolment ratio for primary education has brought about the decline of gross enrolment ratio.

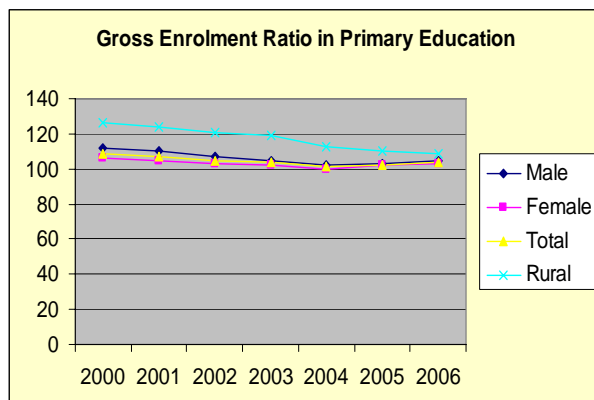
In 2000, the highest gross enrolment ratio for primary education belongs to provinces of Kohkilouye & Boyer Ahmad, Ilam and Ardebil (137.6%, 136.5% and 134.3%) and in 2006 to the provinces of Kohkilouye & Boyer Ahmad, Khoozestan and Lorestan (114%, 110.6% and 110.6%), and the lowest gross enrolment rate for primary education in 2000 is reported for the provinces of Sistan & Balouchestan, Yazd and south Khorasan (73.5%, 86.7% and 90.8%) and in 2006 for provinces of south Khorasan, Kerman and Yazd (89.8%, 89.8% and 99.3%).

The net and gross enrolment ratios for primary education are illustrated in the under table and chart:

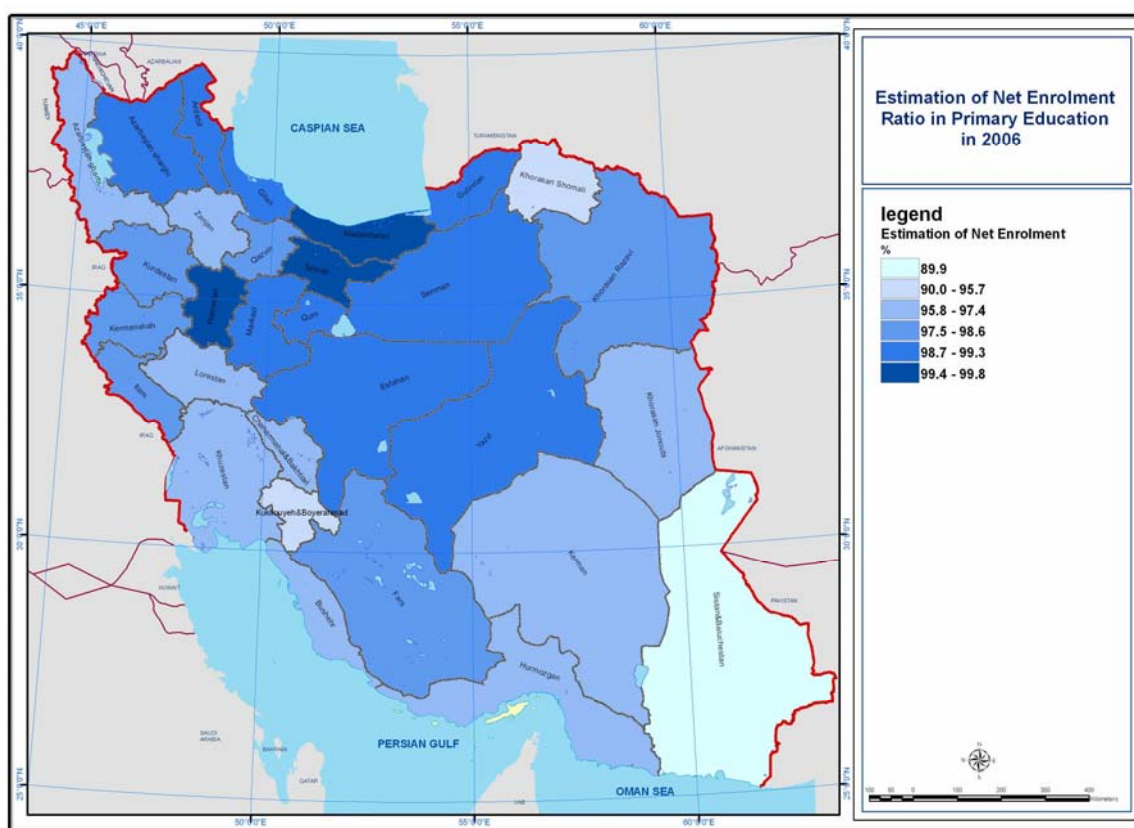
Net Enrolment Ratio at Primary Education 2000-2006							
Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Nationwide	95,9	96,2	96,5	96,8	97,2	97,5	97,8



year	Gross Enrolment Ratio at Primary Level				Gender Parity Index
	Boy	Girl	Total	Rural	
2000	112	106	109	126	0.95
2001	110	105	107	124	0.96
2002	107	103	105	121	0.92
2003	105	102	104	119	0.97
2004	102	100	101	113	0.98
2005	103	102	102	110	0.98
2006	105	103	104	109	0.98



The following chart illustrates net enrolment ratio for primary education at national level.



● Gross & Net Enrolment Ratio at Lower Secondary Education

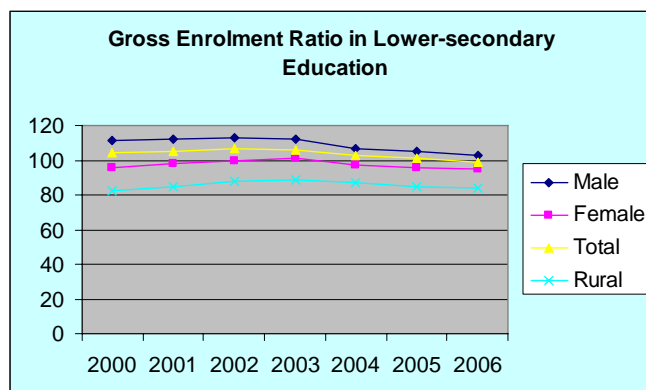
During the years of study (2000-2006), the growth rate for gross enrolment ratio for total student population (at national level) fluctuated between 99% and 104%. The Table on growth of the indicator shows that during 2000 through 2002, the indicator increase with an ascending trend

from 104% to 107%; however, for the succeeding years, it declined to 99% with 8% reduction in the last year of study (2006).

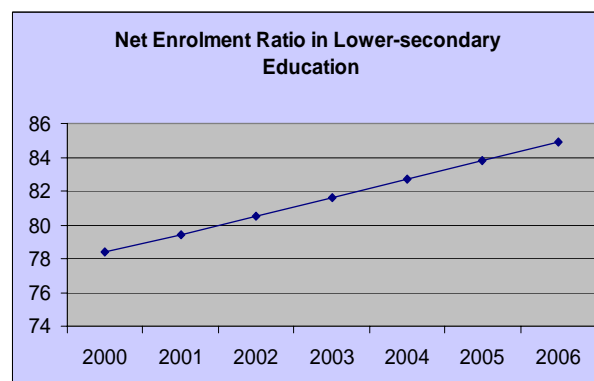
According to the Table on gross enrolment ratio for lower secondary education at national level, the ratio increased from 78.4% in 2000 to 84.9% in 2006, revealing an improvement for this ratio up to 6.5% during the years of study.

The following table and chart illustrate net and gross enrolment ratio at lower secondary education during 2000-2006.

year	GER at Lower Secondary Education 2000-2006				Gender Parity
	Boy	Girl	Total	Rural	
2000	111	96	104	82	0.87
2001	112	98	105	85	0.87
2002	113	100	107	88	0.88
2003	112	101	106	89	0.90
2004	107	97	103	87	0.91
2005	105	96	101	85	0.92
2006	103	95	99	84	0.92



Net Enrolment Ratio at Lower Secondary Education 2000-2006							
Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Nationwide	78.4	79.4	80.5	81.6	82.7	83.8	84.9



Based on information, the net enrolment ratio of 12 provinces has been below national average (78.4%) in 2000. Also, the lowest net enrolment ratio has been reported for the provinces of Sistan & Balouchestan and north Khorasan in 44.16% and 58.62% respectively, and the highest net enrolment ratio for the provinces of Tehran, Gilan, Mazandaran, Semnan and Yazd with 90.45%, 87.68%, 87.69%, 87.43% and 87.12% respectively.

Estimations for the year 2006 show that only in 11 provinces, the net enrolment ratio at lower secondary education had been below national average, 88.9%. From among provinces of the country, Sistan & Balouchestan, and north Khorasan have reported the lowest net enrolment ratio at 51.45% and 66.39% and Mazandaran, Gilan and Tehran showing the highest net enrolment ratio among other provinces respectively at 96.66%, 94.02% and 93.69%.

The same trend was repeated for gross enrolment ratio of boys and girls in rural areas. As shown in the Table, gross enrolment ratio for boys reaches from 111% in 2000 to 113% in 2002, but it faces a 10% decrease to about 103% in 2006.

Gross enrolment ratio of girls from 96% in 2000 reaches to 101% in 2003 with a 5% initial growth, but it ends up to 95% in 2006 with a 6% reduction.

Gross enrolment ratio for rural areas starts with an ascending trend from 82% up to 89% in 2003 and shifts to a descending trend of 84% in 2006 with a 5% reduction.

Encouraging function of these indicators, particularly significant growth of net enrolment ratio are the results of government's policy making, implementing out-of-school intake plans welcomed by rural and deprived regions, distance learning and semi-face-to-face classes, exploiting the capacities of boarding schools, conducting rural annexed classes, upgrading transition rate, promotion rate by grade, drop-out rate of students.

Although we witnessed remarkable achievements during the past years, the net enrolment ratio of rural children and gender parity index are still far from our expectations. Therefore, certain obstacles such as cultural barriers, ethnic prejudices, parents' need to labor children, shortage of educational spaces in some regions, lack of resources and... have to be eliminated or lessened if we are to attain the preset goals.

Gross enrolment ratio of lower secondary students in Sistan & Balouchestan with 49% in 2000 and in Mazandaran province with 125% shows the lowest and highest rate among other provinces respectively. In the same year, the rural part of Sistan & Balouchestan and Qom reported the lowest and highest gross enrolment ratio with 33% and 147% respectively.

Studies show that during the above year, gross enrolment ratio reached to an acceptable degree within 17 provinces and higher from national average (104%); during the same year, gross intake rate for 10 provinces was reported fewer than 100%.

Tables on rural gross enrolment ratio show that in provinces like Qom, Esfahan and the City of Tehran, the above ratio is more than other provinces up to 2003 due to the open doors of these provinces to immigrants.

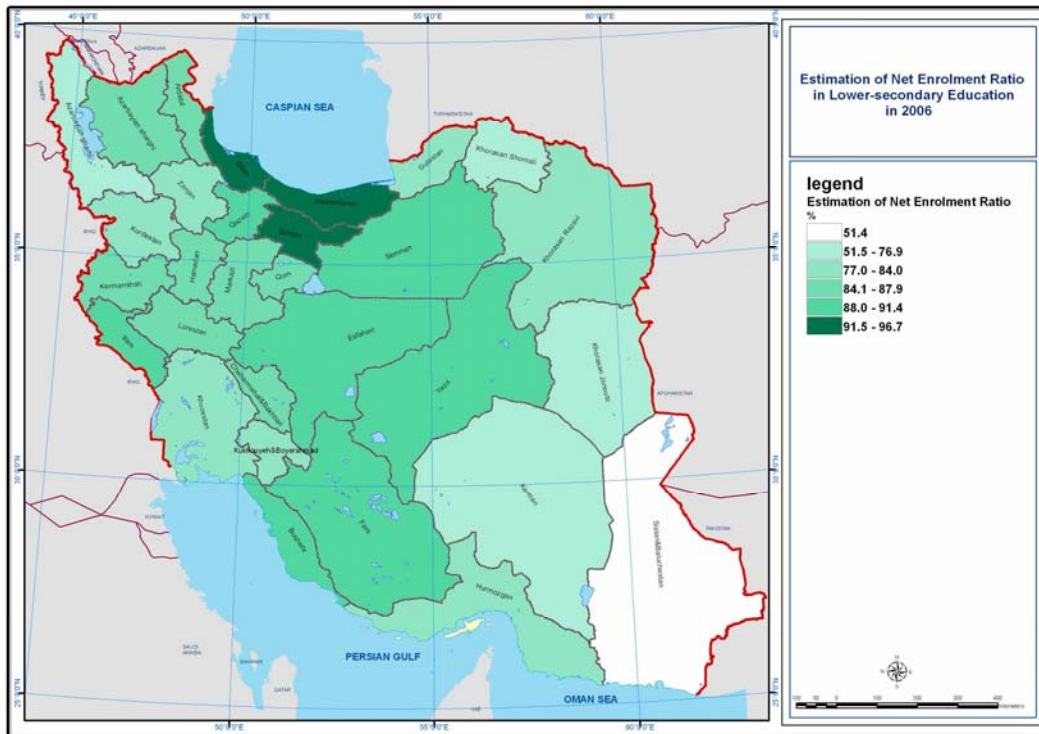
Based on information, and as a rule of thumb, the above ratio and even gender parity index for the deprived provinces such as south Khorasan, Sistan & Balouchestan, Kordestan and Hormozgan are too much farther from standard situation than other provinces, with Sistan & Balouchestan at the lowest rank.

As for net enrolment ratio, the above provinces are listed with a great distance from national average (75.16%) among which, Sistan & Balouchestan province is placed at the bottom of the list with 41% in terms of net enrolment ratio.

Efficient measures taken by the Government and education system in the provinces have caused improvement of educational rates and indicators such as net and gross enrolment ratios by 2006.

Allocation of one fourth of General Education centralized budget to the province of Sistan & Balouchestan during the last years of Third Development Plan, development of boarding and central-village schools, implementing out-of-school intake plan, increasing total budget of the province by government, implementing development plan such as construction of education and health spaces, road construction, financial contributions to poor families and ... are among initiations during this period.

The under chart illustrates national net enrolment ratio at lower secondary education:



● Gross Enrolment Ratio at Upper Secondary & Pre-University

During the years of study, gross enrolment ratio for total students of upper secondary from 68.7% in 2000 reaches to 60.9% in 2006 with a declining trend. It shows an 8% decrease for the ending year as compared to the initial year.

The same study shows that gross enrolment ratio for boys has decreased from 68% to 60% with an 8% reduction and girls' gross enrolment ratio from 70% to 62% with 8% reduction.

The reasons for such decline are as follows:

1. Unfeasibility of conducting classes and schools of upper secondary education in under-populated areas due to technicality of the course and absence of expert teachers in the region;
2. Lack of motivation among students, specially boys students, to continue studies;
3. Educational degrading, particularly high students drop-out rate;
4. Economic and cultural poverty, and fake occupations in some border provinces;
5. Inflexible rules and regulations, educational methods and curricula for this course of study, also the irrelevant textbook contents with market needs as well as students' requirements.

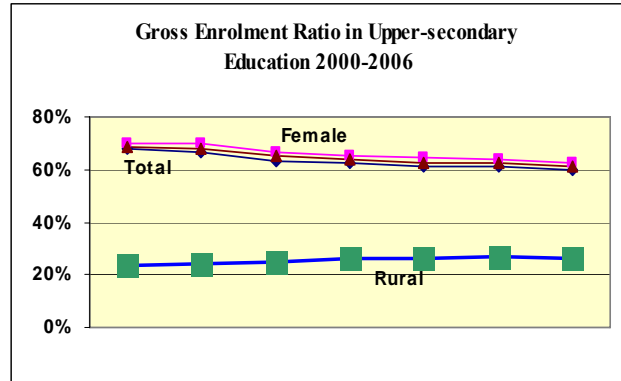
Rural gross enrolment ratio fluctuated between 23% in 2000 (with 3% increase) and 26% in 2006 during the years of study.

Although the above ratio has significantly increased during these years, the ratio is too far from standard point (at national average). The main reasons for such low gross enrolment ratio are as follows:

- Impossibility of establishing classrooms in rural areas due to technicality of the course;

- Dispersion, arduous roads, and long distance to rural and deprived regions;
- Immigration of villagers to cities and/or rural students frequenting urban and central village educational schools that are not calculated in urban statistics.
- Employment and absorption by job market.

year	GER at Upper Secondary & Pre-University 2000-2006				Gender Parity
	Boy	Girl	Total	Rural	
2000	67,6	69,7	68,7	23,5	1.03
2001	66,5	69,7	68,0	24,0	1.05
2002	63,4	66,6	64,9	25,0	1.05
2003	62,8	65,5	64,1	26,1	1.04
2004	61,2	64,2	62,7	26,5	1.05
2005	60,9	63,7	62,3	26,7	1.05
2006	59,7	62,2	60,9	26,4	1.04



As shown in the Tables, three provinces of Tehran, Semnan and Mazandaran respectively recorded the highest rate with 93%, 88% and 88%, and provinces of Sistan & Balouchestan, Hormozgan, west Azarbayjan and Kordestan the lowest gross enrolment ratio with 24%, 49%, 50%, and 50% among other provinces in the year 2000.

The above information indicates that distance of the ratio in provinces with the lowest ratio as compared to national average is so significant (60%).

It should be noted here that gross enrolment ratio of 15 provinces is lower than national average. Analysis of the Table on gross enrolment ratio at upper secondary education in 2006 reveals that three provinces of Ilam, Kohkilouye & Boyer Ahmad, and the City of Tehran are among places with the highest ratio of 70%, 76%, and 77%, and Sistan & Balouchestan, west Azarbayjan and south Khorasan with the lowest ratio of 30%, 49% and 51% respectively.

In rural sector, gross enrolment ratio of certain provinces like west Azarbayjan, north Khorasan, Sistan & Balouchestan, Qom, Markazi and Hamedan was under 20% in 2006, showing a gap with national average and as compared to rural school-age population of upper secondary education.

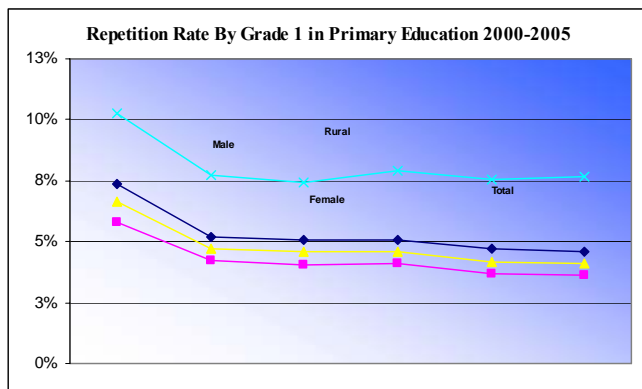
In spite of improvement of ratio in 2006 as compared to 2000, the degree of increase is not promising in the provinces.

Although a lot of effort has gone into development of education at rural areas such as development of theoretical upper secondary, pre-university schools, and technical and vocational schools, much more energy is needed to hit the goal.

● Repetition Rate by Grade at Primary Education Primary First Grade

As shown in the following table and chart, repetition rate in primary first grade at national level (urban/rural) during the years of study has reached from 7% to 4%, while repetition rate in primary first grade for rural areas decreased from 10% to 8%.

Boys' repetition rate in primary first grade was 7% in 2000 and 5% in 2005, while girls' repetition rate of primary first grade has reached from 6% to 4%.



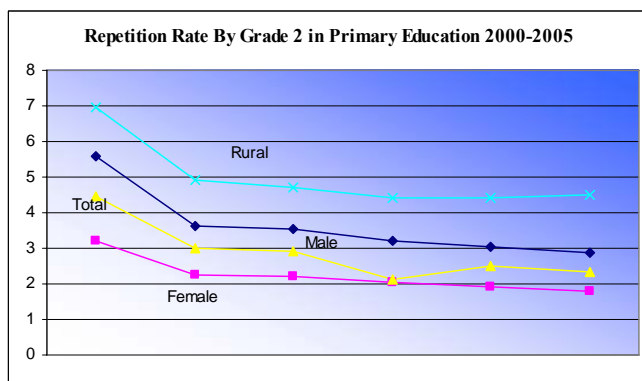
Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Boy	7.4%	5.2%	5.1%	5.1%	4.7%	4.6%
Girl	5.8%	4.2%	4.1%	4.1%	3.7%	3.6%
Total	6.6%	4.7%	4.6%	4.6%	4.2%	4.1%
Rural	10.3%	7.7%	7.5%	7.9%	7.5%	7.7%

Studies show that girls' repetition rate by grade during the years of study is lower than that of boys. Although repetition rate in the first grade of primary education for boys and girls had been declining nationwide as well as in rural areas, it recorded the most recurrent rate of repetition by grade as compared to other primary grades. Of course, the impact of experiencing first grade repetition, as an initial experience, is much deeper and important.

Repetition Rate by grade in primary first grade at rural areas is more common than in urban areas with the least difference during the years of study. Such phenomenon arises from numerous factors including bilingual children, unavailability of nursery programs, incoherent studies and vocational qualifications of some teachers at primary first grade classes, newly-published textbooks, non-proficiency of teachers over subjects and... The importance of first experience on future progress requires that practical strategies be designed for reducing repetition rate. The Highest repetition rate by grade in primary first grade relates to provinces of Sistan & Balouchestan, Hormozgan, and Kohkilouye & Boyer Ahmad in 2000 (16%, 13%, and 11%) and in provinces of Sistan & Balouchestan, north Khorasan, Hormozgan and Kohkilouye & Boyer Ahmad for the year 2005 respectively (15%, 8%, 7% and 7%).

Primary Second Grade

Repetition rate by grade in primary second grade at national level during the years of study shows a decrease from 4.46% to 2.33% as shown in the following table and chart. Repetition rate in the second grade of primary education has also reduced in rural areas from 6.95% to 4.49%; however, it is still higher than repetition rate in second grade at national level (urban/rural).



year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Boy	5,6	3,64	3,54	3,20	3,04	2,87
Girl	3,21	2,26	2,21	2,05	1,92	1,80
Total	4,46	2,98	2,90	2,13	2,50	2,33
Rural	6,95	4,92	4,73	4,43	4,43	4,49

Boys' repetition rate in primary second grade decreased from 5.6% in 2000 to 2.87% in 2005 and girls' repetition rate from 3.21% in 2000 to 1.80%.

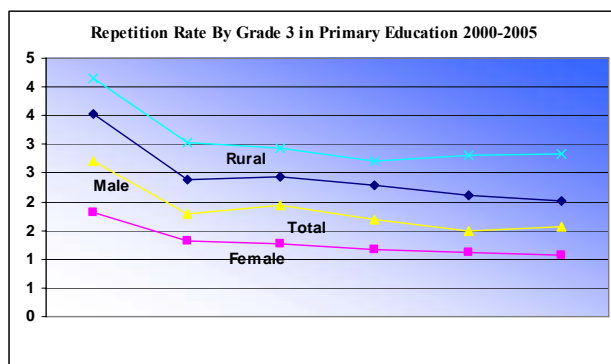
The girls' repetition rate in primary second grade is lower than that of boys during the years of study with no variation for this period.

In 2000, the highest repetition rate by second grade of primary education was reported in provinces of Sistan & Balouchestan, Hormozgan and Zanzan respectively (13.36%, 8.20% and 7.01%) and in 2005 in Sistan & Balouchestan, north Khorasan and Kohkilouye & Boyer Ahmad (11.04%, 4.08% and 3.77%).

In 2000, the lowest repetition rate by second grade of primary education was recorded from provinces of Tehran, Yazd and Semnan (1.18%, 1.19% and 1.48%) and in 2005 from Tehran, Mazandaran and Yazd (0.27%, 0.57% and 0.72%).

Primary Third Grade

During the years of study, repetition rate by third grade of primary course at national level has declined from 2.70% in 2000 to 1.56% in 2005. While, repetition rate in primary third grade at rural areas reached from 4.16% to 2.84% with an about 1.32% reduction. Still, it is higher than repetition rate by grade at national level (urban/rural) and the variation of repetition rate between national level and rural areas has remained almost unchanged.



year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Boy	3.53	2.39	2.43	2.29	2.12	2.01
Girl	1.80	1.32	1.27	1.16	1.13	1.08
Total	2.70	1.80	1.94	1.69	1.50	1.56
Rural	4.16	3.02	2.92	2.71	2.81	2.84

Boys' repetition rate by grade has reached from 3.53% in 2000 to 2.01% in 2005 and the same rate for girls from 1.80% to 1.08%.

The highest repetition rate by third grade of primary education in 2000 was reported from Sistan & Balouchestn, Zanzan and Kohkilouye & Boyer Ahmad respectively (8.33%, 4.27% and 4.25%) and in 2005 from Sistan & Balouchestan, north Khorasan and Khoozestan (6.94%, 2.85% and 2.73%).

The lowest repetition rate by third grade of primary education in 2000 was recorded in Tehran, Mazandaran and Semnan (0.85%, 0.91% and 1.09%) and in 2005 in Mazandaran, Yazd and Tehran (0.16%, 0.17% and 0.21%).

During the entire period of study, girls' repetition rate by third grade of primary education was less than that of boys.

Primary Fourth Grade

Repetition rate by grade at primary fourth grade for the whole country has reached from 2.99% in 2000 to 1.16% in 2005; the rural repetition rate at primary fourth grade had been declining too from 4.23% in 2000 down to 2.77% in 2005, but it was higher than repetition rate of students at national level during the years of study.

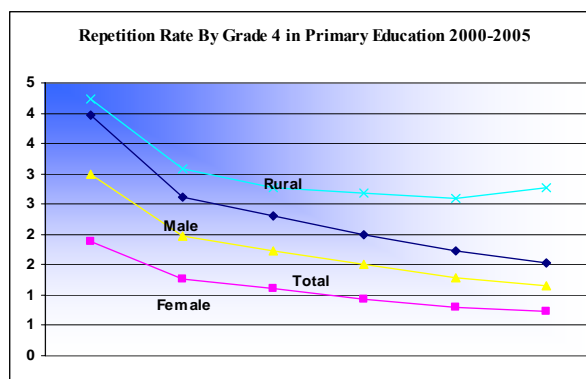
Boys' repetition rate by fourth grade of primary has decreased from 3.98% in 2000 to 1.54% in 2005 and for girls' student from 1.88% to 0.73%.

The Highest repetition rate at primary fourth grade in 2000 belongs to the provinces of Sistan & Balouchestan, Khoozestan and Hormozgan respectively (6.77%, 4.85% and 4.45%), and in 2005 in the provinces of Sistan & Balouchestan, Khoozestan and Zanzan respectively (7.9%, 4.49% and 4.22%).

The lowest repetition rate by fourth grade of primary education in 2000 was reported from Mazandaran, Yazd and Tehran (1.64%, 1.86% and 2.09%) and in 2005 from Mazandaran, Hamedan and Tehran (0.56%, 0.57% and 0.84%).

Girls' repetition rate in all provinces during the years of study had been less than that of boys' students.

Repetition Rate By Grade 4 in Primary Education 2000-2005						
year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Boy	3.98	2.63	2.30	2.00	1.72	1.54
Girl	1.88	1.26	1.11	0.94	0.80	0.73
Total	2.99	1.98	1.73	1.50	1.29	1.16
Rural	4.23	3.07	2.77	2.68	2.59	2.77



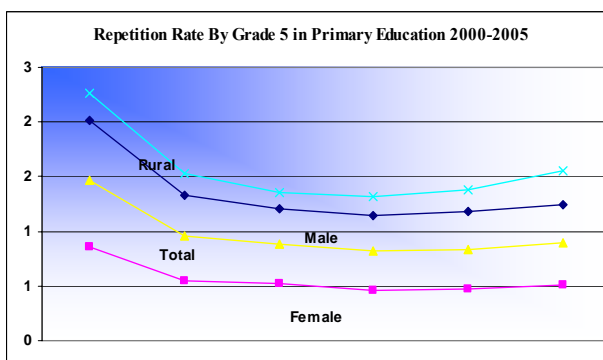
Primary Fifth Grade

Studies show that repetition rate by fifth grade primary education has reached from 1.46% in 2000 to 0.89% in 2005 with a descending trend and the rate for rural areas during the same years has decreased from 2.27% to 1.56%; however, it was always more than repetition rate for the whole country.

During the years of study, repetition rate by fifth grade of primary education has reached from 2.02% to 1.24% for boys and from 0.85% to 0.51% for girls' students. While, girls and boys' repetition rate shows a decreasing trend, boys' repetition rate for all the years of study had always been more than that of girls.

The highest repetition rate of primary fifth grade in 2000 was reported from provinces of Sistan & Balouchestan, Khoozestan and Hormozgan (3.25%, 2.61% and 2.28%) and in 2005 from provinces of Sistan & Balouchestan, Zanzan and Khoozestan (3.03%, 1.83% and 1.61%). The lowest repetition rate of primary fifth grade in 2000 belongs to the provinces of Ardebil, Mazandaran and Yazd (0.5%, 0.66% and 0.73%) and in 2005 to Mazandaran, Tehran and Yazd (0.23%, 0.25%, and 0.41%).

Repetition Rate By Grade 5 in Primary Education 2000-2005						
year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Boy	2.02	1.34	1.21	1.15	1.18	1.24
Girl	0.85	0.55	0.52	0.46	0.47	0.51
Total	1.46	0.96	0.88	0.82	0.84	0.89
Rural	2.27	1.52	1.36	1.32	1.38	1.56



Nationwide

The highest repetition rate by grade during the years of study has been reported in the first grade of primary education that in spite of a 43% reduction (from 7% in 2000 to 4% in 2005) the rate is still distressing. The girls' repetition rate by grade during the years of study had always been less than that of boys for the first to fifth grades of primary education.

The highest repetition rate in the first to fifth grades of primary course during the years of study was reported in Sistan & Balouchestan. Although it showed a declining trend, it is still more than other provinces. The repetition rate by first grade of primary education in Sistan & Balouchestan province decreased from 16% in 2000 to 15% in 2005 and in the second grade from 13.36% to 11.94%, in the third grade from 8.33% to 6.94%, in the fourth grade from 6.77% to 5.88%, and in the fifth grade from 3.25% to 3.03%.

After Sistan & Balouchestan, the highest repetition rate by grade has been reported in the following provinces:

Primary first grade: in Kohkilouye & Boyer Ahmad from 11% in 2000 to 7% in 2005, north Khorasan from 10% to 8%, Hormozgan from 13% to 7%.

Primary second grade: in Hormozgan from 8.2% in 2000 to 4.08% in 2005, in north Khorasan from 6.22% to 4.08% and in Kohkilouye & Boyer Ahmad from 4.62% to 3.77%.

Primary third grade: during the years of study in north Khorasan from 3.82% to 2.85%, in Zanjan from 4.27% to 2.59% and in Kohkilouye & Boyer Ahmad from 4.17% to 2.57%.

Primary fourth grade: during the years of study in Khoozestan province from 4.85% to 3.14%, in Zanjan from 3.7% to 2.73% and in Kohkilouye & Boyer Ahmad from 3.95% to 2.76%.

Primary fifth grade: during the years of study in Boushehr from 2.21% to 1.75%, in Zanjan from 1.73% to 1.83% and in north Khorasan from 1.68% to 1.7%.

Rural Areas

The highest repetition rate has been reported in the first grade of primary education and the lowest reduction of repetition rate by grade during the years of study has occurred in the same grade.

The repetition rate by grade in primary first grade at national level (urban/rural) has reached from 7% to 4%, in the second grade from 4.5% to 2.3%, in the third grade from 2.7% to 1.56%, in the fourth grade from 2.99% to 1.16%, and in the fifth grade from 1.46% to 0.92%.

In the rural areas, repetition rate in primary first grade has reached from 10% in 2000 to 8% in 2005, in the second grade from 7% to 4.5%, in the third grade from 4% to 2.8%, in the fourth grade from 4.2% to 2.8% and in the fifth grade from 2.2% to 1.6%.

A comparative study of repetition rate by grade in the rural areas and the whole country shows that in all grades of primary course, repetition rate by grade in rural regions was more than the whole country (urban/rural); during the years of study, repetition rate by first grade of primary education in rural areas was more than all grades in the village and the whole country (urban/rural); the reduction rate for all grades was also less than that of the entire country.

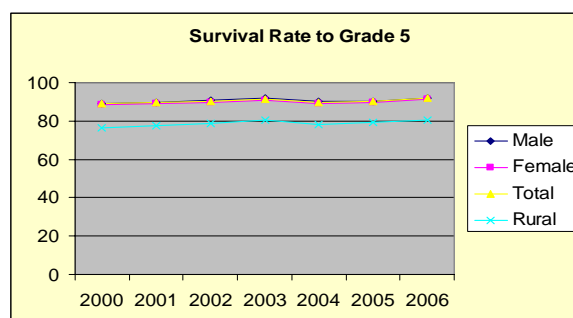
Comparing Reduction Percentage of Primary Repetition Rate by grade in Urban/Rural Areas with Rural Areas (2000-2005)

Grade	Regions	2000	2005	Reduction percentage
First	Nationwide (urban/rural)	7	4	-43%
	Rural	10	8	-20%
Second	Nationwide (urban/rural)	4.5	2.3	-49%
	Rural	7	4.5	-36%
Third	Nationwide (urban/rural)	2.7	1.56	-42%
	Rural	4	2.8	-30%
Fourth	Nationwide (urban/rural)	2.99	1.16	-61%
	Rural	4.2	2.8	-35%
Fifth	Nationwide (urban/rural)	1.46	0.92	-39%
	Rural	2.2	1.6	-27%

Survival Rate from Primary First Grade to Fifth Grade

Based on the information on below the table and chart, survival rate from first grade to fifth grade of primary education in the whole country has reached from 88.83% in 2000 to 91.84% in 2005, showing the growth of this rate. In other words, a higher percentage of children who are enrolled in primary first grade, continue their studies up to the end of primary education. In rural areas, the above rate has increased from 76.3% to 80.4%.

Survival Rate to Grade 5							
year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Boy	89.24	89.91	90.64	91.94	90.07	90.38	92.18
Girl	88.37	88.83	89.61	90.86	89.30	89.65	91.41
Total	88.83	89.39	90.15	91.48	89.70	90.03	91.84
Rural	76.30	77.41	78.75	80.51	78.15	79.16	80.40



Although this rate shows an increasing trend for the whole country and rural areas as well, it is far from standard level. On the other hand, the difference of this rate in rural areas as compared to the whole country shows a very minor change.

It reveals that reduction of the existing gap and growth of survival rate for students of primary education in rural areas require enhancement of quality education and more concentration on regional special characteristics.

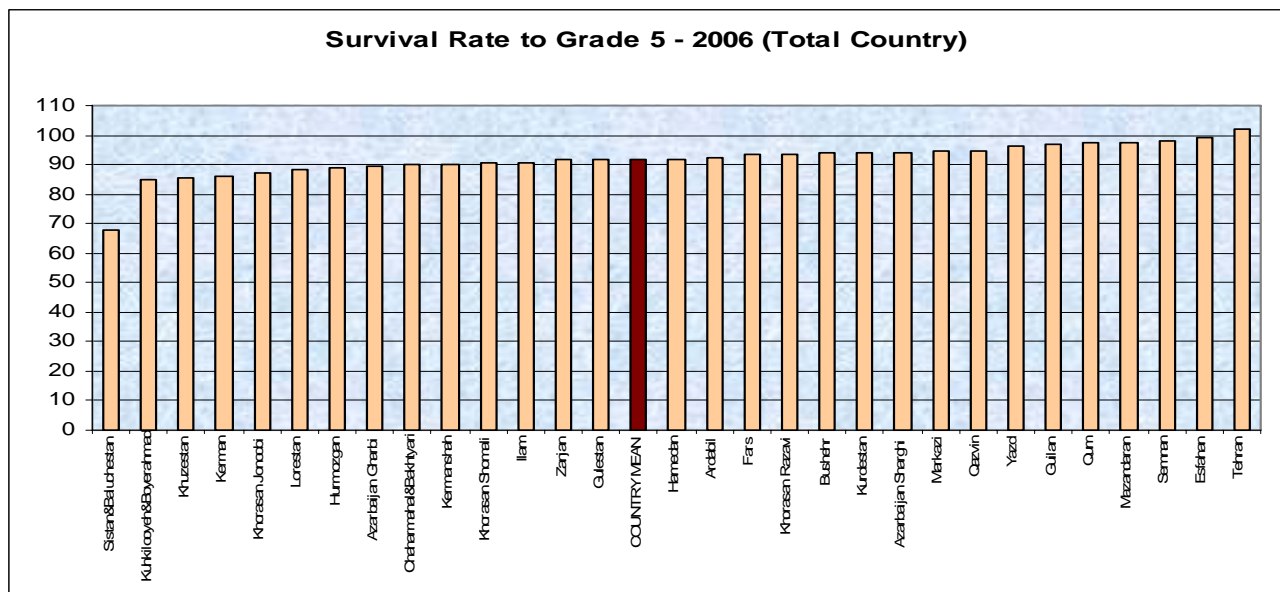
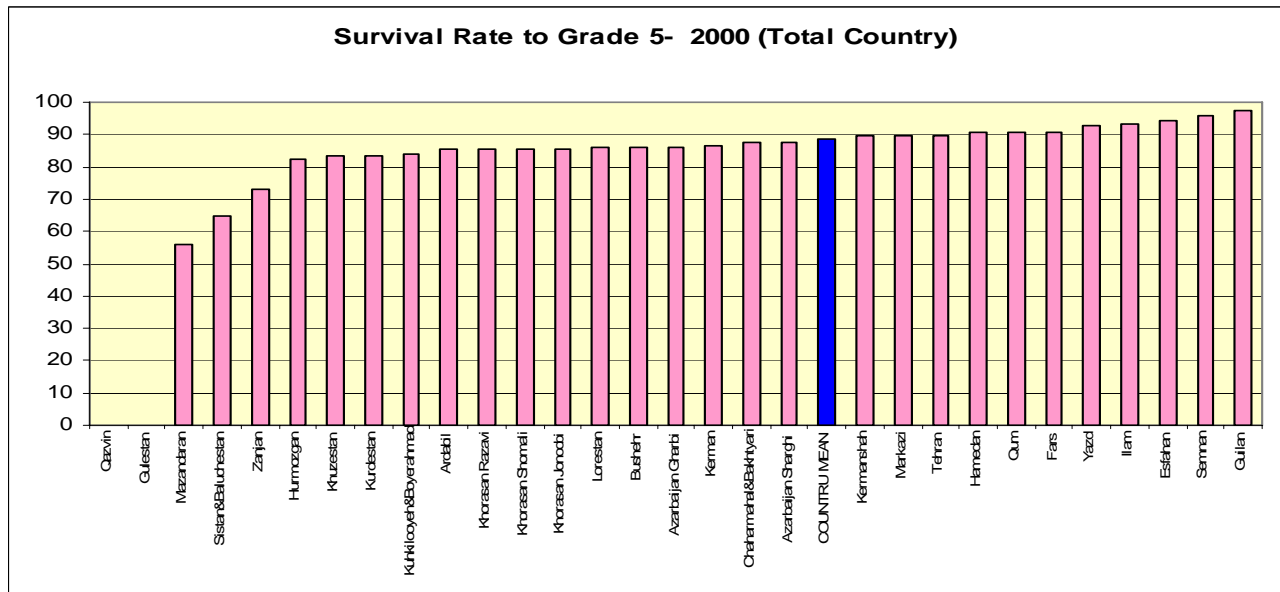
Boys' survival rate is higher than that of girls throughout the years of study.

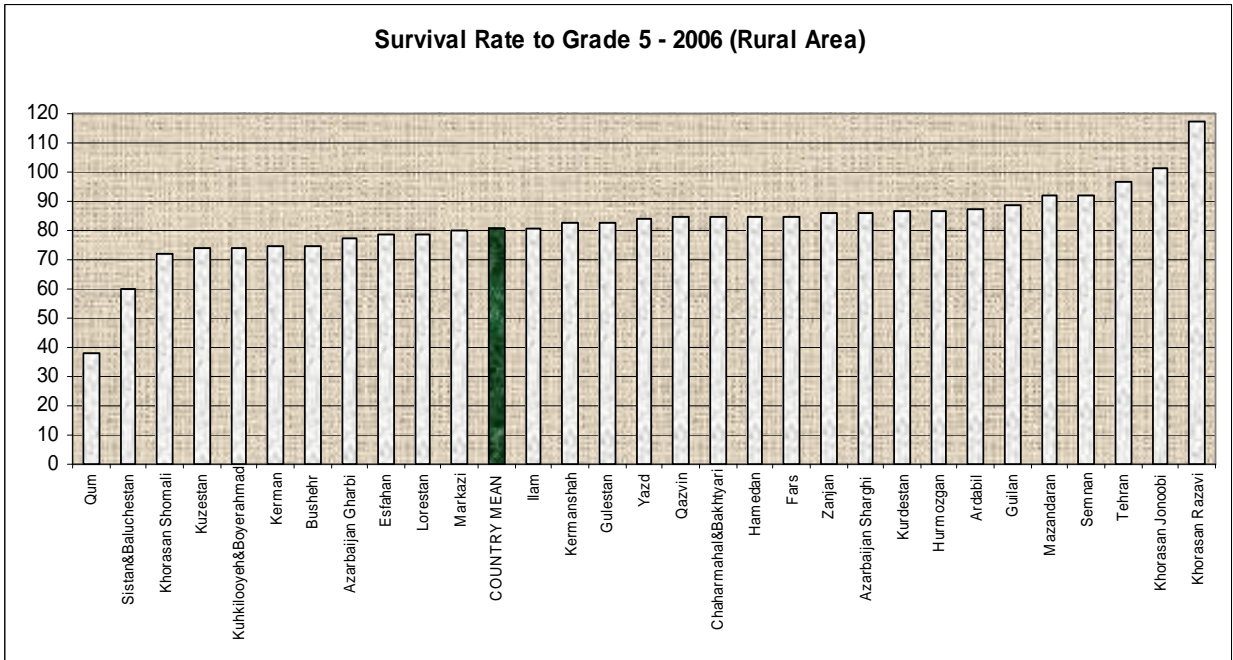
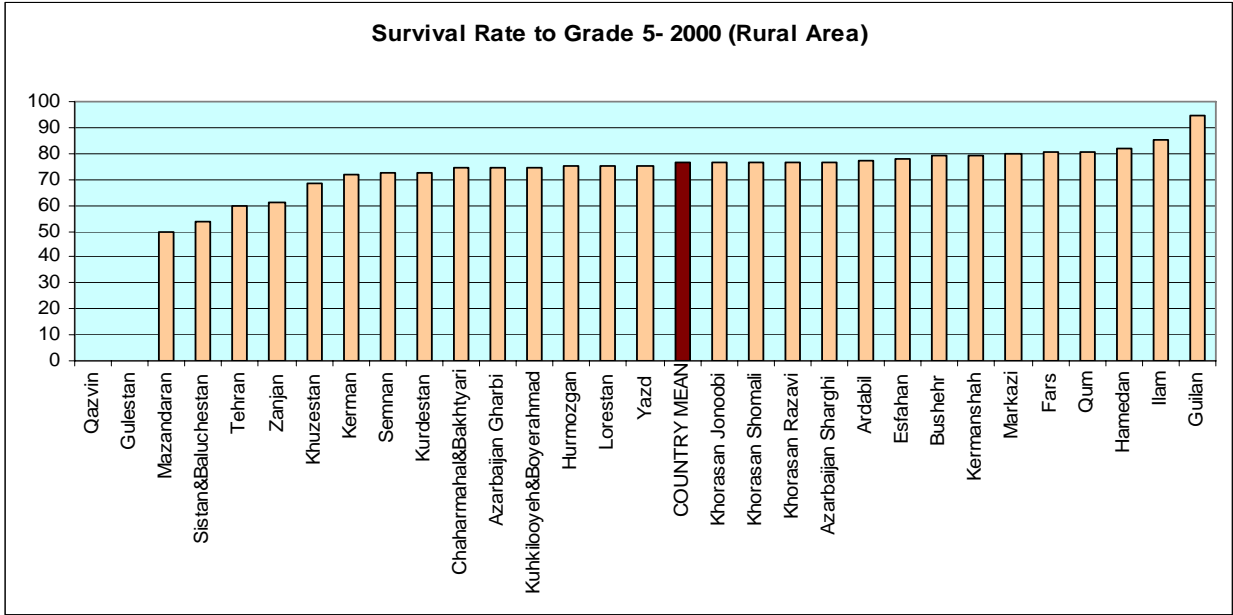
Boys' survival rate has reached from 89.24% in 2000 to 92.18% in 2006, while the same rate for girls' students has reached from 88.37% to 91.41%. It means that girls' drop-out rate in primary education is higher than that of boys' students, while gender disparity index in the years of study

has remained almost unchanged. The highest survival rate from first to the fifth grade of primary education in 2000 belongs to the provinces of Gilan, Semnan and Esfahan respectively (97.65%, 95.74%, 94.11%), and in 2006 in the provinces of Tehran, Semnan and Mazandaran respectively (102.04%, 98.32%, and 97.63%).

The lowest survival rate in 2000 has been reported in Mazandaran, Sistan & Balouchestan and Zanzan respectively (63.96%, 64.55%, 64.55% and 73.10%), and in 2006 in the provinces of Sistan & Balouchestan, Kohkilouye & Boyer Ahmad and Khoozestan (68.01%, 84.73% and 85.36%). During the years of study, girls' survival rate was less than that of boys.

The survival rate from first to fifth grade in 2000 and 2006 for the whole country and villages is illustrated in the following charts:

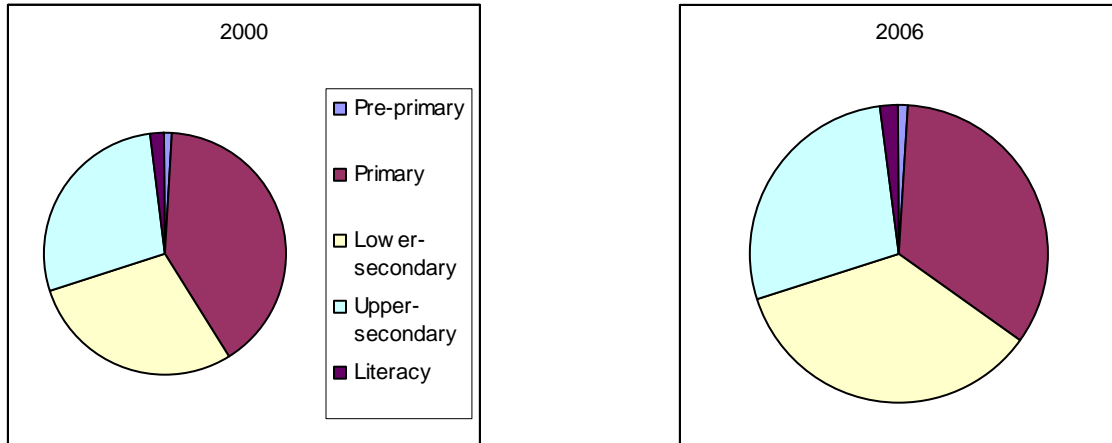




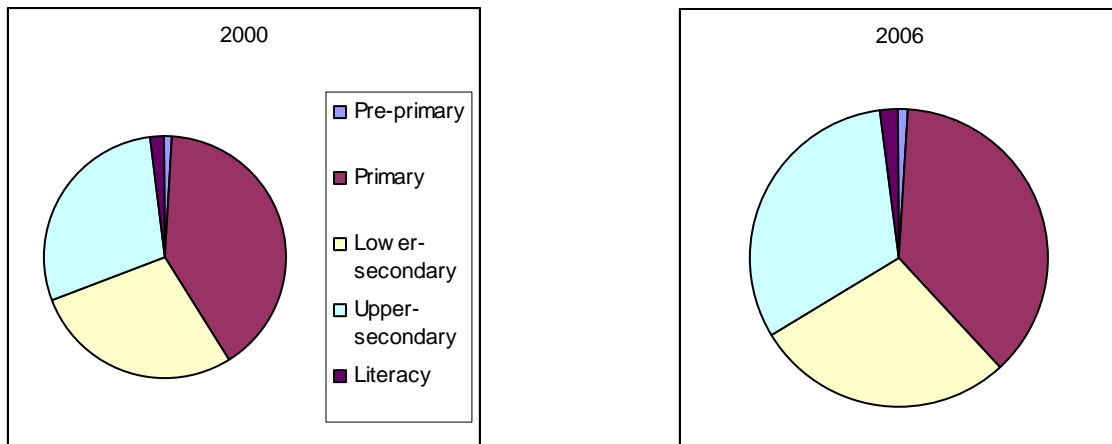
• Share of Primary, Lower/ Upper Secondary Education from Total Public Budget, GDP & Total Expenditures on Education

The last indicator studied in this section, is share of educational courses from total public budget, GDP and total expenditures on education. This share for the period of 2000 through 2006 is illustrated in the under pie charts:

PUBLIC EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE



PUBLIC EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION AS PERCENTAGE OF GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT (GNP)



PUBLIC EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL EDUCATIONAL EXPENDITURE

