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Education First
Sri Lanka

Ministry of Education
Sri Lanka

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Ministry of Education,
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Battaramulla,
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‘Best things are for the children of the nation’.

Mahinda Rajapaksa
His Excellency the President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

The education system should not be focused on the next ten years but should be focused on the next century. I strongly believe that we need to assess how productive is the time spent by a student today for his or her future [Mahinda Chinthana Vision for the Future, 2010:72].

Education First
Sri Lanka

Vision of the Ministry of Education, Sri Lanka:

Future generations of Sri Lankan citizens equipped with competencies to meet the challenges of a changing, globalised, knowledge-driven economy.

Mission of the Ministry of Education, Sri Lanka:

To develop an excellent education system which enables students to acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to be future citizens who will perform their roles eff ciently and effectively in a modern, globalised, knowledge-driven economy.

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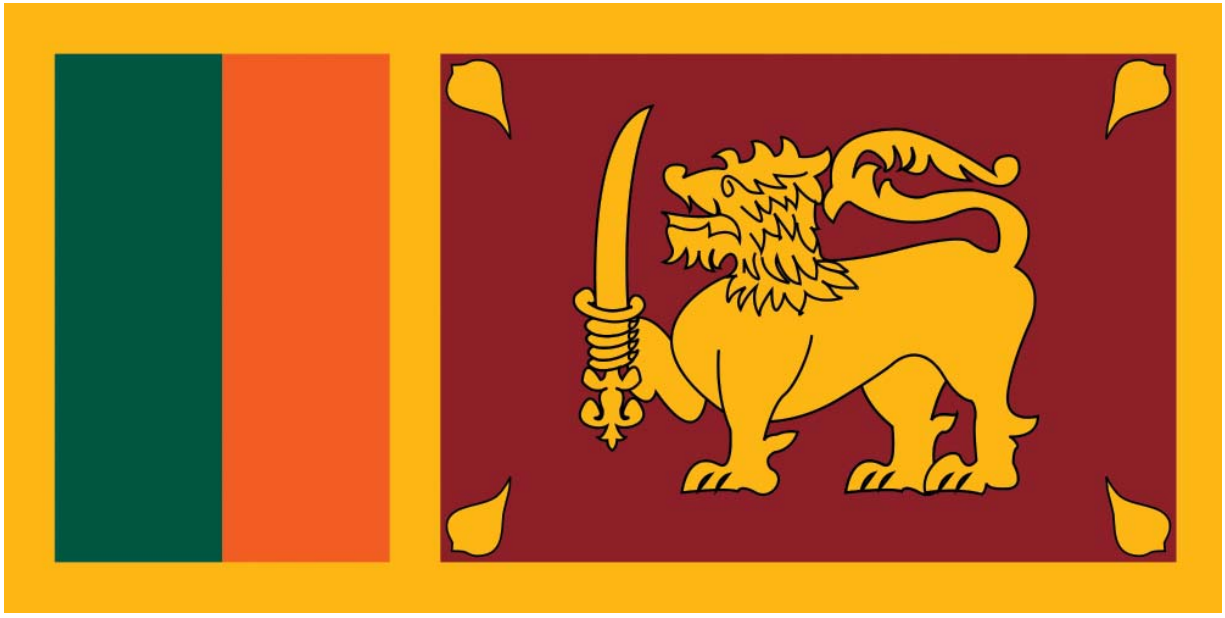


National Flag of Sri Lanka

Message from the Hon. Minister of Education

'Education First, Sri Lanka'

This booklet -'Education First, Sri Lanka'- provides a brief account of the historical tradition, the evolution and the contemporary developments of education in this country. It will be a useful handbook for anybody interested in gaining an awareness of our system of education.

In the past learning was associated with promotion of religious values and spiritual development. Education was imparted in monasteries guided by the clergy. But with modernisation and development of science and technology the need for development of skills has become an important goal of education. We in Sri Lanka are attempting to merge both these main objectives in fashioning our education system. The need for inculcating values, especially the traditions based on our cultural heritage as well as the acquisition of skills required in a globalised environment are equally important.

The education policy is based on the vision enshrined in the Mahinda Chinthana Vision for the Future (MCVF, 2010) of Sri Lanka. The country is progressing rapidly on the path to make Sri Lanka the Wonder of Asia by developing five major hubs in the areas of naval, aviation, commercial, energy and knowledge. In pursuing this ideal the education sector has to play a key role in developing the knowledge hub. The Ministry of Education in collaboration with the other relevant ministries is working relentlessly to achieve this goal. Our slogan 'Education First' indicates the priority given to education.

I hope this publication will be useful to those who want to learn about our education system. If any party wishes to have further information in any of these aspects we are most happy to oblige.

Bandula Gunawardana (MP)
Minister of Education
Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

Message from the Hon. Monitoring MP for Education

I am pleased to see the publication of the 'Education First, Sri Lanka' which gives an overview of the education system in Sri Lanka from ancient period to present era. Without doubt, it has covered all aspects of the education system briefly.

Sri Lanka as a fast-developing country, has taken a number of initiatives to transform the education system to match the needs of a knowledge-based economy. Human resource development is the key to faster economic growth. The development in science and technology has improved productivity to levels unimagined in the past and we must make use of this trend to accelerate our growth. Improvement in teaching of science, mathematics, technology and foreign languages (English in our case) and the development of soft-skills are crucial to be competitive in a globalised market situation. We are overhauling the secondary school curriculum and providing facilities to schools to reach this target. The development of 1,000 secondary schools as full curriculum schools and 5,000 primary schools as child-friendly primary schools is a big step in this direction.

Sri Lanka would wish to gain from the experiences of other developing countries. This will help us to adapt new initiatives without reinventing the wheel. Similarly other countries too would be willing to gain from our experience. This is an example of sharing our experience with others in a small way. If any party is interested we are glad to further elaborate our experiences.

Mohan Lal Grero (MP)
Monitoring MP for Education
Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

Message from the Secretary, Ministry of Education

This publication has been designed to provide a bird's eye-view of the history and the current developments of the education system in Sri Lanka. It will be useful to Sri Lankans as well as foreigners interested in studying about our education system.

The educational tradition which has its beginnings over two millennia ago, nurtured by eastern Buddhist tradition has imbued the value of learning. Enriched by the influx of western ideas subsequently, the current thinking is based on a mix of the best of both, the east and the west. We strive to preserve the values of the east and inculcate the skills necessary for a modern global society.

Expanding provision and improving the quality have been the hallmarks of the present educational policy. We have been successful in achieving the first in quantitative expansion. According to international literature, the Sri Lankan education system has been celebrated in development policy circles and the economic literature for the success in providing widespread access to primary and secondary education and enabling the country to attain comparatively high human development levels for a middle-income country.

Our challenge is to improve the quality of education so that the output from the system will be equipped with the competencies necessary for meeting the demands of an uncertain future. We are striving to achieve that goal. The strategies are briefly outlined in this publication -'Education First, Sri Lanka'-.

I hope our experiences will be useful for policymakers in other developing as well as middle-income countries. We are always prepared to share our experiences with anybody who is interested.

S.M. Gotabaya Jayaratna
Secretary
Ministry of Education
Sri Lanka

National Tree of Sri Lanka
(Na Tree - *Mesua Ferrea*)

National Flower of Sri Lanka
(Nil Mahanel - *Nympheae Stelleta*)

1 The country and the people: Sri Lanka

The Ancient City...

National Unity...

The Capital...

Sri Lanka: Country profile

Location	7.00 N 81.00 E South Asia
Land Area	62,705 sq.km
Climate	Tropical
Government	Democratic Socialist Republic
Languages	Sinhala, Tamil, English
Religions	Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, Islam
Currency	Sri Lankan Rupee
Population	20.26 million
Female population	51.5 (out-of the total population)
Sex ratio (Number of males per 100 females)	94.3
Dependency ratio (population below 15 years of age and 60 years and over by the working population of 15 to 59 years of age)	61.3%
Per capita income	US$ 2836
Life expectancy	74.9 years
Infant mortality rate	8 per 1,000
Adult literacy rate	94.5
Unemployment rate in workforce	4.5%
Human development index	0.691
Gender parity in general education	1:1
Access to safe drinking water	87.7
Availability of electricity	91%
Telephone Access (mobile)	105%
Internet use	40%

The location and historical overview

Sri Lanka is an island in the Indian Ocean situated to the south of the Indian subcontinent with a land area of 65,000sq. kms, lying a few degrees north of the equator. It has a tropical climate and the monsoonal winds bring rain to the south west from May to September and to the north-east from October to February. Inter-monsoonal rains prevail during the other months. Adequate rainfall in the south-west and the central highlands helps the growth of lush green vegetation. The central parts of the island are mountainous with rivers flowing in all directions to the surrounding coastal plains. With nature's gift of rain and fertile soil, the principal means of livelihood of the people from the dawn of history has been agriculture.

Although located closer to the Indian subcontinent, Sri Lanka is a separate island strategically situated on the main sea routes between the East and the West. This has had a tremendous influence on its history.

The proximity to the subcontinent created close affinities between Sri Lanka and India. The original settlers of the island migrated from India and the principal religions in the country, Buddhism and Hinduism were introduced from that country. The ancient culture, language, art and architecture, technology and social customs were influenced by India. Political developments in India, too, had their repercussions on this island. Sri Lanka was subjected to frequent invasions from South India, whenever strong rulers emerged there. Western powers too, wanted to have a strong hold on this island, in order to consolidate their power in India. Finally, when India gained independence, this island too, got its independence without any bloodshed.

However, being a separate island helped Sri Lanka to develop a culture of its own, with a distinct identity. Buddhism which originated in India, has almost disappeared from that country, but remains the principal religion in this country. Similarly the language, social customs and other cultural aspects have developed with their own distinguishing characteristics.

The strategic location on a main sea-route, resulted in travellers visiting this island in the past. The Greek and Arab merchant sailors found it a convenient port of call on their voyages to the East. These visitors described the island by such names as Taprobane, Serendib, Ceilao and finally Ceylon. The present name Sri Lanka is being used with the promulgation of the Republican Constitution in 1972. The ancient travellers have left graphic accounts of the island and its people in their

historical records. Marco Polo, Ibn Batuta and Fahien Bhikku are some of the travellers who have left glowing records of their experience in this country.

Sri Lanka has a recorded history of over 2,500 years which began with the arrival of a migrant prince with his following from India. His descendents established the kingdom with Anuradhapura as the capital which developed to be a golden era which lasted for over a millennium. The magnificent hydraulic system comprising tanks and canals which are engineering marvels provided water for cultivation that made this country a granary in the east. The remains of huge religious edifices and works of art and architecture, stone sculpture are evidence of a flourishing civilisation. However due to foreign invasions and neglect of the ancient irrigation works the population shifted to the South-West and the country became vulnerable. At this time the European explorers who came in the wake of the Renaissance in Europe along the ancient sea routes in search of spices, conquered the maritime provinces of this island in the 16th century and finally, the British were able to subjugate the whole country at the beginning of the 19th century.

Tank and Dagaba : System of spritual and economic development...

The British were interested in developing cash crops in place of traditional agriculture and lands owned by the people communally, were sold to companies for cultivation of these crops. First, coffee and then tea and rubber were the crops that were introduced. And the economy was transformed from a traditional subsistence system to an export oriented market economy.

During the 20th century with the growth of the national movement for revival of national culture and constitutional reforms, the British rulers influenced by liberal movement in the mother country commenced a process for empowerment of the people through representative government and social development. In 1931 universal suffrage was granted to elect representatives to the State Council whereby a fair degree of local autonomy was granted. In 1948 the country gained independence and became a dominion within the British Commonwealth. A Westminster model of parliamentary system was established in 1948.

In 1972 Sri Lanka became a Republic and in 1978 an Executive Presidency model of governance was adapted. In 1987 some of the powers and functions exercised by the central government were devolved to the provinces. Each province will have an elected Provincial Council which will manage the provincial administration with regard to the devolved functions. The local government institutions, the Municipalities, the Urban Councils and Pradesiya Sabha run by elected representatives of the people manage local affairs.

A waterfall in upcountry...

SRI LANKA
National capital
Provincial capital
Town, village
Provincial boundary
Main road
Secondary road
Railroad
Airport
© Nations Online Project
INDIA
Palk Strait
Palk Bay
Gulf of Mannar
Laccadive Sea
Bay of Bengal
INDIAN OCEAN
Kankesanturai
Point Pedro
Kayts
Jaffna
Elephant Pass
Devipattinam
Rameswaram
Dhanushkodi
Talaimannar
Kilinochchi
Puthukkudiyiruppu
Mullaittivu
Vellankulam
Manjulam
NORTHERN
Nedunkeni
Mannar
Puliyankulam
Pulmoddai
Madhu Road
Vavuniya
Silavatturai
Nilaveli
Pankulam
Kebitigollewa
Medawachchiya
Horiwupotana
Trincomalee
Hamillewa
Mutur
Pomparippu
Anuradhapura
Kantalai
NORTH CENTRAL
Kalpitiya
Maragahewa
Kathiraveli
Puttalam
Kekirawa
Habarane
Galgamuwa
Polonnaruwa
NORTH
Anamaduwa
Dambula
Valachchenai
Maho
Chenkaladi
WESTERN
Batticaloa
Nadia
EASTERN
Ganewatta
Chilaw
Maha Oya
Kurunegala
Paddiruppu
Matale
Kuliyapitiya
Kehelula
Kalmunai
CENTRAL
Pannala
Kandy
Mahiyangana
Uhana
Amparai
Negombo
Kegalla
Tirrukkovil
Gampaha
Bibile
Ja-Ela
Nuwara Eliya
Badulla
Colombo
Avissawella
Sri Jayewardenepura Kotte
UVA
Pottuvil
Moratuwa
Mount Lavinia
Monaragala
WESTERN
Haputale
Panadura
Horana
Ratnapura
Buttala
Balangoda
Okanda
Kalutara
SABARAGAMUWA
Pelmadulla
Telulla
Kumana
Beruwala
Matugama
Rakwana
Kataragama
Embilipitiya
Deniyaya
Tissamaharama
Kirinda
Ambalangoda
Udugama
SOUTHERN
Hambontota
Akuressa
Tangalla
Galle
Matara
SRI LANKA
0 20 40 60 80 km
0 10 20 30 40 50 mi

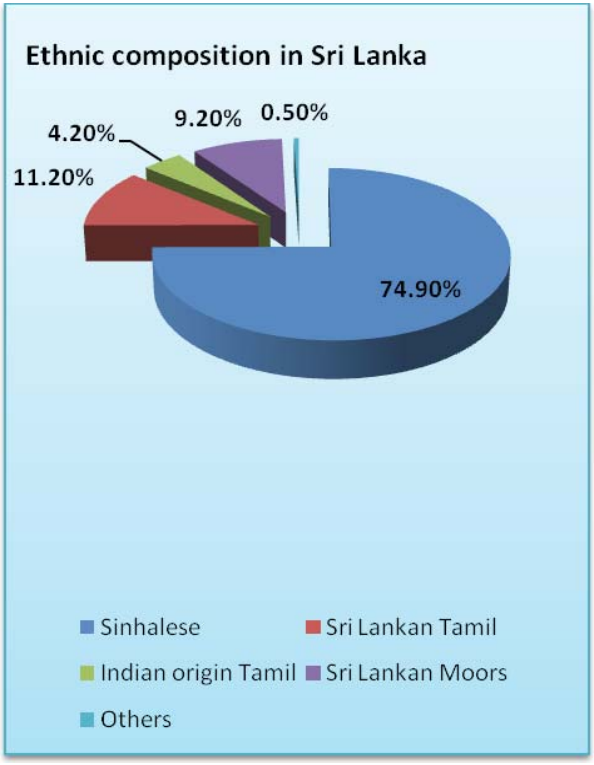
People and society

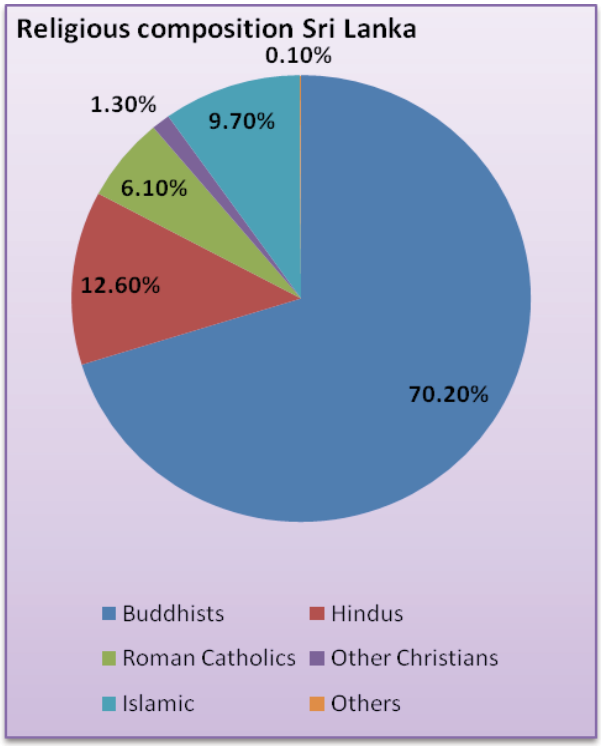
The population of Sri Lanka is 20.26 million according to Population Census (2011) and the average annual growth rate is 1.00 per cent (Department of Census and Statistics, 2012). Thus the country has reached stability in population growth. The decline in the rate of population increase has led to a reduction in the young dependency ratio which is a favourable development for the education sector as the decreasing numbers will enable the authorities to divert more resources for education quality improvement. However, with the increase in life expectancy of the population the elderly dependency ratio is increasing.

Learning to live together...

The population of Sri Lanka consists of a mix of many ethnic groups whose ancestors migrated and settled down in the country over the centuries. As a result the present population is a mosaic of different ethnic groups and religious denominations within a multi-cultural milieu. Ethnically the Sinhalese comprise 74.9 per cent of the population, the Sri Lankan Tamils 11.2 per cent, the Sri Lanka Moors 9.2 per cent, the Tamils of recent Indian origin 4.2 per cent, and others 0.5 per cent (Department of Census and Statistics, 2012).

Religion-wise there are 70.2 per cent Buddhists, 12.6 per cent Hindus, 9.7 per cent Islam, 6.1 per cent Roman Catholics and 1.3 per cent other Christians, 0.10 per cent others (Department of Census and Statistics, 2012). Each cultural entity maintains its own customs and practices with a distinct identity, but all contribute to form a Sri Lankan identity as citizens of one country.





Source: primary data from: Department of Cenus and Statistics (2012).

Sri Lanka has graduated to the level of a middle-income country in the year 2010 with a per capita income of US$ 2,400. The per capita income for the year 2011 has risen to US$ 2,836. However, the quality of life as shown by the Human Development Index (HDI) compiled by the United Nations at .691 shows that Sri Lanka enjoys a higher level of quality of life in comparison to countries having a similar or a higher level per capita income. Some of the components taken in to account in the compilation of the HDI, such as literacy at 94.5 per cent, life expectancy at 74 years and Infant mortality at 8 per 1,000 live births are impressive achievements in social development. These are the results of the social welfare measures pursued by successive governments after independence, to which free education and free health services have made a remarkable contribution.

On gender issues the country has followed an enlightened policy. The right to vote

irrespective of gender restrictions granted with universal suffrage in 1931 and the provision of educational facilities for females without discrimination has established gender equity in Sri Lankan society. Girls out number boys in enrolment in secondary education and females form the majority in professions such as teaching and nursing. Participation of women in other professions such as medicine and law is increasing rapidly.

Under Mahinda Chinthana Vision for the Future (MCVF) the economy is growing at a rate of 8 per cent per annum. Poverty has been reduced to 8 per cent. By 2015 the country will achieve both the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) as well as the Education for All Goals (EFA).

Tooth Relic (Dalada maligawa) Kandy...

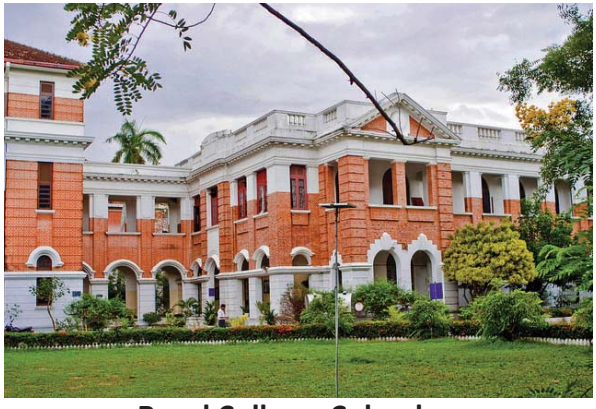
Sigiriya: A world heritage...

Kandyan Dancers...

Increasing access to and participation in education...

2 Historical overview of the education system

Ibbagamuwa Central College, Kurunegala.



Royal College, Colombo.

The ancient tradition of learning

In the ancient times, following on the lines of eastern traditions, learning was considered a valued treasure. Men of learning were highly respected and royal patronage was extended to great teachers, poets and men of letters.

In a society where printing was not known, transmission of knowledge was handed down the generations through word of mouth, the oral tradition. Religious knowledge and philosophy of Buddhism were encapsulated into short stanzas which were memorized by the pupils, who were trained to expand the kernel into detailed exhortations when preaching to the people.

Later the texts were committed to writing in Ola leaf manuscripts and these were stored in the libraries of temples. There were great seats of learning comparable to present day universities, run by the clergy where religion, philosophy and literature were taught.

The Pirivenas or monastic colleges, primarily intended for the clergy, also had lay students. There were a number of such monasteries in the capital city where large numbers of priests learned Buddhism, languages, grammar, rhetoric and allied academic disciplines. The literary works produced in the latter part of the Anuradhapura period, in Sinhala, written in Ola manuscripts, show a high quality of literary excellence.

Unfortunately, the knowledge in technology has not been committed to writing and is lost to the future generations. However the ancient religious edifices and the irrigation system with large reservoirs and canals is testimony to a high level of engineering knowledge that the ancients possessed. Foreign invasions and natural disasters led to the drift to the south west, abandoning the ancient centres of civilization.

Information about Hindu educational traditions is meagre. There would have been temple schools based on eastern tradition in the Tamil settlements in the north. These would have been modernised during the time of the Portuguese and Dutch rule.

The Muslim settlements came up much later when the Arabs came as traders in large numbers and settled down after the 15th century. In these settlements there were learning centres attached to mosques where the recitation of the Quaran was practiced.

Advent of Western influence

The Portuguese arrived in 1505 and captured the maritime provinces of the country. They ruled these areas for 150 years while the Sinhala kingdom survived in the central highlands. Thereafter, the Dutch succeeded the Portuguese and after another 150 years the British took over. Two decades after their capture of the maritime provinces, they were able to subjugate the king of Kandy and bring the whole island under their rule. Their rule lasted till 1948 in which year the country gained independence.

Under the Portuguese, education was in the hands of the missionaries who established schools to propagate the Roman Catholic religion. Different orders of the church, the Franciscans, Jesuits, Dominicans and Augustinians arrived in the island and zealously organised parish schools where reading writing and scriptures were taught. The medium of instruction in these schools was the mother tongue. Elementary education was provided to all children in the parish, while the secondary schools enrolled only the children of Portuguese civil and military officers or local chieftains. The secondary school curriculum in addition to reading, writing and scriptures had humanities and rhetoric.

The Dutch who succeeded the Portuguese, discovered that the establishment of schools greatly assisted in the work of civil administration and trade. They followed a rigorous policy to expand education and the number of schools and the pupils increased rapidly. Due to the suspicion that Catholics would support the Portuguese, they followed a policy of suppressing Catholicism and promoting the Dutch Reformed Church. However they did not leave education in the hands of the clergy and the government exercised a fair degree of control over the running of schools. They appointed a Scholarchal Commission to supervise schools in each district.

The British, who succeeded the Dutch, laid the foundation for a mass education system during the 19th century. To begin with, the clergy were encouraged to establish schools with government assistance. Later, influenced by the Humanitarian movement in England and also realising the need to educate the natives, to man the lower level positions in the public service and the emerging commercial plantation sector, the government started supporting education. A dual system of schools, those run by the denominational bodies with government assistance , of which some were following the English medium and also charging fees and others run by the government as state schools in the mother-tongue for the children of common people, emerged.

With the increase in the number of schools, the government established the Department of Public Instruction in 1869 and it was entrusted with the task of managing the government schools and regulating the assisted schools in order to ensure that standards were maintained. The government increasingly realised its duty of providing a basic education which helped to combat crime.

The national re-awakening

By the dawn of the 20th century there was a national revival among the Buddhists and the Hindus. Influenced by the developments in India and international events such as the defeat of Russia by Japan in 1905, the emerging local middleclass under the commercial economy, became conscious of their national heritage and the need for a struggle for greater freedom from colonial rule. They had received a liberal education in the public schools and subsequently in higher education institutions in England. The Buddhist leaders formed the Theosophical Society to establish schools with a Buddhist environment while the Hindu leaders established the Hindu Association to establish schools for Hindu children. As a result the number of assisted schools expanded rapidly.

The dawn of a new era

Dr C.W.W. Kannangara

The spurt in education which propelled Sri Lanka to achieve a high level of social development began even before the country gained independence. The Donoughmore Constitution (1931-1947) which granted Sri Lanka a status of semi-independence provided the opportunity for laying down a firm foundation in social development. Dr. C.W.W. Kannangara who held the portfolio of education during this whole period is one person responsible for initiating a series of educational reforms that created a lasting influence on the history of education in this country. The expansion in the provision of education, enactment of a comprehensive law on education, grant of free education from the kindergarten to the university, establishment of central schools, change in the medium of instruction to national languages, curricular changes and student welfare measures such as bursaries for promising students from disadvantaged families and free midday meal for schoolchildren were all his proposals. It is

said that he left, “education which was the patrimony of the rich as the heritage of the poor”.

The thinking of Dr. Kannangara formed the basis and guide to action for policy makers in the post independence era. The post independence period is marked by further growth in education establishing a network of schools spread throughout the country.

The take-over of schools in 1960-61 is another landmark towards establishing a national system of education. The establishment of schools had been carried out by denominational bodies in competition which resulted in lack of planning, duplication and waste of resources. With this legislation except for a small number of schools the vast majority came under government control and a fair degree of rationalisation has been made possible.

Student welfare services too expanded during this period. In addition to school midday meal and scholarships, textbooks and a set of uniforms is being supplied and school transport is subsidised by the government.

Another area that received the attention of the education authorities during this time was curriculum development. The Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) was established in the 1960s mainly to develop curricula in science and mathematics. Later it took over the development of curricula in all subjects and helped in teacher development as well.

In 1985 the National Institute of Education (NIE) was established by an Act of Parliament not only to carry forward the function of curriculum development but also to award degrees in education for the professional development of teachers, principals and educational administrators.

Teacher development is another area of concentration by the educational authorities. The establishment of National Colleges of Education (NCoE) (1986) recognised the importance of pre-service training of teachers. 17 NCoEs were established with all the facilities to train the teachers required for schools. In addition 100 Teacher Centres (TCs) were established to provide in service training for teachers.

The National Education Commission (NEC) was established by an Act of Parliament in 1991 as the body that would formulate national policy on education. The Commission is appointed by His Excellency the President and policy recommendations are submitted to His Excellency. This would ensure continuity in policy and decision-making on a consensual basis irrespective of party affiliations.

Comprehensive education reforms have been carried out periodically to bring the education system on par with international trends. The reforms carried out in 1947, 1960-61, 1972, 1981, 1997 and 2006 are some of the landmarks in the pursuit of quality improvement in education.

Landmarks in the evolution of the present system of education in Sri Lanka

1869	Establishment of the Department of Public Instruction
1939	Enactment of Education Ordinance No. 31 of 1939
1943	Special Committee on Education publishes its Report
1943	Establishment of Central Schools
1947	Introduction of free education from Kindergarten to University
1961	Take-over of denominational schools to establish a national system of education
1962	Report of the National Education Commission
1972	Educational reforms
1981	White paper on education
1985	Establishment of National Institute of Education
1986	Establishment of National Colleges of Education
1987	Devolution of power to provincial councils
1991	Establishment of National Education Commission
1997	Education reforms
1998	Enactment of compulsory education regulations
2006	Educational reforms: Education Sector Development Framework and Programme (2006-2010)

Participation in education...

3 The system of education

Equal oppertunities for quality education...

The policy of the government of Sri Lanka is to provide free-education from the primary stage to the first degree level of university education. To ensure that every child has access to schooling, a network of schools has been established covering every nook and corner of the island. The necessary resources to these schools have been supplied. All teachers in schools are appointed and paid by the government. At present the teacher pupil ratio is 1:17. The students enjoy a package of welfare services which includes free textbooks, school uniforms, midday meals, free health services including dental treatment, scholarships for deserving students and subsidised transport. Children with disabilities are provided with special facilities to ensure equal opportunities.

The general education span is of 13 years' duration from age 5 to 18 years. At present education is compulsory from 5 to 14 years. A policy decision has been taken to increase the upper age limit to 16 years.

From birth to five years is the stage of early childhood care and education. Those who leave schools after the compulsory span have further opportunities in vocational training and those who successfully complete secondary education can join universities or tertiary institutes for higher education. Accordingly, the different stages of education can be classified as follows:

- Early Childhood Care and Education.
- General Education (school education).
- Tertiary and University Education.
- Vocational and Technical Education.

Constitutional provision

The Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka in its chapter on, 'Directive Principles of State Policy and Fundamental Duties' states that it is pledged to establish in Sri Lanka a democratic society the objectives of which include, "complete eradication of illiteracy and the assurance to all persons of the right to universal and equal access to education at all levels".

The national education policy is formulated on the recommendations of the National Education Commission (NEC) established under an Act of Parliament. The Commission functions under the Presidential Secretariat and it submits its recommendations to the President. The government after perusal of these recommendations declares what is accepted as national policy on education. Educational reforms are formulated on the basis of these policy recommendations. The Commission has developed eight national goals and a set of competencies as an approach to the achievement of goals.

National goals and competencies

National goals:

The national system of education should assist individuals and groups to achieve major national goals that are relevant to the individual and society.

i. Nation building and the establishment of a Sri Lankan identity through the promotion of national cohesion, national integrity, national unity, harmony, and peace, and recognising cultural diversity in Sri Lanka's plural society within a concept of respect for human dignity.
ii. Recognising and conserving the best elements of the nation's heritage while responding to the challenges of a changing world.
iii. Creating and supporting an environment imbued with the norms of social justice and a democratic way of life that promotes respect for human rights, awareness of duties and obligations, and a deep and abiding concern for one another.
iv. Promoting the mental and physical well-being of individuals and a sustainable life style based on respect for human values.
v. Developing creativity, initiative, critical thinking, responsibility, accountability and other positive elements of a well-integrated and balanced personality.
vi. Human resource development by educating for productive work that enhances the quality of life of the individual and the nation and contributes to the economic development of Sri Lanka.
vii. Preparing individuals to adapt to and manage change, and to develop capacity to cope with complex and unforeseen situation in a rapidly changing world.
viii. Fostering attitudes and skills that will contribute to securing an honourable place in the international community, based on justice, equality and mutual respect.

Basic competencies:

The following basic competencies developed through education will contribute to achieving the national education goals.

(i) Competencies in communication:

Competencies in communication are based on four subsets: literacy, numeracy, graphics and IT proficiency.

Literacy: Listen attentively, speak clearly, read for meaning write accurately and lucidly and communicate ideas effectively.
Numeracy: Use numbers for things, space and time, count, calculate and measure systematically.
Graphics: Make sense of line and form, express and record details, instructions and ideas with line form and colour.
IT proficiency: Computer literacy and the use of ICT in learning, in the work environment and in personal life.

(ii) Competencies relating to personality development:

- Generic skills such as creativity, divergent thinking, initiative, decision-making, problem solving, critical and analytical thinking, teamwork, inter-personal relations, discovering and exploring;
- Values such as integrity, tolerance and respect for human dignity; and
- Emotional intelligence.

(iii) Competencies relating to the environment:
These competencies relate to the environment: social, biological and physical.
Social environment: Awareness of the national heritage, sensitivity and skills linked to being members of a plural society, concern for distributive justice, social relationships, personal conduct, general and legal conventions, rights, responsibilities, duties and obligations.

Biological environment: Awareness, sensitivity and skills linked to the living world, people and the ecosystem, the trees, forests, seas, water, air and life -plant, animal and human life.
Physical environment: Awareness, sensitivity and skills linked to space, energy, fuels, matter, materials and their links with human living, food, clothing, shelter, health, comfort, respiration, sleep, relaxation, rest, wastes and excretion.
Included here are skills in using tools and technologies for learning working and living.

(iv) Competencies relating to preparation for world of work:
Employment related skills to maximise their potential and to enhance their capacity: to contribute to economic development, to discover their vocational interests and aptitudes, to choose a job that suits abilities, and to engage in a rewarding and sustainability livelihood.

(v) Competencies relating to religion and ethics:
Assimilating and internalising values, so that individuals may function in a manner consistent with the ethical, moral and religious modes of conduct in everyday living, selecting that which is most appropriate.

(vi) Competencies in play and use of leisure:
Pleasure, joy, emotions and such human experience as expressed through aesthetics, literature, play, sports and athletics, leisure pursuits and other creative modes of living.

(vii) Competencies relating to 'learning to learn':
Empowering individuals to learn independently and to be sensitive and successful in responding to and managing change through a transformative process, in a rapidly changing, complex and interdependent work.

Source : NEC (2003:71-75).

The implementation of national education policy is the responsibility of the Central Ministry of Education and the Provincial Education Authorities.

Early childhood care and education (ECCD)

Pre-school kids:
Celebrating Independence day...

Recognising the importance of the early years in the physical, mental, social and emotional development of a child, the government has prepared a National Policy on Early Childhood Care and Development. According to this policy, the central government will lay down national policy guidelines including the standards to be maintained by pre-school institutions. The provincial councils will be responsible for regulating the pre-school institutions functioning in their province.

The period of ECCD of 6 years is divided in to two, 0 - 3 years as the stage of infancy and 4 and 5 years as the stage of pre-school education. The stage of infancy is the responsibility of the Ministry of Health. There is a well developed system of primary health care by which health workers visit the homes of infants and mothers are made aware how to bring up children. Children requiring further attention are directed to the specialist clinics. Children aged 4 and 5 years attend child centres known as pre-schools. These are maintained by local government authorities, community organisations and the private sector.

Provincial statutes empower the provincial authorities to register all ECCD centres, visit them and ensure the maintenance of standards on facilities and teachers. They will also train teachers and help to obtain teaching and learning materials.

The national policy also envisages to provide for the training of mothers and care givers on home-based care. Under this activity awareness programmes are being conducted for the target groups through the print and electronic media and face-to-face briefing sessions. Knowledge on proper nutritional practices as well as providing a stimulating environment is emphasised.

According to school census 90 per cent of children who enter the grade one class in schools have participated in some form of pre-school education programme.

General education

The period of general education comprises all grades from grade one to thirteen in the school system. Broadly there are two main divisions primary covering the first five years and secondary eight years from grade six to thirteen.

Primary stage of education

Primary students: walking to the school...

The first five years of schooling at the primary stage of education is crucial to lay a firm foundation for the subsequent learning of the child. This period is demarcated into three key stages:

Key stage 1: grades 1 and 2	The main learning mode is the guided play with secondary emphasis on active learning and a minimum emphasis on deskwork.
Key stage 2: grades 3 and 4	Equal importance is given to all three modes of learning, play, activity-based learning and deskwork.
Key stage 3: grade 5	The emphasis is on deskwork, as pupils are prepared for the early years of secondary education supplemented by active learning and play.

At the end of each stage all children are expected to achieve a list of essential learning competencies. Besides, there are also desirable learning competencies for those gifted children.

The integrated primary curriculum is woven round four main subject areas:

- Language (mother tongue).
- Mathematics.
- Environment related activities.
- Religion.

Activity-based oral English (ABOE) is introduced through environment related activities. English words are used in day-to-day transactions. The idea is to ensure that children become familiar with English words early so that they will learn English better once it is introduced as a second language at grade three. An introduction to the second national language i.e., Sinhala for Tamil speaking children and Tamil for Sinhala speaking children is also implemented from grade three onwards. This is done to promote national integration and the intention of the government is to ensure that future citizens are trilingual.

At every stage, education is child-centred and activity-based. There is less emphasis on examinations and structure, but more on developing the child's mind, skills and abilities.

The new curriculum also requires upgraded classrooms, materials for activities and a play area in the school garden for children to engage in various activities. Primary education programme is designed to make schools child-friendly.

At the end of the primary stage of education there is the grade five scholarship examination to award bursaries to deserving children and selection for placement in prestigious secondary schools. The competitiveness of this examination has had an adverse impact on children. Therefore the MoE has taken several measures to minimise these ill effects and further action is intended to be taken in the future.

Learning by doing in teams...

Secondary stage of education

The secondary stage of eight years is further sub-divided into three levels. These are:

- Junior secondary level from grade six to grade nine;
- Senior secondary level leading to GCE OL; and
- Senior secondary level leading to GCE AL.

The junior secondary level

At the junior secondary level the child will begin to learn through a subject based curriculum that replaces the integrated curriculum. However relationships among subjects are maintained through horizontal integration. There is a common curriculum but in certain subjects specialisation is permitted by allowing the student to select certain optional areas.

At this level too learning through simple projects and practical work is emphasised. Another characteristic is the introduction of school-based assessment (SBA). Under this programme, from grade six onwards pupil's work is assessed through different evaluation procedures including written tests and observation of practical work.

From grade six onwards students are given the option to study selected subjects in the English medium. They can select any subjects other than History and Religion to study in English if there is a competent teacher in the school.

At present education is compulsory from grade one to nine. Around 93 per cent of students attending school complete grade nine. Now the MoE has decided to extend the upper age limit to sixteen years and legislation will be enacted to legalise this provision.

Senior secondary level (GCE OL)

After completing the four year junior secondary level at grade nine, students proceed to GCE OL class at grade ten. This course is of two years' duration and at the end the students sit a public examination, the GCE OL. The curriculum consists of six core subjects and three or four optional subjects selected from several groups of subjects.

Students who pass in six subjects with first language, mathematics and three subjects at credit or higher level qualify to follow the GCE AL course. Approximately 60 per cent of students qualify to proceed to GCE AL grade.

Senior secondary level (GCE AL)

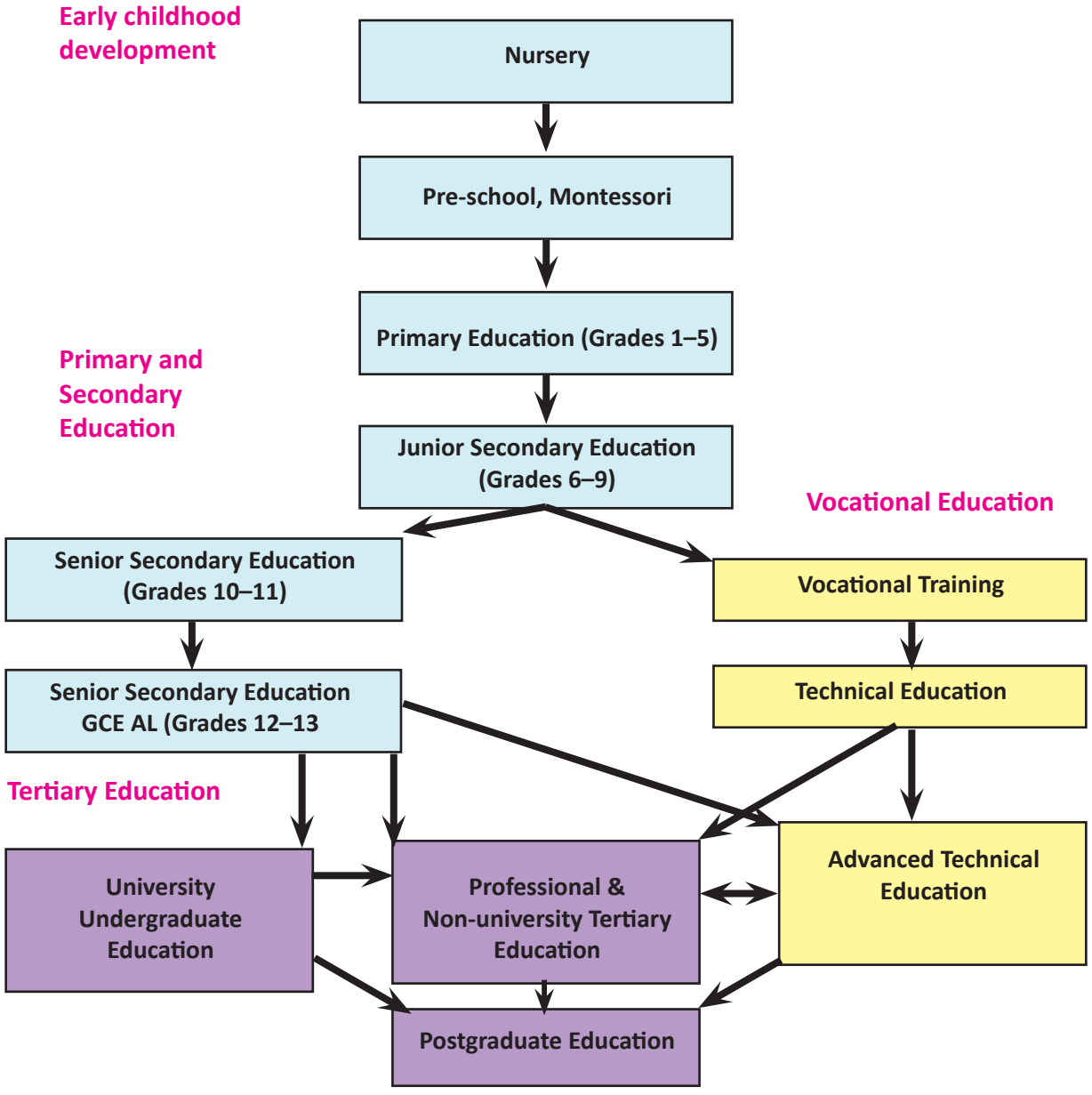
The GCE AL course is of two years' duration and constitutes the final stage of secondary education. It is an attainment examination as well as a selection examination for university admission. The main features of this course are:

- there is an array of subjects from which students are required to select three subjects for study,
- there are four broad streams Science, Commerce, Arts and Technology and the students are expected to decide the stream in which they wish to pursue their education and select three subjects accordingly,
- all students should do general English, intended to improve their English language skills and a common general paper to develop generic skills,
- admission to universities are determined on merit but a district quota is reserved for students coming from educationally disadvantaged districts,
- marks obtained at the GCE AL examination are standardised using what is described as the Z- score formulae.

At the GCE AL examination approximately 60 per cent of students reach the pass level but only about 15 per cent of these are selected to the universities. This has made the examination extremely competitive and students seek private tuition to obtain higher marks.

The students who fail to enter the universities are admitted to other tertiary level institutions in technology, business studies, and professions such as teaching and nursing. The government has a plan to coordinate the programmes of the university and tertiary education institutions and secondary education so that output from the secondary education system fit into the world of work.

General organisation structure of the education system in Sri Lanka



School system

The school system has evolved over a period of two centuries and at present there are 9,931 government schools and 98 recognised private schools. In addition there are 560 Buddhist centres (Pirivenas) of learning and approximately 300 "International schools" which prepare students mainly for foreign examinations. The schools administered by the Central Ministry of Education are designated as national schools and other schools administered by the provincial councils as provincial schools. The number of national schools is 342 and the balance come under the provincial councils.

The government schools are classified by type depending on the terminal grade of the school and the complexity of the courses offered. There are:

- **1AB schoolswhich have classes up to GCE AL in all subject streams, namely, Science, Arts and Commerce with or without primary sections,**
- **1C schools which have classes up to GCE AL in Arts and Commerce streams with or without primary sections,**
- **Type 2 schools which have classes up to GCE OL only,**
- **Type 3 schools which are primary schools and terminate at grade five while in a few places they go up to grade eight.**

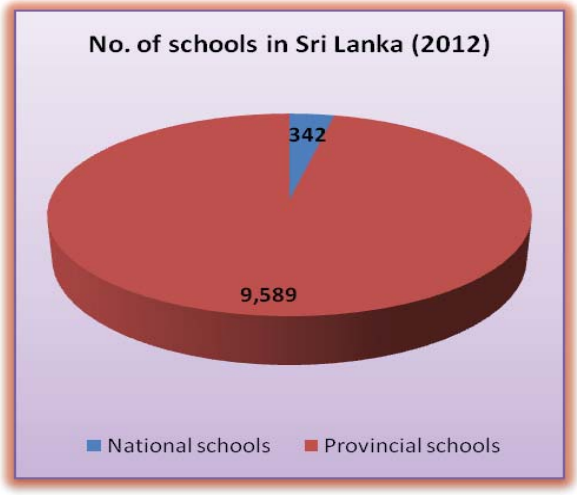
According to School Census 2012 there are 342 national schools (1AB and Type 1C), 431 1AB provincial schools, 2,041 Type 1C schools, 4,030 Type 2 schools and 3,125 Type 3 schools.

Number of schools by type, by province and students and teachers

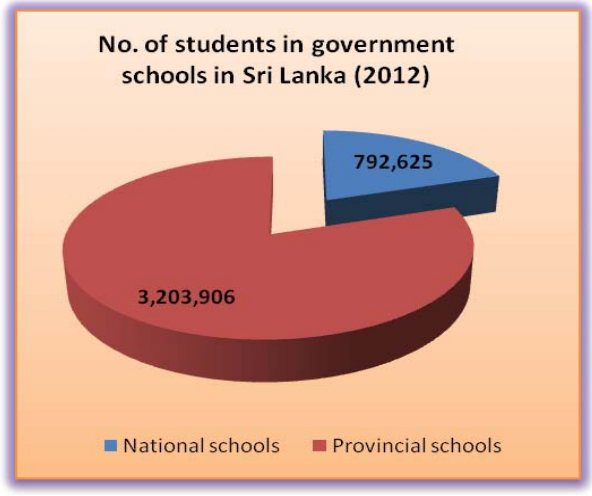
Province	Number of schools						Number of students	Number of teachers
	1AB (National)	1AB (Provincial)	1C	Type 2	Type 3	Total		
Western	71	91	271	573	337	1,343	940,393	42,013
Central	54	60	322	524	542	1,502	525,594	30,960
Southern	65	48	251	497	242	1,103	509,194	28,679
Northern	14	62	121	312	442	951	247,276	14,637
Eastern	29	48	182	373	432	1,064	388,222	20,486
North Western	35	44	285	598	252	1,214	473,642	27,394
North Central	10	24	160	329	254	777	265,490	14,878
Uva	36	26	198	349	251	860	274,815	18,962
Sabaragamuwa	28	28	214	475	372	1,117	371,905	21,779
Total	**342**	**431**	**2,004**	**4,030**	**3,124**	**9,931**	**3,996,531**	**219,788**

Source: MoE (2012).

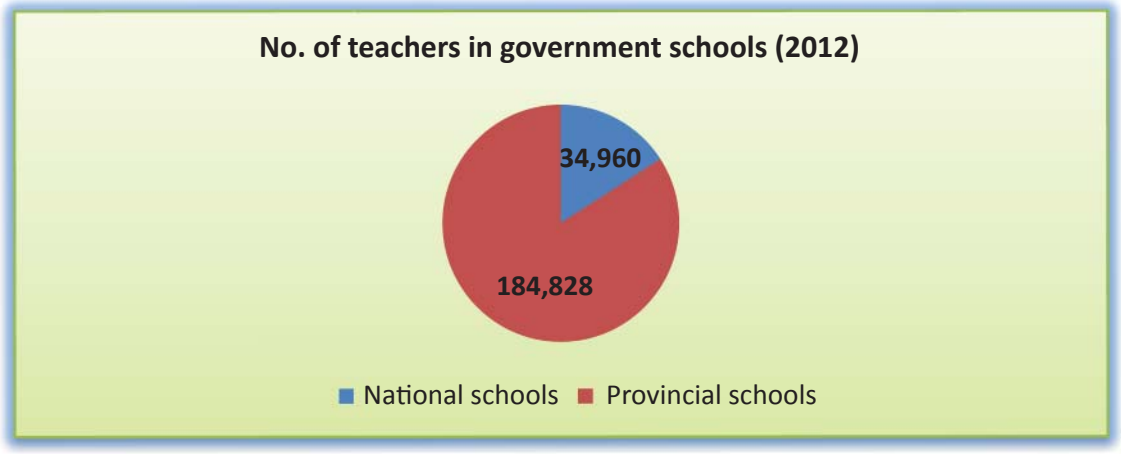
Distribution of schools by province, national and provincial categories and type



Source: MoE (2012).



Source: MoE (2012).



Source: MoE (2012).

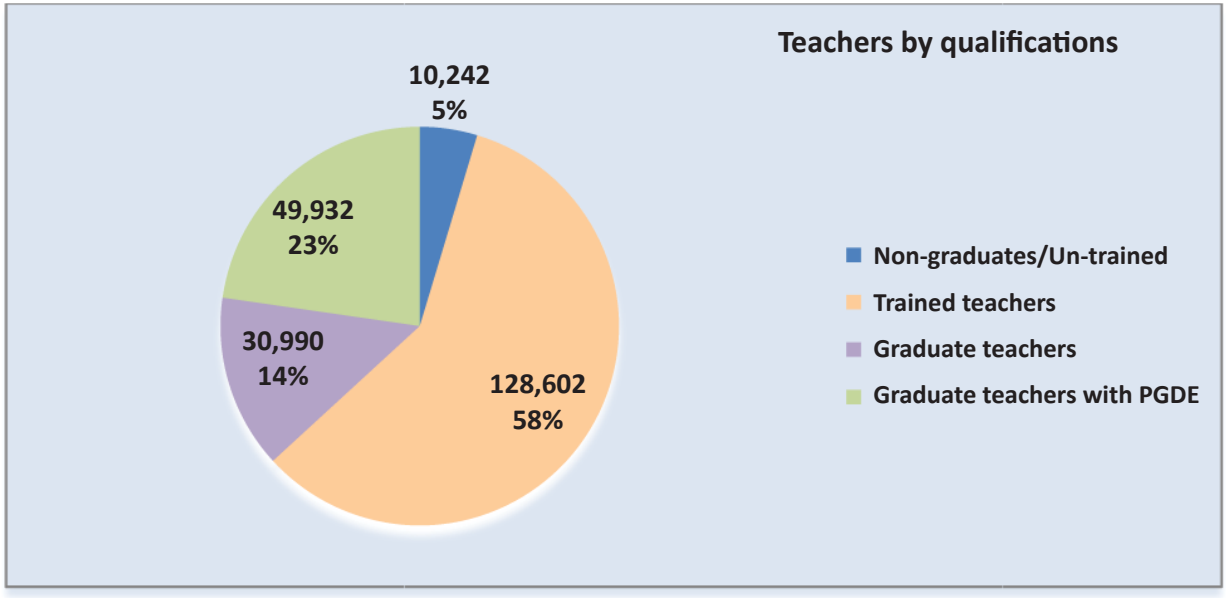
The size of schools varies to a great extent depending on the location and popularity of the school. Although the average size of a school is 408 students there are 1,590 comprising 16 per cent of all schools with an enrolment of less than 50 pupils and 187 schools with over 3,000 pupils. These small schools have to be maintained in order to ensure access to children in remote locations, though they incur high costs.

Teacher education

Trainee teachers at NCoEs...

The total number of teachers in the education system serving under the MoE and the provincial ministries of education amounts to 219,887. The teacher-pupil ratio (TPR) is 1:17 which is one of the most favourable TPRs among the developing countries.

Most teachers are those with a pedagogical training either at a NCoE or a Faculty of Education in a University. The Diploma in Teaching conducted in an NCoE is of three years duration while a teacher training course in a Teachers' Training College (TTC) is two years. Graduate teachers have a degree obtained from a recognised university and they are expected to undergo a post graduate diploma in education to become professionally qualified. The number of untrained teachers in the system is minimal and in future no un-certificated persons will be recruited to the teaching service.



Source: MoE (2011).

Teacher distribution by province and qualifications

Province	Number of teachers				
	Trained graduates	Graduates	Trained	Untrained	Total
Western	12,095	6,805	21,956	495	41,351
Central	6,692	3,220	18,632	2,380	30,924
Southern	7,083	4,494	17,548	367	29,492
Northern	3,387	1,626	8,420	746	14,179
Eastern	3,591	2,590	13,777	663	20,621
North Western	7,004	2,974	16,088	1,477	27,543
North Central	2,326	2,520	8,774	1,458	15,078
Uva	3,136	3,357	10,568	1,818	18,879
Sabaragamuwa	4,677	3,366	12,937	840	21,820
Total	**49,991**	**30,952**	**128,700**	**10,244**	**219,887**

Source: MoE (2011).

There are 17 NCoEs which offer pre-service diploma in teaching courses. Their intake is around 3,000 per year. There are 11 TTCs that offer two year training programmes for teachers in service who are untrained. Besides there are four Faculties/Departments of Education attached to universities, and the NIE conducting Diploma in Education courses or Bachelor of Education courses.

Mahaweli NCoE, Sri Lanka

In-service training for teachers are conducted in teachers' centres, subject based resource centres, under the guidance and supervision of NIE. A large number of In-Service Advisors (ISAs) conduct regular programmes at zonal level to upgrade the skills of teachers.

Curriculum development

Sri Lankan schools follow the national curriculum developed up by the NIE. The staff of NIE with assistance of experts in the field and in consultation with teachers who practice the curriculum in schools prepare the syllabi for all subjects and also the detailed teacher instructional manuals (TIMs).

According to national curriculum policy the curriculum cycle is of eight years' duration. At the end of each cycle if necessary amendments are proposed and if agreed implemented. Once a decision is taken to amend the curriculum the NIE staff carry out orientation programmes for teachers with the help of ISAs in the provinces.

Schools have the freedom to adapt the curriculum to the local environment to make teaching and learning more meaningful and interesting. NIE has a continuous dialogue with teachers through school visits and contact with ISAs.

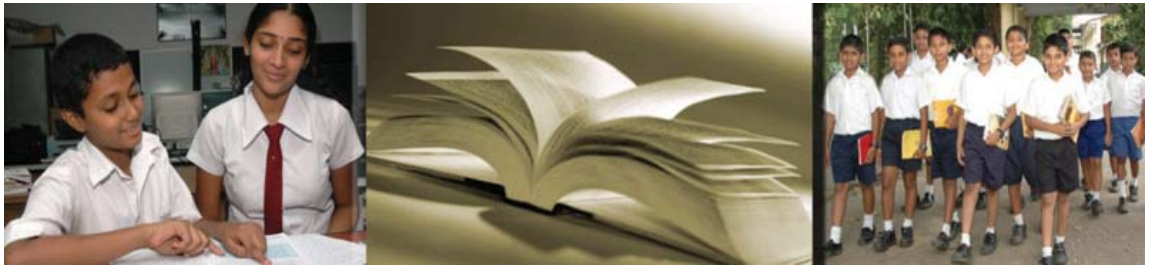
National Institute of Education, Sri Lanka

In addition to the academic curriculum schools pay a lot of attention to co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. These activities provide opportunities for children to acquire non-cognitive skills which stand in good stead when they go out to work and live in the wider society. Skills such as communication, decision-making, creativity, productive thinking, leadership, inter-personal and intra-personal skills are developed more through the 'hidden' curriculum than the formal subjects.

Leisure and sports...

Textbooks

The government provides free textbooks to all children up to GCE OL grades. The Department of Education Publications (DEP) is responsible for writing, publication and distribution of textbooks to schools. Books are written by expert committees drawn from university academics, practicing teachers and NIE subject specialists. Printing of books is contracted to government agencies and the private sector. This is a massive task and the DEP annually handles 30 million copies of books costing SLRs. 3,000 million. The Department of Education Publications has been able to deliver the books on time to schools which itself is an achievement. The present thrust of the authorities is to improve the quality of books. Physical quality is ensured by specifications such as that the books be printed on 70gsm paper and use of four colours.



Free education policy : textbooks for all students.....

Examinations

The Department of Examinations (DoE), a department under the MoE conducts all public examinations. The responsibility of this department is to certify the educational achievements by using evaluation instruments and techniques in a way that ensure reliability and validity of examinations. There are three main examinations conducted by this department for schoolchildren. These are:

- **Grade 5 scholarship and placement examination**
  This examination is held at the end of grade 5 for the purpose of awarding bursaries to promising students who do not have the means to finance their education and to place bright students in schools with better facilities for secondary education.

- **GCE OL examination**

  This examination is held at the end of the general education stage at grade 11. Approximately 500,000 school students sit for this examination annually. Of this number 60 per cent qualify to enter the GCE AL course while the balance leave the school system to join vocational training or seek work.

- **GCE AL examination**

  This is also a school leaving examination as well as an examination for selection to universities. Around 200,000 students sit this examination and the best students get admitted to universities. Those who fail university admission join other tertiary level institutes in technical and professional areas.

A drawback in the existing examination system is the stress caused to the students because of its highly competitive nature. Students are more concerned with cramming of facts rather than acquiring competencies. In order to overcome this situation the DoE is taking some new initiatives:

- change the structure of question papers and questions to test higher-order generic competencies such as problem solving, critical thinking, divergent thinking, analytical thinking, logical reasoning, creativity and initiative;
- an item bank will be established with adequate number of questions to draw annually for examinations;
- issue of evaluation reports for different subjects in school examinations; and
- carry out research studies to upgrade the quality of examination instruments.

Students are concerned about their achievements .....

Education subsidy programmes

The government provides a package of welfare services to pupils in schools in addition to free education. These include:

- free textbooks to all children up to GCE OL;
- a set of school uniforms given annually;
- a scheme of scholarships, which provides financial assistance on the basis of achievement at the grade 5 examination;
- subsidised public transport to children to travel to school;
- free medical services including dental care and free spectacles for needy children; and
- midday meal for primary children in disadvantaged schools.

These welfare measures have contributed to the high rate of participation in education and the high literacy rate and educational attainments in the country.

Non-formal education (NFE)

NFE programmes cater to the needs of out of schoolchildren and adult groups in the community. The main programmes conducted under the NFE are:

- **Functional literacy centres:** These centres are located in areas where there are concentrations of non-school going children. They have either not enrolled in a school or have dropped out prematurely from school. The reasons for dropping out from school are due to socio-economic reasons mainly poverty. Some children are from disrupted families where the parents are separated or the child is living with relations. It is this type of child who falls prey to abuse. Some children who attend these classes and show progress are admitted to formal schools while the others continue in the centre until they achieve basic literacy, numeracy and life skills and join a vocational centre for further training.
- **Community learning centres:** These centres provide continuing education opportunities for different target groups. The programmes are designed to meet the needs of the target group. Most centres conduct training in income generation activities for unemployed youth and mothers. Along with skills development general education programmes in health and nutrition, home gardening and house-keeping are conducted.

- **Vocational training centres:** These centres have been started to provide vocational training to youth who are desirous of improving their vocational skills. The centres are generally located in schools and classes are conducted in afternoons on about three days of the week. The courses conducted are mostly required in the construction and services sectors such as carpentry, masonry, welding electrical wiring, electronics, automobile repairs, radio and TV repairs, catering, agriculture and agro-based products, handicrafts and computer literacy
- **Implementation of compulsory education regulations:** Regulations on compulsory attendance of children in schools, enacted in 1997 compel all children in the age group 5 to 14 to attend a school or an alternative educational institution recognised by the MoE. The Project Assistants attached to the NFE units are responsible for the implementation of these regulations. In terms of new policy decision of the government the upper-age limit will be raised to 16 years.

There are also a few special programmes such as centres for street children and literacy centres for adults, which are organised in centres where there is a demand. NFE programmes generally, cater to the needs of the disadvantaged sectors in society, and it is an important strategy to promote access, equity and inclusion.

Special education

Special education programmes look after the needs of children with different abilities from normal children. The categories of such children are:

- visually impaired;
- hearing impaired;
- physically disabled;
- mentally retarded.

Some children have a number of these disabilities and they constitute a group with multiple disabilities. In case of these children it is essential to assess the degree of disability of these children and advise the parents. While providing this service the MoE conducts a number of programmes to meet the needs of these groups. The MoE has accepted the principle of inclusion in educating children with special needs. Wherever appropriate these children are encouraged to learn in normal classes. However there are exclusive schools for those who are severely handicapped and unable to adapt to the conditions in a normal class. The programmes conducted for children with special educational needs (SEN) are:

- special education units in schools where trained instructors take care of these children at the start and once they are ready directed to a normal class;
- inclusive education in normal classes where teachers are given a training to look after such children;
- special schools run by the private sector for those who are severely affected by disabilities. These schools are financially assisted by the government;
- a special centre for children affected by autism as a model national centre located at Maharagama; and
- a Braille press for printing of Braille books to children with visual impairment.

The MoE also conduct advocacy and awareness programmes among the public and policymakers on the needs of children with different abilities. The NIE also has a department on special education responsible for adapting the national curriculum to meet the needs of these children and conduct training courses for teachers. A general course on special education is held for parents and caregivers to understand how these children should be taken care of. There is one NCoE and aTTCs where training of special education teachers is undertaken.

Ensuring vertical equity …

Career guidance and counselling

Counselling for children with problems has to be done by trained persons aware of principles of child psychology. These teachers should be able to understand the problems of children establish rapport with them and guide and help them to take proper decisions.

Similarly career guidance for children to identify their aptitudes and opportunities available in the world of work is essential for the development of human resources in a country. Secondary schoolchildren should have an awareness of the opportunities available in the labour market so that they can take right decisions with regard to the courses of study that they should select.

This imperative has been recognised and a teacher for counselling and guidance is provided for schools with an adequate enrolment to engage a full-time teacher. In other schools a part-time teacher is allocated. Training programmes are conducted to upgrade their knowledge and skills and materials are supplied to update information on career opportunities.

Pirivena education

Buddhist clergy: learning…

Pirivenas are traditional educational institutes run for training of Buddhist clergy and lay students who wish to follow an education in a Buddhist environment. There are altogether 720 Pirivenas with an enrolment of 62,861 students and 6,129 teachers. The Pirivenas are graded according to the courses of study they offer. There are basic Pirivenas which conduct elementary classes, secondary level Pirivenas providing upper-secondary level courses and Pirivena Institutes conducting higher education courses. The government gives a grant to the Pirivenas to cover the salaries of teachers and for maintenance of facilities.

The curriculum consists of normal school subjects for lay students and clergy are given an additional training in Buddhist studies and classical oriental languages such as Pali and Sanskrit.

They make a useful contribution to the achievement of EFA goals as most of the lay students are from disadvantaged backgrounds who have dropped put from formal school or not enrolled in a school at all.

Promoting physical health…

4 Management of education

Ministry of Education, Sri Lanka.

Management of education

The responsibility for provision of education in Sri Lanka is shared by the central government and the provincial councils, in terms of the constitutional amendment carried out in 1987 for the devolution of power to the provinces. Under this scheme the central government is responsible for:

- Laying down national policy on education, norms and standards of education based on recommendations of the NEC.
- Formulation of national policy framework and policy guidelines.
- Education sectoral planning and development for the general education sector in collaboration with the national and provincial educational authorities.
- Monitoring the maintenance of standards in educational institutions.
- Formulating the national curriculum and training the provincial trainers through the NIE.
- Establishing service conditions for the four education services: the teachers service, the principals service, the education administrators service, and the teacher educators services
- Teacher education.
- Formulation and implementation of pre-service teacher education curricula.
- Human resource management of education administrators, school principals and school teachers at the national level
- Management of specified schools designated as national schools.
- Administering professional development programmes and courses for principals, section heads and teachers
- Publishing and distributing free textbooks and accrediting any textbooks produced by the private sector.
- Administration of Public examinations.
- Providing free school uniforms and subsidies for schoolchildren.
- Establishing national norms and standards for essential and higher-order learning spaces, teaching-learning capital assets and teaching-learning material
- Donor coordination.

The central MoE is under the charge of the minister in-charge of the subject of general education. The minister is responsible to the President and the cabinet of ministers on all matters relating to general education. The minister is assisted by a deputy minister.

The Secretary to the Ministry of Education is the chief executive officer and is accountable to the Minister of Education and the President for the implementation of policy. Under the secretary there are additional secretaries in charge of divisions and directors of education in-charge of specific subjects.

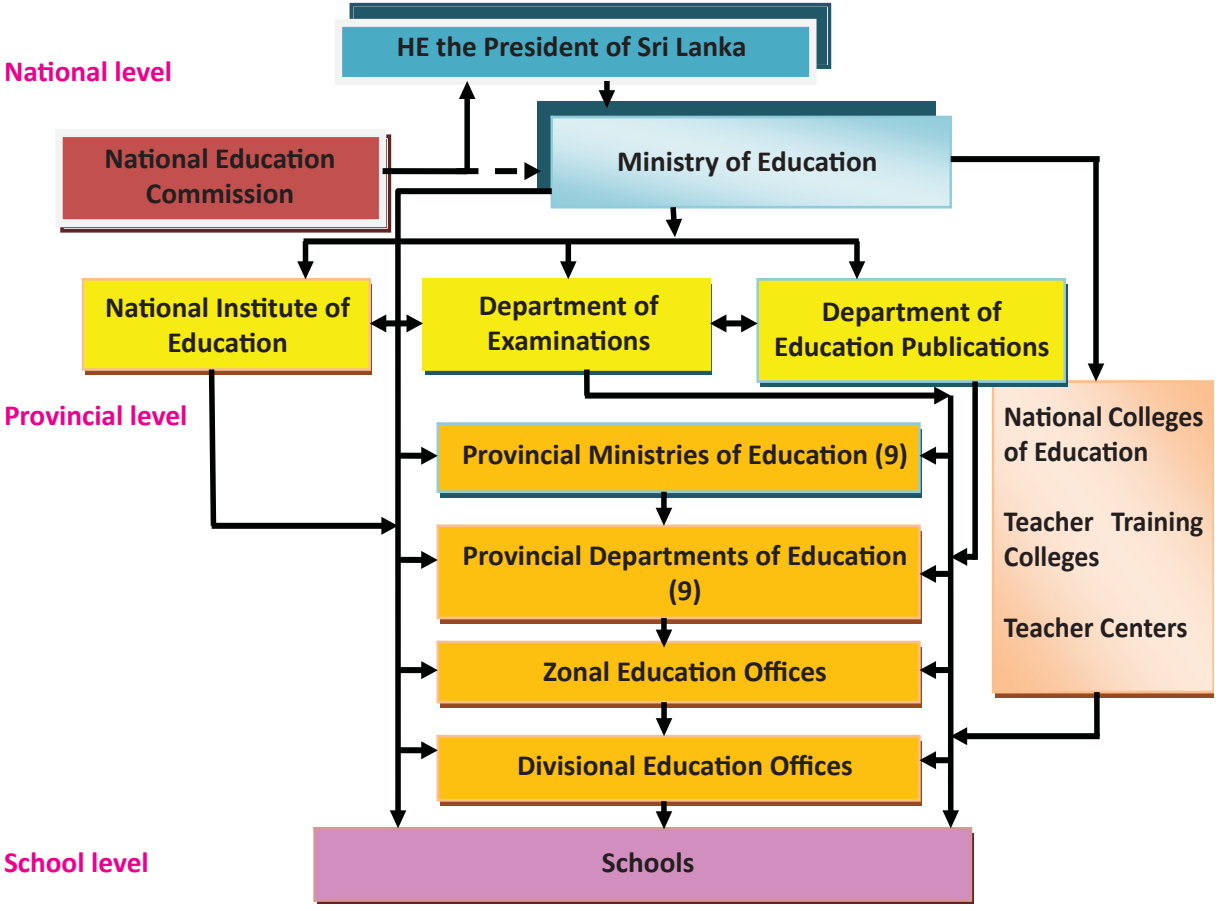
There are also other agencies functioning under the ministry responsible for specialised areas. These are:

- The Department of Examinations under a Commissioner General responsible for the conduct of public examinations.
- The Department of Educational Publications under a Commissioner General responsible for the production and distribution of textbooks.
- The National Institute of Education under a Director General responsible for the development of the national curriculum, training of teachers and carrying out research on education.

The national schools and teacher education institutes, namely the NCoEs and TTCs and TCs are administered by the Chief Commissioner for teacher education.

Equal opportunities for access...

Education administrative and management structure in Sri Lanka



Provincial education authorities

There are nine provincial councils co-terminus with the nine provinces. They are governed by elected provincial councils except in the Northern province where elections have not been held due to the ethnic conflict. Now that the conflict has ended elections are due to be held soon.

There is a Provincial Ministry of Education in each province under a Provincial Minister of Education. The Provincial Minister is assisted by a Provincial Secretary of Education. The schools are managed by the Provincial Department of Education under the Provincial Director of Education.

For facilitation of administration a province is divided in to a number of educational zones headed by a Zonal Director of Education. The administrative functions related to the management of schools and supervision is carried out by the Zonal Education Office. Each zone has approximately 100 to 150 schools. The zones are further sub-divided into education divisions functioning under Deputy Directors in-charges of education divisions.

The Provincial Councils, especially, PME and Provincial Department of Education will be jointly responsible for the following broad functions with regard to school education at provincial levels:

- Establishing provincial level norms and standards, within and in consistent with national policies, norms and standards of education.
- Preparation and implementation of provincial education development plans both medium-term plans and annual implementation plans including budgetary requirements in line with the national policy framework.
- Managing the provincial schools.
- Managing the teacher cadre in provincial schools and implementing continuing teacher development programmes.
- Implementing special and non-formal education programmes.
- Conducting regular provincial-level monitoring and evaluation.

School level

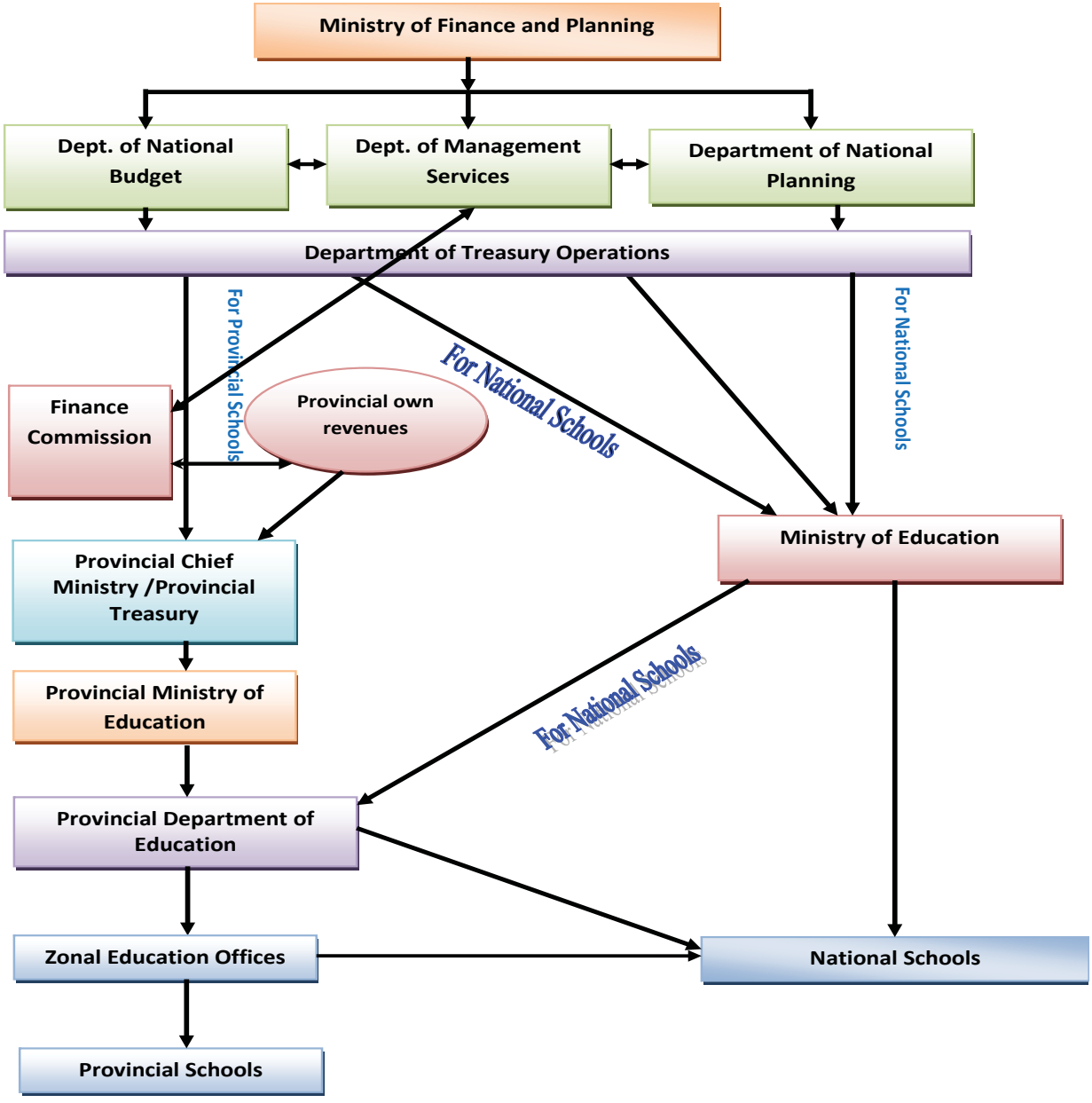
The principal who is the head of the school is responsible for the efficient and effective management of the school. In the past there was a high degree of bureaucratic control from above in the management of schools. Most procedures were covered by circular instructions. But now there is a change towards school-based management (SBM) through the programme for school improvement (PSI).

Under this programme schools are empowered to take decisions on managerial and financial matters through the School Development Committee (SDC) comprising the principal and the representatives of teachers, parents, alumni and the zonal director of education. There is a School Management Committee selected from among teachers to assist the principal in implementing the decisions of the SDC. The government gives an annual grant to the school to purchase the quality inputs that the teachers need for teaching learning process. The SDC is accountable not only to the education authorities but also the community that the school serves. The proceedings of the SDC are transparent, that assures accountability.

Education finance

With the expansion of educational facilities and with the establishment of a national system of education the government almost entirely took over the burden of financing the cost of education. In the early period during the decade of 1960s the government invested nearly 5 per cent of the GDP and 15 per cent of the annual government expenditure on education. However during the following decades due to illiquidity and cash rationing problems and issues arising due to several factors such as the rise in oil prices, need for more investment on infrastructure and later due to the ethnic conflict that went over for two and a half decades the government was compelled to curtail expenditure on education. Even after the conclusion of the conflict rehabilitation of war affected areas took precedence. However on absolute terms the allocation on education was never reduced. In the current budget the allocation for education has increased substantially. Even under conditions of financial contractions Sri Lanka has been able to maintain its educational services comparatively at a satisfactory level due to the population transition and the infrastructure development undertaken during the early years.

Education financial allocation flow in Sri Lanka



Foreign aid for education

The financial constraints faced by the education sector have to a certain extent been mitigated by the inflow of foreign aid to the sector from the 1990s. Until then the development partners' assistance received for education had been meagre. With the advent of the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank donor funding for education has increased substantially.

Bilateral and multi-lateral development partners to the education sector:

- World Bank
- Asian Development Bank
- UNICEF
- UNESCO
- AusAID
- World Food Programme
- GIZ
- KOICA
- JICA

5 A new approach to education planning and financing

Moving from an input-oriented to an outcome-oriented approach...

In 2006 the MoE introduced a new initiative in planning and financing, the sector-wide approach (SWAp) deviating from the traditional historical method of preparing individual plans of institutions and sections depending on allocated funds. The 2006 - 2010 educational development plan was prepared for the whole sector based on national guidelines, but incorporating the activities of lower level institutional plans of schools, educational zones and provinces.

The education sector development framework programme (2006-2010)

The ESDFP (2006 -2010) was organised under four main policy themes, these are:

Theme 1: Promoting equitable access to basic and secondary education;
Theme 2: Improving the quality of primary and secondary education;
Theme 3: Enhancing the economic efficiency and equity of resource allocation; and
Theme 4: Strengthening education governance and service delivery.

The key characteristics of the ESDFP (2006-2010) are:

- It is a comprehensive education sector development framework;
- It is embedded with a multi-year education budgetary framework, medium term educational planning approach and a results based monitoring and evaluation system;
- It emphasises on devolving decision making power and authority to the school level; and
- It is a coordinated contribution of GoSL and the development partners for the achievement of educational results and outcomes (MoE, 2007).

The main policy objectives under the different themes are given below.

Theme 1: Promoting equitable access to basic and secondary education

Continue with demand-side incentives for school attendance: This includes tuition free education in public schools, free school textbooks, school uniforms, subsidised public transport, scholarships for deserving children, school meals for children in disadvantaged schools and a mechanism to ensure compulsory education for children from 6 to 14 years.

Upgrading the network of schools to relax constraints on geographically equitable access to good quality basic and secondary education: A network of good quality schools will expand further in rural areas to increase equity of access to full curriculum schools offering courses in science, English and technology subjects.

Strengthening special education programmes for children with SEN: Special education facilities for children with visual impairment, hearing impairment, behavioural problems, multiple disabilities, learning difficulties.

Strengthening NFE programmes for non-school going adolescents: Activating school attendance committees, expanding functional literacy centres and capacity building of non-formal project assistants.

Strengthening the school health programme: Extending the school midday meals and enhancing the quality, provision of water and sanitary facilities to schools, strengthening the school medical services and introducing the concept of school health promotion.

Theme 2: Improving the quality of primary and secondary education

Curriculum restructuring and upgrading: introduce a curriculum approach that better reflects modern international trends, disseminate curriculum goals to stakeholders and orient the education system more strongly to the world of work.

Quality improvements of subjects: improve the quality of instruction in key subjects: science, mathematics, ICT, English and expanding bilingual education programme where English is used as the medium of instruction in selected subjects.

Teacher development: Enhance teacher motivation, skills and performance; and introducing a system of school-based teacher development (SBTD).

Modernising examinations and testing: Develop examinations to reflect modern concepts on assessment and testing,

acquisition of higher-order transferable skills among schoolchildren by developing a high quality bank of test items, publish and disseminate examination guidelines and strengthening the capacity of the Department of Examinations.

Promote social cohesion: Conduct programmes to bring teachers of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds together in training programmes and encourage schools to have more and more extra-curricular activities for children of different backgrounds to mix together.

Theme 3: Enhancing the economic efficiency and equity of resource allocation

Establishing a medium term budget framework (MTBF) for education: This will facilitate multi-year planning, implementation and monitoring at the national and provincial levels of the education system and will enhance the external efficiency of the education system by prioritising the allocation of resources in favour of higher-order learning spaces and assets and quality processes.

An overarching education sector development plan: The long-term education sector development plan provides an overarching framework to expand and improve the education system. This multi-year rolling plan will increase the planning and monitoring efficiency by enabling the educational institutions to prioritize and time sequence their activities within a broader resource envelope and longer time horizon.

A public expenditure and quality education tracking system (PEQETS): It will promote equity and transparency in resource distribution by tracing the flow of expenditure to and through the various levels of the system, down to schools.

National assessments: A scheme for national assessment has been introduced to assess achievement levels of students in grades 4, 8 and 10 in languages, mathematics and science carried out by the National Education Research and Evaluation Centre (NEREC) of the University of Colombo.

Theme 4: Strengthening education governance and service delivery

Establish balanced control model of SBM, the PSI: It will empower school communities comprising school principal, teachers, parents, alumni and well wishers to take decisions speedily on school matters, effectively utilise resources and generate new resources and ensure transparency in utilisation of resources.

Organisationl analysis and capacity building: The organisational capacity assessment of the education system will identify capacity gaps and design capacity building programmes. This programme will be based on the roles and functions of the various education agencies, capacity gaps and overlaps, the division of labour between the MoE and the provincial authorities and leadership and management of the sector.

Implementing a human resource development strategy: This strategy was based on an analysis of current and projected future work requirements, present stock of skills, the anticipated outflow of human resources through natural attrition and the type and range of skills available in the younger age groups.

Achievements under ESDFP (2006 – 2010): selected

- Survival rate grades 1-9 increased from 78% to 91%.
- Out-of-schoolchildren reduced by 67,708

Cognitive achievement scores:
National Assessment: Grade 4 (proportion of students scoring over 50%)

- First Language increased from 68.9% to 82.9%
- Mathematics increased from 66.5% to 81.8%
- English increased from 31.9% to 58.4%

GCE OL Examination:

- Percentage qualifying to enter GCE AL class:
  2005 - 47.72% 2011 – 61%

GCE AL Examination:

- Percentage qualifying to enter universities
  2005 - 59.2% 2010 - 61.21%

The education sector development framework programme (2012-2016)

The aim of the sector plan is to transform the school system to lay the human capital foundation for a knowledge-based economy, focused on the total personality development of children passing out from the school system.

The policy framework will fill the gaps in the themes identified by ESDFP (2006-2010) and has been enriched on the basis of the proposals of the MCVF (2010) and the national guidelines of the Emerging Wonder of Asia (MFP, 2010). It will also achieve the goals set by the international community through the EFA initiative and the MDGs.

The ESDFP (2012-2016) is organised under the following policy themes:

Theme 1: Increase equitable access to primary and secondary education;

Theme 2: Improve the quality of primary and secondary education;

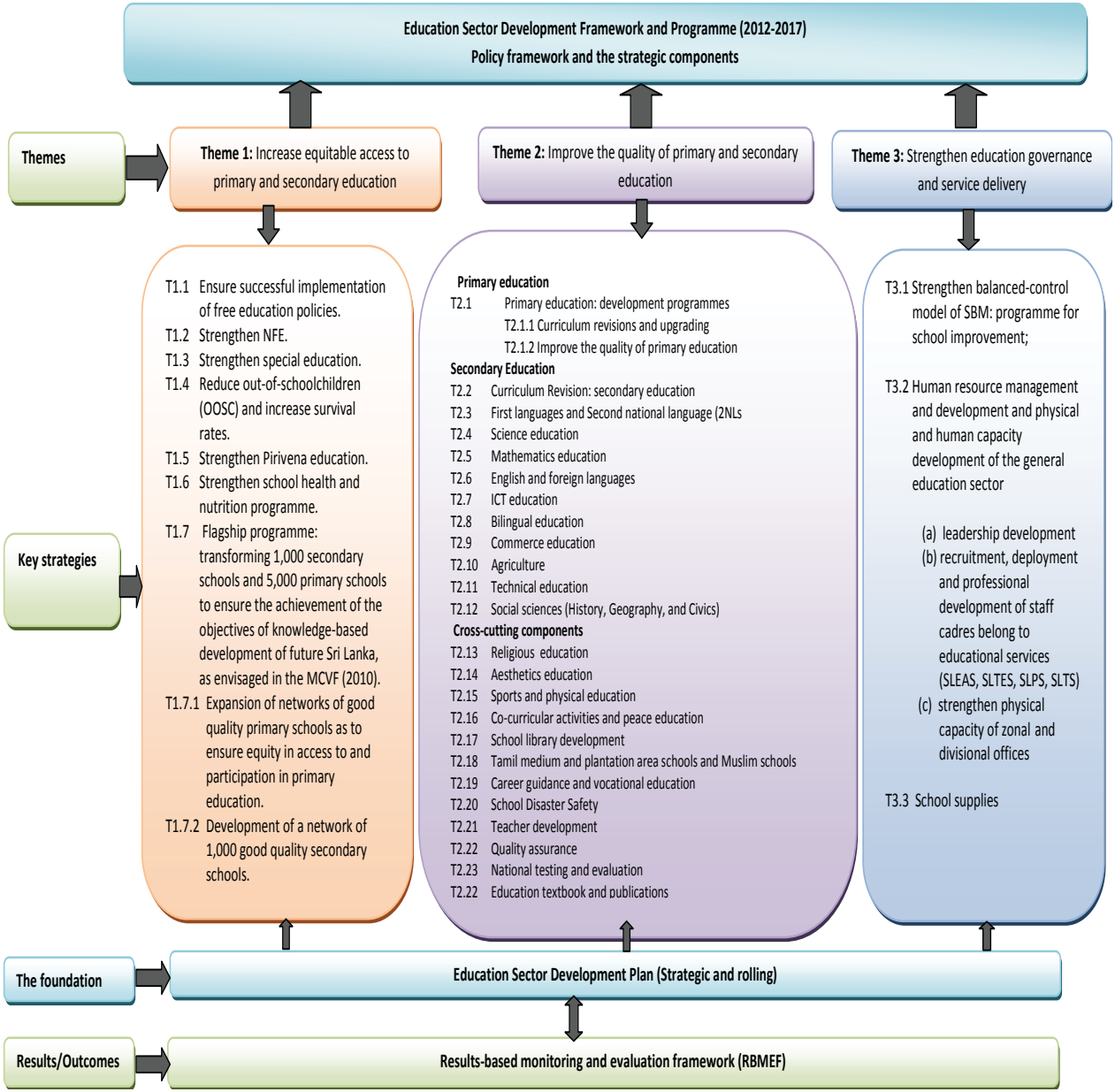
Theme 3: Strengthen governance and service delivery of education;

The Foundation: Overarching education sector development rolling plan; and

Crosscutting activity: Results-based monitoring and evaluation (MoE, 2012; 2013).

Learning in groups...

ESDFP (2012-2017) policy framework and strategic components



Source: MoE (2012; 2013).

Theme 1: Increase equitable access to primary and secondary education

Main Strategies:

Ensure successful implementation of free education policies:

- Free-education in all government and assisted schools.
- Grants to children with special needs and those from marginalised families.
- Free textbooks to all students from grades 1 to 11.
- Free school uniform materials to all children from grades 1 to 13.
- Bursaries to 15,000 children from needy families annually on the results of grade 5 examination.
- Subsidised public transport for all children travelling in public transport.
- Midday meal for children in disadvantaged primary and small schools.

Strengthen non-formal education (NFE):

- Implementation of compulsory education regulations.
- Advocacy campaign on compulsory education.
- Increase NFE centres for out-of-schoolchildren.
- Expand and improve the quality of vocational training centres.
- Establish adult and community learning centres.
- Develop and strengthen monitoring and evaluation framework for NFE.

Develop special education:

- Train teachers to identify and assess children with SEN.
- Increase the number of schools with special education units to orient students with SEN to be mainstreamed.
- Improve the curricula in special education to be relevant to needs.
- Develop capacity of teachers and professionals in special education centres.
- Conduct advocacy programmes on special education.
- Develop a monitoring and evaluation framework for special education.

Develop Pirivena education:

- Increase grants to Pirivenas for subsidising construction of special spaces.
- Increase grants to Pirivenas for purchase of equipment.
- Organise training programmes for Bhikku students on Dhammadutha activities.
- Strengthen the teaching of classical oriental languages and foreign languages.

School health and nutrition:

- Equip all schools with drinking water and sanitary facilities.
- Accredit all schools using the criteria of health promoting schools.
- Strengthen skills based health education.
- Ensure that the school medical inspection is carried out in all schools and follow up action taken.
- Ensure school canteens provide healthy food items and are clean.
- Create awareness on health problems of adolescents.
- Strengthen monitoring and evaluation through a digital database.

Transforming 1,000 secondary schools and 5,000 primary schools as centres of excellence:

The flagship programme, in brief

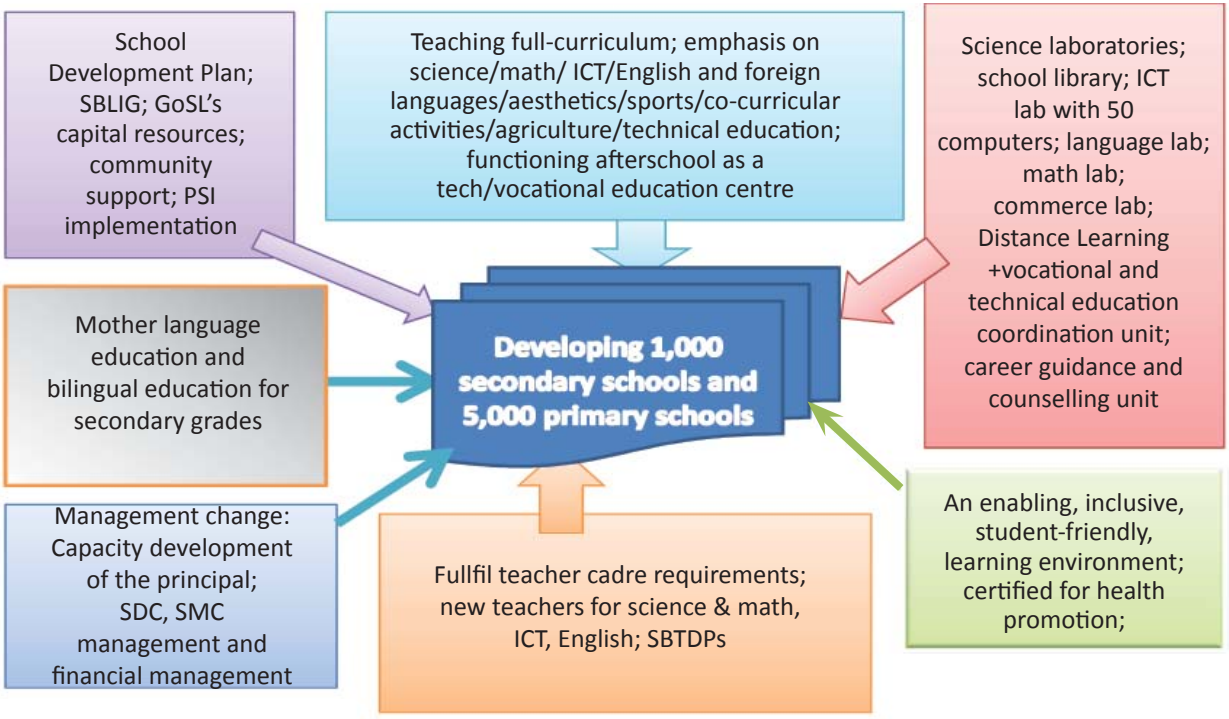
The flagship programme of the ESDFP (2012-2016) is aimed at establishing viable primary and secondary school networks at divisional level to provide high quality education for children in the neighbourhood. It has been planned to develop about 1,000 good quality secondary schools offering science, arts and management streams at senior secondary stage at each Divisional Secretariat Division (DSD). In Sri Lanka, there are 72 DSDs where secondary schools offering Science GCE ALs are not available. Also there are 100 DSDs where only one secondary school is offering science stream at GCE AL. Schools have been selected through a mapping exercise which considered the criteria such as demographic factors, student population in the schools in the area and student flow, geographical factors, distance between schools and available facilities in the schools in the area.

In the flagship programme, each secondary school will be linked with networks of 3-5 primary schools so that about 5,000 primary schools will also be improved around the country. The learning environment of the secondary schools will be improved with higher-order learning spaces. Teachers of science, mathematics and English will also be provided. The learning environment of the primary schools will be assured as learner friendly and with adequate facilities for child-centered learning. Schools in the plantation sector and in the areas affected by the conflict during last several decades will receive special attention in the flagship programme (MoE, 2012).

- The 1,000 schools selected on the basis of a school mapping exercise.
- Offer a full-curriculum comprising language education (national and foreign), science, mathematics, commerce, information communication technology aesthetics and sports and physical education.
- Provide qualified staff in adequate numbers.
- An environment conducive to learning and personality development.
- An effective career guidance and counselling programme.
- Each secondary school to be the centre for 3-5 feeder primary schools which will be developed as model primary schools.
- Establishment of 1,000 Mahindodaya Technological Laboratories.

Mahindodaya Technological Laboratory

Development components of secondary schools: improving learning environment



Source: MoE (2012).

Theme 2: Improve the quality of primary and secondary education

Primary education

- Upgrading the curriculum to better reflect modern national and international trends.
- Develop standards for each key stage.
- Revise syllabi and teacher instructional manuals.
- Upgrade essential learning competencies.
- Piloting the new curriculum in a sample of selected schools.

- Expand and strengthen child-friendly school framework.
- Coordinate and set up feedback mechanism.
- Fill gaps in infrastructure facilities to meet national norms.
- Maintain an effective primary education EMIS to support of primary education.

Six dimensions have been identified for the promotion of child friendliness:

- rights-based and proactively inclusive;
- gender responsive;
- improving children's learning outcomes;
- healthy, safe and protective of children;
- actively engaged with students, families and communities; and
- supported by child-friendly systems, policies, practices and regulations.

Secondary education curriculum reforms

- Revisit and upgrade curricula taking into account future needs of Sri Lanka as a country moving towards a middle-income country.
- Diversify the curriculum to meet different learning needs.
- Use of information gathered from national assessments and public examinations in the revision of curricula.
- Develop curriculum standards and use them in curriculum revision.

Subjects in secondary school curriculum

At secondary level a large number of students are following the Arts stream due to lack of access to science education. Of the students studying in GCE AL classes 52 per cent are in Arts, 26 per cent in Commerce and only 22 per cent in Science streams. The government intends to rectify this situation by providing more facilities to schools to expand science education. Under the government programme to develop one thousand secondary schools it is expected to ensure that 40 per cent do science 35 per cent commerce and reduce the arts to 25 per cent (MoE, 2012).

Targets for 2016:

- Increase participation in GCE AL – Science: from 22% to 40% by 2016.
- Increase participation in GCE AL – Commerce: from 26% to 35% by 2016.
- Reduce participation in GCE AL – Arts: from 52% to 25% by 2016.

The subjects in the junior secondary stage:

- First language (Sinhala or Tamil)
- Second language (English)
- Second national language
- Religion (Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, Islam)
- Mathematics
- Science
- History
- Practical & technical skills
- Aesthetic subjects
- Life skills and civic studies

The Subjects at GCE OL
The core subjects:

- First language (Sinhala or Tamil)
- Second language (English)
- Science
- Mathematics
- Religion
- History

The optional subjects:

- Languages and Humanities (Civics, Geography)
- Aesthetic subjects
- Technical subjects

The students can select one subject from each stream.

The subjects at GCE AL:

There are 54 subjects grouped under 4 streams. Students are expected to select three subjects in any one of the streams. The streams are:

- Science
- Commerce
- Arts
- Technology

Curriculum revision will aim at mastery of cognitive skills as well as development of soft skills essential for successful living. The medium of instruction will be Sinhala or Tamil in the primary level and Sinhala, Tamil or English under the bilingual education programme at secondary level. Every child will be required to take part in co-curricular activities.

Subject-based quality development: In secondary education the national curriculum will be implemented though different subjects. Facilities in schools will be improved to carry out practical activities where necessary.

Traditional dancing...

Quality assurance will be ensured through the accreditation of schools based on identified criteria.

Teacher development

Pre-service training of teachers will be provided in the 17 NCoEs and in-service training at the NIE or TTCs and Teacher Centres/Resource Centres and by ISAs. Non-graduate teachers will be encouraged to obtain degrees from universities or the NIE.

School-based teacher development (SBTD) will be promoted to improve the professional skills of teachers.

Examinations: Public examinations are highly competitive and students attend private tuition classes in order to obtain high marks and this has caused anxiety among students which have interfered with the broad objectives of education. Therefore the DoE will introduce a scheme to give weight-age to grades given under school-based

assessment (SBA). Also the structure of the examination papers will be adapted to test the higher-order skills of candidates. The DoE has initiated an action programme to develop a bank of test items in order to overcome the personal factor in setting questions and develop examination and assessment guidelines.

Textbooks: The content quality of textbooks will be improved by appointing subject review panels comprising qualified personnel. The department will also promote the development of e-books and interactive CDs with animated activities, self-study manuals, self-assessments and links for further studies.

Peace and social cohesion: Promotion of peace and social cohesion is effected through the teaching of second national language, Sinhala for Tamil speaking students and Tamil for Sinhala speaking students, English as a link language, co-curricular activities and providing opportunities for teachers and students of different ethnic backgrounds to meet together and come to know each others' cultural practices.

Theme 3: Strengthen governance and service delivery of education

Main strategies:

Strengthen balanced control model of SBM through the PSI:

- Schools will be further empowered to take decisions on the administration of the school.
- School-based learning improvement grant (SBLIG) will be given to schools to be used for quality development of education.
- The School Development Committee will function in a transparent manner which will ensure efficient utilisation of funds.

Human resource management, development and capacity building:

- Capacity development programmes for officials of SLEAS, SLTES, SLPS.
- A systematic programme for leadership development of principals.
- Capacity building of provincial, zonal and divisional offices.

The secondary school education is aligned to meet the needs of universities as well as those of the tertiary and vocational education institutes so that there will be a seamless transition from the secondary to the tertiary sector.

Education sector development plans: The education development plans (both medium-term and annual) will be formulated following SWAp using the rolling planning technique. Further, programmes will be conducted to strengthen institutional planning capacities and processes at school, zonal, provincial and national-level education agencies.

Financing for results: Several education budgetary techniques and innovations were introduced to improve results of education as well as for improving learning outcomes of students (e.g. some budgetary techniques such as: medium-term budgetary framework (MTBF) following SWAp; innovative programmes like results-based budgeting (RBB), formula funding of schools (FFS), SBLIG etc.). Nevertheless, based on results-based financing principles, RBB will be introduced ensuring equity, efficiency and accountability of the system as well as improving financial management in the system.

School-based learning improvement grant (SBLIG): It has been provided learning enhancement grant to schools in order to improve the learning outcomes of students. SBLIG will be expanded to the extent possible and schools will be empowered to invest those on their priorities. This approach is aimed at increasing economic efficiency and equity of resource allocation as that ensures disbursements closer to the beneficiaries and target groups. Hence such grants will be focused on improving student achievement in the key subjects. The amount and types of grants and criteria for awards, such as performance-based and/or need-based would be determined in consultation with the PEAs.

National assessments: The operation will assist the country to establish a sound system for national assessments of learning outcomes of students that can be used as feedback for policy reformulation. Therefore, it has been planned to conduct periodical national assessments (i.e. grade 4 and grade 8) in order to measure learning outcomes of students. In a results and outcomes oriented medium-term programme, it is a necessity to periodically explore the progress of achievement of students. Hence, the MoE wishes to continue national assessments and provide advocacy to relevant organisations and officials for improvements.

National assessments of achievement of students which measure the level of acquisition of learning outcomes by students as a feedback for policy reformulation and programme improvement, especially, through rolling planning approach within

the education sector development planning at national and provincial levels. Further, it is suggested that Sri Lanka may participate in international assessments such as TIMSS and PISA in the future. The information and feedback from these national and international assessments could be used by the policymakers and technocrats in key areas such as curriculum development, pre-service teacher education, continuing teacher development, and in the production of educational learning material including textbooks. The learning assessments will also provide feedback for PEAs and national education agencies on the performance of the education systems.

Crosscutting activity: Results-based monitoring and evaluation mechanism

Results-based monitoring and evaluation framework: A distinguishing feature of the ESDFP (2012-2017)) is the emphasis on the achievement of results. Under each development objective targets to be achieved are shown as indicators.

Monitoring: The progress of implementation of the plan is carried out jointly by the MoE, provincial education authorities and the development partners. At the meetings of the Education Development Committee comprising representatives of the central-level agencies and the provincial education authorities the progress of activities under the plan are reviewed and remedial actions taken. There is also a steering committee under the chairmanship of the Secretary, MoE and key officials where problems are discussed and issues sorted out. The subject directors of MoE will also supervise the activities in their subject areas. The development partners too, carry out their monitoring missions twice a year. Capacity building programmes for officials are also a part of the HRD component. An electronic database for monitoring is also being developed.

Research: Research studies on key areas will be given on contract to independent research organisations or universities. The officials will be encouraged to carry out action research in their own fields.

Education for All Initiative: The government is committed to achieve the EFA goals enunciated at the World Education Conference held at Jomtien and the framework designed at Dakar subsequently in 2001. Sri Lanka is on the path to fulfilling these targets by 2015.

Educational attainments at a glance: Sri Lanka (2011 or nearest)

Primary enrolment	98.26%
Dropout rate (Primary)	0.23%
Primary education completion rate	99.5%
Secondary enrolments rate	98.50%
Secondary education completion rate	98.50%
Literacy rate	94.50%
Student-teacher ratio	17:1
Secondary education completed ratio (out-of total population)	75.00%
Computer literacy	38.00%
Per pupil cost	SLRs. 24,610.00
Number of schools with sanitary facilities as a percentage of total number of schools	96.40%
Number of schools with school library facilities as a percentage of total number of schools	64.00%
Number of schools (Types 1AB and 1C) with compute facilities as a percentage of total number of 1AB and 1C schools	83.50%
Number of schools (Types 2 and 3) with compute facilities as a percentage of total number of Types 2 and 3 schools	20.10%
Survival rate at grade 5	98.50%
Survival rate at grade 9	97.80
Rank of the quality of primary education (out-of 131 countries)	42
Rank of the overall quality of education (out-of 131 countries)	44

6 Higher education system in Sri Lanka

University of Sri Jayewardenepura

University of Peradeniya

The structure of higher education

There is a separate Ministry of Higher Education (MHE) in charge of universities and higher technical institutes offering higher national diploma certificates under a minister assisted by a deputy minister. The chief executive officer of this ministry is the secretary to the MHE.

The management of universities is under the University Grants Commission (UGC) appointed by his Excellency the President. The chairman UGC functions as the chief executive officer of the Commission. The academic freedom of the universities in ensured under this arrangement. There is a Quality Assurance Council functioning with the UGC to ensure the quality of university education.

Technical education leading to higher national diploma certificates is under the Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technical Education (SLIATE) which also comes under the purview of the MHE.

Higher education up to the first degree level is offered free to all Sri Lankan students and most children receive bursaries to pursue their education under the "Mahapola Scholarship Scheme".

The universities

There are 15 state universities and 17 postgraduate institutes functioning under the UGC.

Universities:

- University of Colombo
- University of Peradeniya
- University of Sri Jayawardenepura
- University of Kelaniya
- University of Moratuwa
- University of Jaffna
- University of Ruhuna
- Eastern University Sri Lanka
- South Eastern University of Sri Lanka
- Rajarata University of Sri Lanka
- Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka
- Wayamba University of Sri Lanka
- Uva Wellassa University
- University of the Visual and Performing Arts
- Open University of Sri Lanka

Admissions to universities are done on the basis of the student's performance at the GCE AL examination. The marks obtained by students in different subjects are standardised using a statistical formulae and converted to "Z" scores and ranking is based on this score. However, in order to ensure equity for children coming from disadvantaged areas, a district quota is allocated on the basis of the population in the district and a percentage is reserved for the most back ward districts. As the number of places available in the universities is much less than the number of students who qualify there is intense competition to enter the universities.

The number of students qualifying and the number admitted to the state universities

Subject stream	2007/2008			2008/2009			2009/2010			2010/2011		
	No. qualified	No. admitted	Percentage	No. qualified	No. admitted	Percentage	No. qualified	No. admitted	Percentage	No. qualified	No. admitted	Percentage
Arts	56,917	6,307	11.08	65,235	6,693	10.26	62,676	6,841	10.91	72,800	7,064	9.70
Commerce	37,861	4,357	11.51	36,707	4,337	11.82	33,202	4,583	13.80	35,581	4,876	13.70
Physical science	10,018	4,241	42.33	10,408	4,493	43.17	10,164	4,467	43.95	12,657	4,455	35.20
Biological science	16,625	5,164	31.06	17,886	5,323	29.76	19,242	5,656	29.39	21,478	5,621	26.17
Total	**121,421**	**20,069**	**16.53**	**130,236**	**20,846**	**16.01**	**125,284**	**21,547**	**17.20**	**142,516**	**22,016**	**15.45**

Source: UGC (2011).

A small number of places are reserved for students with special abilities and foreign students. The total enrolment of students in the universities is 105,127 and in the postgraduate institutes is 5,650 (UGC, 2011).

Postgraduate institutes

- Postgraduate Institute of Medicine
- Postgraduate Institute of Agriculture
- Postgraduate Institute of Pali and Buddhist Studies
- Postgraduate Institute of Archaeology
- Postgraduate Institute of Management
- Postgraduate Institute of Science
- Postgraduate Institute of English
- Postgraduate Institute of Human Resource Advancement
- Postgraduate Institute of Indigenous Medicine
- University of Colombo School of Computing
- Gampaha Wickramarachchi Ayurveda Institute
- National Institute of Library and Information Science
- Institute of Technology, University of Moratuwa
- Institute of Biochemistry, Molecular Biology and Biotechnology
- National Centre for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Science
- Swamy Vipulananda Institute of Aesthetic Studies
- Institute of Agro Technology and Rural Science

Other higher education institutions

Besides the SLIATE there are a few other higher education institutes which come under the purview of Ministry of Higher Education. These are the Buddhist and Pali University, and Buddasasravaka Bikkhu University.

The Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technical Education (SLIATE)

SLIATE has been established by an Act of Parliament for fostering Advanced Technical Education at post secondary level in Engineering and Business Studies. It functions under a Director General. At present there are 16 Advanced Technical Institutes (ATI) functioning in different parts of the country. These function under a Director.

The basic qualification to enter these institutes is passing the GCE AL examination. The specific subjects vary depending on the course that the student wishes to follow. Full-time courses are held on week days while part-time courses are conducted during week-ends.

ATIs under SLIATE at present conduct courses in the following fields:

- Accounting
- Management
- Business Studies
- Engineering
- Information Technology
- Agriculture
- English

Practical learning in technology...

Practical learning in technology...

7 Technical and vocational education and training

UNIVOTEC

Technical College, Maradana.

The structure

Technical and vocational education institutes other than the SLIATE come under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Skills Development (MYASD). There is the minister who is responsible to the President for the management of the ministry, a deputy minister to assist the minister and the secretary to the ministry who is the chief executive. The institutions functioning under this ministry are:

Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC) is the apex body in vocational education and training in Sri Lanka. It is responsible for planning, coordination and development of tertiary and vocational education. It is the regulatory body for all aspects of implementation of technical and vocational education and training in the country.

Department of Technical Education & Training (DTET) manages Technical Colleges which are outside the SLIATE. There are approximately 17,000 trainees enrolled in the colleges run by this department.

Vocational Training Authority (VTA) runs a network of centres to train craft level in construction electrical repairs and service trades. Annual training capacity is around 34,000.

National Apprentice & Industrial Training Authority (NAITA) facilitates attachment of trainees to work places for on the job training. The total intake is about 27,000.

National Institute of Business Management (NIBM) is a degree awarding institute and has branches in the outstations. The total intake is nearly 10,000.

University of Vocational Technology (Univotec) provides university level education for students who pass out from technical institutes to obtain a degree in technology. This was established in 2008 and the annual intake is 319.

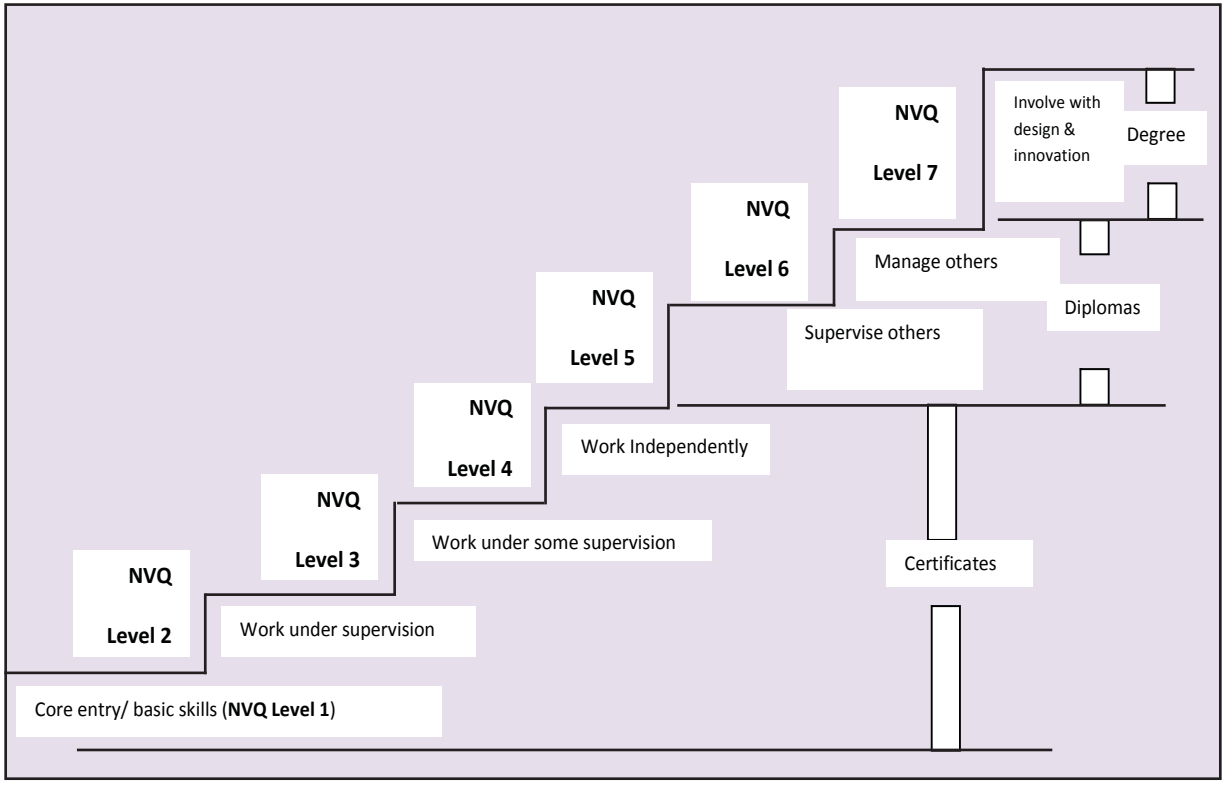
National Youth Service Council (NYSC) provides training programmes for youth in vocational fields. The capacity is about 15,000.

Ceylon German Technical Training Institute (CGTTI) conducts courses mainly in motor mechanism and mechanical fields. The intake is around 3,000.

National Institute of Fisheries and Nautical Engineering (NIFNE) has a capacity of 1,600.
Sri Lanka Institute of Printing (ICTRL) has a capacity of 860.

National Vocational Qualification - Sri Lanka (NVQSL) is a scheme to accredit qualifications in the vocational field. It has levels from one to seven, Level one is recognizing the core of entry level skills and two are basic qualifications. Levels 2, 3 and 4 are recognising the increasing levels of competencies. Level 4 qualification awards for full national craftsmanship. Level 5 and 6 is a national diploma. Level 7 is a Bachelors degree or equivalent. Certification of these levels is carried out by institutions accredited by TVEC and they are nationally recognised.

National vocational qualification (NVQ) levels



Source: MoE (2013).

Besides there are many other institutions under different ministries which conduct training programmes in their areas of speciality.

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Useful websites

Ministry of Education	-	www.moe.gov.lk
National Institute of Education	-	www.nie.lk
Department of Examinations	-	www.doenets.lk
Department of Education Publications	-	www.edupub.gov.lk
Ministry of Higher Education	-	www.mohe.gov.lk
Ministry of Youth Affairs and Skill Development	-	www.youthskillsmin.gov.lk
University Grants Commission	-	www.ugc.ac.lk
National Education Commission	-	www.nec.gov.lk
Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission	-	www.tvec.gov.lk

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