

2010

EDUCATION FOR ALL SIERRA LEONE COALITION



PROGRESS ON MEETING EDUCATION FOR ALL (EFA) GOALS WITH EMPHASIS ON ADULT LITERACY

**AN ASSESSMENT OF SIERRA LEONE'S MARCH TO MEETING
THE FULL EFA AGENDA**

April 2010

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Full responsibility for the content and form of this report rests with the consultant.

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Executive Summary

1.0 Introduction

This study titled “*progress on meeting Education For All (EFA) Goals with emphasis on Adult Literacy*” is an assessment of Sierra Leone’s march to meeting the full EFA agenda. Essentially, it is part of the Education Watch Initiative which generally aims at providing high quality and credible research data that the EFA Coalition can use to critically engage Government and the country’s development partners to honour their commitments under the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal in 2000, the Bamako Conference, Being a signatory to the World Education Forum Agreement meant that the Sierra Leone Government made a commitment to provide greater access, equity and equality to basic education and to mobilize resources to achieve all the six goals by the year 2015. Indeed, Sierra Leone now benefits from the Education Watch Initiative for conflict affected fragile states to track progress it has made against the backdrop of its recent historical circumstance towards the attainment of all of the EFA goals. The year 2008 marks almost mid-way towards the dead line of 2015 when such undertaking (meeting the EFA Goals) by the Sierra Leone Government would have been achieved. As with all the ratified International Agreements, the mid term provides an opportunity to assess what progress or otherwise has been made. This survey, “An assessment of Progress on EFA Goals in Sierra Leone” serves that purpose.

1.1 Aim

The aim of the research is to assess the progress on all six EFA Goals as listed below:

Goal 1 - *Expanding and Improving Early Childhood Care and education especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children*

Goal 2-*Ensuring that in year 2015, all children, particularly Girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities have access to complete fee free and compulsory Primary Education of good quality.*

Goal 3 -*Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes*

Goal 4 -*Achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to Basic and continuing education for all adults*

Goal 5 - *Eliminating Gender Disparities In Primary And Secondary Education By 2015, and achieving Gender Equality Y 2015 With A Focus Of Ensuring Girls Full And equal Access to and Achievement of Basic Education Of Good Quality*

Goal 6 -*Improvement in all aspects of quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy an essential life skills*

1.2 Objectives

- To determine the progress on all of the EFA goals.
- To determine the progressive investment (financial and material outlay) of the Sierra Leone Government meeting each of the EFA Goals.
- To determine the views of ultimate beneficiaries (Adults) on the institutions and the level of contributions to Adult Education by the government and her development partners.
- To determine the views of all stake holders (Government, INGOs / NGOs and Adults) on the best practices in the promotion and attainment of goals set for Adult Education and other EFA goals.
- To determine the obstacles that hinder the promotion of all of the EFA goals and Adult Education in Sierra Leone and other EFA goals.
- Determine the expansion and improvement in early childhood care and education,
- Suggest ways forward as these relate to policy, resources allocation, coordination and oversight of Adult Education and other EFA goals.

1.3 Expected Outcome

- At the end of the exercise, the research will provide high quality Adult Education Policy tool that would include the views of parents, teachers, Adult Learners, officials in the Education Ministry and other providers of Adult Education as a service.
- Review of existing education policies to reflect engendered pro-poor and pro-literacy responsiveness.
- Removal of barriers to access to Adult Literacy and the realization of other goals.
- Greater Government focus on achieving all EFA Goals by 2015
- Increased and realistic allocation in education budget to Adult Literacy and other EFA Goals
- The promotion of transparency, accountability, and efficiency in the management of Adult Education in the country.
- Expansion in the number of adults willing to begin and complete Adult Education Programmes.
- Improved institutional management system of all institutions implementing EFA Goals
- Rejuvenated interest by INGOs and International Development Partners in the commitments and coordination of Adult Education in Sierra Leone.

1.4 Methodology

To be able to gather information for this study, both primary and secondary sources of data were used:

1.4.1 Secondary Data source

Various documents¹ relating to the goals were read in addition to Sierra Leone Government Budget 2005 – 2008 with a view of obtaining information on the budget profile. Also, information relating to National Primary School Examination (NPSE) and Basic Education and Certificate Exam (BECE) covering the periods 2002 – 2008 were studied and analyzed. Furthermore records from Ministry of Education relating to primary and Junior Secondary

¹ The countries illiteracy rate is 63.1% (See Core Welfare Indicators Questionnaire survey 2007 - Statistics Sierra Leone p12)

Schools (JSS) enrolment, teaching staff etc. were consulted. Finally, relevant surveys on similar issue from Statistics Sierra Leone were also consulted.

1.4.2 Primary Data

Primary data was obtained from three main sources targeting three types of respondents: Questionnaire/Interview guide for non-state-providers of Adult Education; such non-state-providers included all Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) as in the Sierra Leone Directory of Formal and Non-formal Education published by Partners in Adult Education Coordinating Office (PADECO) 2007.

The second targeted population was entire Sierra Leone Adults who are ultimate beneficiaries of Education services. These provided information through the use of focus group discussion guide. The third and the most important instrument used was the interview guide which covered all six goals. This was used to obtain information from the Ministry of Education Youths and Sports (MEYS), who are the principal state-providers of education.

1.4.3 Sampling

The sample size depended on the target population and the instrument used. Thus, for the 223 registered non-state-providers of adult literacy, 114 or slightly above 50% was selected across the country. The second stage was to select 50% of each non-state-provider in every district, at random. Table 1 below shows the distribution.

Table 1 – Distribution of sample selection of non state providers of Adult Literacy

District	Total non-state-providers	50% or more
Bo	28	14
Bonthe	1	1
Moyamba	14	7
Pujehun	7	4
Kailahun	9	5
Kenema	19	9
Kono	15	8
Bombali	16	8
Kambia	40	20
Koinadugu	5	3
Port Loko	8	4
Tonkolili	13	7
Western Area	48	24
Total	223	114

To further investigate Adult literacy and some indicators of the EFA goals, a sample of 250 focus groups out of a predetermined population of 500 for the country were used. Allocations were made depending on the concentration of non-state-providers, (NGOs, CBOs) in the regions. Table 2 shows the selection of focus groups by regions:

Table 2 – Selection of focus groups by regions

No.	Region	Frequency
1	Eastern	42
2	Western Area	52
3	Northern	91
4	Southern	65
Total		250

Individuals with relevant responsibilities in the MEYS, the principal state providers of education, were interviewed. Specifically, the following were interviewed:

1. Head, Basic Education Commission
2. Director, Non-formal Education
3. EFA Coordinator
4. Head, Inspectorate Division
5. Head, Pre and primary school
6. Head, Non-Formal Education
7. Head, Life Skills, Guidance and Cancellation
8. Education Management Information System (EMIS)

2.0 Summary of key findings

Goal 1: Expanding and Improving Early Childhood Care and education especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children

- Until 2005, pre primary school education laid outside the formal system of Education and as a consequence, the sector did not receive the kind of support one would expect as a way of expanding and improving early childhood care. Even though after 2005 government made it a policy that every primary school should have attached to it a pre primary facility, the study found no evidence of the number of schools complying with this policy. What was evident was that government support to early childhood care and education was limited to the provision of school subsidy to some nursery schools, and even with these, there was no clear cut criterion for accessing such support. Furthermore, the study discovered no evidence of the existence of teacher training institution or curriculum catering for nursery teachers - a specialized field in teacher education. At primary level, there has been an increase in enrolment by 61.6% from 2000/01-2006/07 for which data is available.
- In providing learning environment for pupils, the number of primary schools has also expanded from 2,676 in 2000/01 to 5,016 in 2006/07. This represents an increase of 46.7%. Nonetheless, there are still 30% of children of school going age not accessing school.
- In terms of financial support to this system, the study discovered an apparent decrease of -8.73% within the period 2004/05 to 2007/08. Furthermore, in the critical year 2008 when financial resources for primary education for the 19 local councils was devolved, the projected budget was Le46,115.5Bn, the actual that was made available was Le16,665.6Bn for all four quarters. This represents a short fall of Le29,449.9Bn or 63.9%.
- The number of staff that should provide for the learning needs of children in primary schools has expanded from 13,000 in 2000/01 to 19,316 in 2004/05. However, the study reveals that the number of qualified staff for primary schools have only marginally expanded (61.4% to 61.5%) in the period under review.
- Pass rate from primary schools to JSS has been fluctuating from 2000/01 and 2006/07. Thus, though 81% passed in 2001/02, the study observed a gradual decline to 72.5 % in 2007/08.

Goal 2: Ensuring that in year 2015, all children, particularly Girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities have access to complete fee free and compulsory Primary Education of good quality.

On this goal, the study found evidence that government has taken several practical steps such as the fee free primary schools, affirmative action for the girl child in the North and eastern regions of the country and school feeding programmes for targeted schools.

- The study also found out that government supply of textbooks and school subsidy of \$2 (at an exchange rate of Le3,000) per pupil per academic year has partly led to increase in girl child enrolment everywhere. However, the study further found out that this amount is too small, and that the payment is always in arrears of one term. This situation creates the demand for extra charges by school authorities to be able to run the schools even though such demands contravene government's avowed policy.
- The study revealed an expansion in the enrolment of the girl child from 44.9% in 2001/02 to 46.2% in 2005/06 for the periods for which data is available.
- Government's effort to reduce the burden of education on parents for the disadvantaged and poor still faces the challenges of extra charges which dwarf by comparison, with government's contribution. This appears to defeat government intension of expanding primary school education by government undertaking most of the expenditure.
- There is insufficiency in space in schools. This is more evident in the urban areas than in the rural areas.
- That more girls than boys are dropping out of school.

Goal 3: Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes.

For this goal, the study found that despite the enactment of laws to ensure that this becomes a reality, life skills education faces the major problem of being under resourced to carry out the necessary personnel preparation to make this goal a reality.

- Evidence exists however that tech/voc enrolment of girls and women increased by 38.8% between 2000/01 and 2006/07.
- The study further revealed that there exists a large failure rate of girls (87% for the SSS WASSCE) for the periods 2005 – 2008 in the BECE which would require that this number accesses facilities in life skills education and vocational training. However, only 112 such tech/voc exist and they are highly under resourced. Furthermore, there is no evidence to show the national spread which would allow any intervention to be based on sound statistics possible.
- Financial allocation to life skills and vocational training is arbitrary, and resources are only available on paper: as such they are only accessed in ad hoc manner by necessary authorities in the directorate. The study revealed that this abnormally had to do more with the complicated budgetary process and the over reliance on budgetary support from donor partners who make commitments but are never able to comply in time. Since allocation to MEYS is projected and predicated on donor contribution, unavailability of resources in

time unfortunately ensures that planned programmes are often derailed or implemented haphazardly.

- The study further revealed that there is emphasis on the production of suitable teaching and learning materials (with over reliance on donor support) but little effort to train the specialized staff to use these materials and even less to distribute them to the schools.
- The study found no evidence of government carrying out its commitments to provide teaching and operational learning centers in all parts of the country.
- There has been little or no sign of increase in financial allocations out of the MEYS budget to non formal and life skills.
- Increased support to livelihood skills cannot be determined from the number of schools government claim to have constructed because there are no figures in those accessing those facilities over the years.

Goal 4: Achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to Basic and continuing education for all adults

The study found no evidence of government's concerted effort to address adult literacy. Thus:

- Budget allocation for the period 2005 to 2008 has never been more than 0.07% of the MEYS budget in any single year even though the Bamako Conference committed all member states to 3% of the education budget to Adult Education.
- Also, the study reveals that there is over reliance on partner activity to attain accelerated adult education in the country, and most of these partners have inadequate resources in terms of finance, trained personnel and other adult learning materials.
- In addition, the minimal effort of these INGOs seems to be directed more to regions of the country with high illiteracy.
- 57.7% of all non state providers believed the adult literacy is not expanding in the country.
- On the motivation of adults to learn, 67.6% of all adult learners are women.
- The study further revealed that 85.2% of adults are willing to take part in adult literacy but men need a form of motivation just as women are getting micro credit as one such, to be able to participate more.
- On literacy classes payment, only 30.4% of adult learners attending adult literacy pay in some form.
- The study further revealed that at present there are 20,000 adults attending literacy classes all over the country. But this figure provided by the Directorate of Adult Non formal Education is of little value for any planning purpose since it is not disaggregated by region, district, or sex.

- Even though there are 223 Non State providers of adult literacy in the country, only 5 such non state providers are being supported by the government by way of annual subventions quite unrelated in quantum to the needs of such organizations.

Goal 5: Eliminating Gender Disparities In Primary And Secondary Education By 2005, And Achieving Gender Equality Y 2015 With A Focus Of Ensuring Girls Full And Equal Access To And Achievement Of Basic Education Of Good Quality

- The study revealed that government has made some effort to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary school education. Indeed, the study found no evidence of government support to the discrimination against the girl child to access education in the statutes relating to education.
- The study also found that expansion in the training of female teachers from 2000/01 to 2006/07, thus, there was an increase of enrolment in teacher training colleges by 30.8%. However, the study was not able to determine the number of female teachers serving in the schools because the responsible division has kept all such records for only 2004 and not for all other years under review.
- There is unequal distribution of qualified female teachers in the periods 2004/5 with the Northern region having the least (5.6%) even though the number of female teachers is highest in that region.
- Sponsorship of girls at post JSS level though a government intension has no evidence in the study.
- The percentage of girls accessing primary schools has also increased from 23,384 in 2000/01 to 67,508 in 2006/07. This represents a percentage increase of 188.7%.
- That gender gap elimination relating to quality remains a serious challenge as about 87% of all girls entering JSS 1 did not complete JSS 3 successfully for the years 2005 – 2008. This is so even if we were to use all pass criteria used by the Basic Education Secretariat to allocate pupils to SSS WASSCE and SSS Tech/Voc combine. Within the terms of reference of this present study, the study was unable to pinpoint any particular reason why girls fail such a massive scale.

Goal 6: Improvement in all aspects of quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy an essential life skills

- The study revealed that there has been tremendous increase in enrolment of pupils from class1- JSS3. However, this expansion has not caught up with the expanding facilities thereby leading to over crowding especially in urban schools. The over all impact is poor learning outcome as is evident in the average pass rate at BECE. Using all pass criteria, the pass rate by both sexes has never exceeded 56% on average. For example, in 2005, the pass rate was 47.5%, reaching a peak in 2006, 55.3%, and falling in 2008 to 45.8%.

- Quality is also affected by the high ratio of pupil to qualified teacher especially at primary level which stands at 108:1.
- The low pupil teacher ratio at JSS level of 40:1 is deceptive as there is no disaggregation by qualified and unqualified teachers.
- Support in terms of providing core textbooks is still inadequate. The two tier system – MEYS main stream supported schools as against SABABU schools creates room for disparities and distorts adequacy of supplies to schools. In the SABABU supported schools, there is 1:1 ratio of child to book, but in the former there is 1:3. Even more important is the fact that the books are kept in the schools compelling parents to buy text books if their children are to do any assignment or receive further tutorial at home.
- Recruitment of qualified teachers to meet the 40:1 standard in primary schools is hampered by the recruitment ceiling policy.
- There is wastage among qualified teacher pool which paradoxically continues to sustain the prevalence of volunteer teachers in the schools system especially in rural communities. The problem is compounded by the poor condition of service for teachers especially the newly recruited teachers whose pay time is unpredictable. This situation exists because the recruitment time (September when schools re-open does not coincide with the government’s financial year) and the lack of contingency budget plans to factor the expanded pay roll in the previous budget.
- The study found out that the recruitment and reward for teachers is not transparent and has no mechanism to keep track of teacher’s record on a sustained basis.

Key Recommendations

Goal 1

- The inspectorate division should ensure that there is strict monitoring of primary schools whether private or government assisted to comply with the policy of the provision of nursery facility if Early Childhood Care is to be achieved by 2015. The MEYS should prioritize the preparation of curriculum and introduction of such curriculum to the five teacher training institutions in the country to be able to provide specialist teachers in early childhood care and education.
- Government should try to obtain an accurate statistics on the number of teachers and their qualifications serving in pre primary schools. This will assist in planning for the number of teachers required and the training that others already serving need.
- There is need to expand the number of primary school facilities in the urban areas especially Freetown. In particular, the ministry needs to carry out a study on primary school density in urban areas taking particular cognizance of distance to school and sitting space.

Goal 2

- Government should endeavour to increase the school subsidy by 100% and a mechanism must be put in place to ensure that such payments are not done in arrears.

- If the target of 2015 is to be achieved, government should expand the school feeding programme as well as make provision for the condiments. The increase in subsidy recommended above should be able to reduce most of the expenditure on the parents of the girl child and disadvantaged children.

Goal 3

- Textbook provisions should be expanded. The opening of resource centers in proximity of schools should be implemented as a realistic approach to making core text books available to children outside school hours. Alternatively, core text books should be provided at a subsidized cost so that children of poor parents can have books both at home and school and the sales should be strictly monitored.

Goal 4

- Adult literacy and non formal education should receive the kind of support it deserves in terms of both allocation (3% of MEYS budget) and institutional arrangement for efficient management.
- The Directorate should organize its adult literacy programmes in a more formal and structured manner so as to assist intervening partners to make proper plans.
- The assistance to the number of non state providers of adult literacy (5 out of 233 at present) should be expanded to about 50% and such selection should be based on regional balance, capacity of the organization, and willingness to adopt standard materials and methodology. As a first step, government should invest in obtaining accurate information about the literacy growth rate in the country so as to strategize to meet the goal in adult literacy by 2015.
- The MEYS should take leadership in standardizing adult literacy programmes, curriculum development, learning material production, methodology, and instructor training.
- The Directorate of non formal education should desist from combining monitoring and coordination which is its main role, with implementation of adult literacy programmes.
- The government should try to meet its commitment of 3% of MEYS budget allocation to adult literacy by 2015.
- The practice of teacher attachment with very little training and only Le20,000 or \$6.7 per month stipend should be discontinued. Professional teachers should be trained for Adult Literacy and remunerated in a manner which will enable them do their work effectively.
- The learning environment for Adults should be motivating and respectful using pupils benches and chairs for Adults should not be the best practice for adult learners as it discourages them from attending.

Goal 5

- The inspectorate division must make as a matter of policy to keep record in disaggregated manner of teachers recruited by sex, district and region, qualified and unqualified. This will enable the policy makers plan for disparities relating to requirements in categories of teachers.
- There is need to expand qualified female teacher recruitment in the country with priority given to the Northern region.
- Government should make concerted effort to realize its intension to support the Girl Child education in the post JSS level. This policy should be highly publicized so as to motivate girl children to do well in the BECE exams.
- Government should endeavour to create a more girl friendly learning environment and learning facilities especially from JSS1 to JSS3 level. The details of this requires strategic dialogue forum among parents, teachers, inspectorate officials and the pupils themselves.

Goal 6

Institutional arrangement

- The responsibility for the implementation of the 6 EFA Goals is shared between two levels of government – central MEYS and 19 Local Councils. The EFA secretarial within the Ministry of Education should be given the capacity and authority to coordinate and monitor all such implementation efforts. This in particular requires an expanded personnel base with the requisite technical skills and knowledge, and over and above adequate remuneration.
- There is the need for the Ministry of Education to provide refresher training for its staff in house so that they are adequately informed about global education commitments. This information is grossly lacking among some core staff in the Ministry.
- There is the need for the Ministry to recruit more professional staff at the level of the various key departments. There is gross under staffing in terms of competencies and number to handle the implementation process within the various departments.
- Record keeping on all EFA Goals as the prerequisite for proper implementation to be taken seriously. The Education Management Information System (EMIS) must be empowered to request information on every sector and must also constantly upgrade such statistics and share the results with all sectors and partners.

Budgetary arrangement

- There is definite confusion in trying to verify the actual allocation to basic education since there is no document which reconciles the percentage of bulk allocation to the ministry as a whole and that percentage that is devolved to the councils. There is therefore need for a two stage transfer mechanism to be adopted and documented: that is the bulk sum to MEYS-stage one and stage two transferred fund to councils less bulk sum.
- Furthermore, on the same issue the study recommends that allocations of the national budget as an effort to meet the EFA Goals should be realistic and accessible. All efforts should be

made that the 20% of national budget should be allocated to the education sector. This requires a concerted and deliberate effort to calculate the 20% out of the total budget each year to allocate to education.

- Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning and MEYS should reach a memorandum of understanding on prioritized expenditure and adequate and timely provision for undertaking activities and programmes under all EFA goals.
- The number accessing Basic Education should match the quality. This requires a strong networking system among teacher training and enrolment, and increased specialized training for life skills and nursery teacher training.
- The recruitment, retention and reward system for teachers as a system must be revamped as a matter of urgency.
- More study leave should be provided for unqualified teachers to seek necessary qualification through higher studies
- Government should target at least 80% success rate consistently from now unto 2015 by reinstating those facilities for both teachers and pupils that sustained such high NPSE passes in the past.

2.0 FINDINGS

GOAL 1: Expanding and Improving Early Childhood Care and education especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

Under GOAL 1, there was the need to assess the legal, policy framework as well as practical actions taken by government to contribute to the realization of this goal.

Early childhood covers the periods when the child is in pre primary and primary school. In Sierra Leone, there is no age limit in attending nursery school. However, a child must attain the age of five before being accepted into primary school. Within the 6-3-3-4 system of education, the child entering primary school should spend six years, at the end of which he/she should have progressed to attempt the National Primary School Examination (NPSE). Expansion and improvement at the pre primary and primary school level are examined in this study along the following indicators:

- Legal frame work developed that enhances this – There is evidence of legal documents that support this effort².
- Increased enrolment over the period – Increased enrolment was investigated from record obtained from Ministry of Education which should show an expansion in the overall intake of children in schools at this level.

Pre primary Education

In the category of pre-primary, until 2005, this sector of education laid outside the formal education system, although the government developed curriculum, produced teachers, and guidelines for opening and maintaining such institutions³. After 2005, government policy was that every primary school should have attached to it and by 2007 government paid 875 teachers in such schools. But the study was unable to get an accurate number of total number of teachers whether trained or qualified serving the level. In addition, the study found no data on the number of pupils accessing such institutions from the side of government. In the same vain, the study found no evidence of the number of pre school proprietors complying with the pre school attachment requirement policy.

Primary School Education

At the primary school level, the study discovered an increase in enrolment during the periods 2000-2008. In 2000/01, there were 508,007 children in primary schools, this increased to 554,308 in 2002/2003, by 2004/05, Further increase occurred 2004/05 which was from 1,291,255 to 1,322,238 in 2006/07 In terms of percentage, for the period for which data is available, there has been an expansion by 61.6% between 2000/2001 and 2006/2007. Within the same period for which data was available the number of primary school structures rose from 2,676 in 2000/01 to 4,298 in 2004/05 and by 2006/07 the number had increased further to 5,016. This represents percentage increase of government assisted primary schools by 46.7%. The study found no records for the periods 2007/08.

Also, this expansion in primary school structures does not relate to the current demand for such infrastructure. It is important to mention that though government has created an enabling environment through the 2004 Education Act which also makes education compulsory, there is a marked imbalance between the structures and the number of pupils these facilities can accommodate. The literature reviewed for the study puts at 30%⁴ of children of primary school going age still out of school.

² See Education Act 2004, Part II Article 5 and 6.

³ See Education Act 2004, Part II Article 5(3)

⁴ The country status report for Sierra Leone, 2006; Population Census, 2004

- Financial support to the expansion in early childhood care and improvement in education has been fluctuating. This has been characterized by steady increase and a drastic reduction in allocation to this sector. For the periods 2005-2008 for which data is available, slight annual increases of 4.8% each in 2006 and 2007 was followed by a decline of -8.73% in 2008. This is shown in table 4 below.

Table 4: Pre-primary and Primary Schools budget allocation

Year	Amount allocated Le'Bn	Difference	% increase/reduction
2001	N/A	N/A	N/A
2002	N/A	N/A	N/A
2003	N/A	N/A	N/A
2004	N/A	N/A	N/A
2005	16,435.6	-	-
2006	17,257.4	821.8	4.8
2007	18,120.3	862.9	4.8
2008	*16,665.6	-1,454.7	-8.73_

Sources: Budget Bureau, Ministry of Finance, *Local Council Finance Department of the Decentralization Secretariat

It should be noted that despite the 2004 Education Act which devolved Basic Education to the 19 Local Councils, transfer of resources which should enable such councils to meet the needs of primary education was only effected in 2008. From the records obtained from the Local Council Finance Department of the Decentralization Secretariat, the total allocated to primary education was Le46,115.5Bn. In actual terms, the Local Councils received only Le16,665.6Bn to implement the early childhood care and primary education in 2008. Thus the difference between what was allocated to local councils and what was actually made available in the year 2008 for primary education (Le29,449.9Bn), this represents a short fall of about 63.9%. This partly explains some of the inadequacies in the provision of learning materials, sitting accommodations, and arrears in the payment of school subsidies to the primary schools in the country.

To be able to serve this level that has expanded over the years, there is evidence in the expansion of qualified primary school teachers. The total number of teachers at primary level in 2000/01 was 13,841 of which 8,492 were qualified and 5,349 were unqualified. By 2004/05, the number of this category of teachers has expanded to 19,316 out of which 11, 846 were qualified and 7,440 were unqualified. Thus, the period under review has seen an expansion by 28.3% the total number of teachers. However, despite the marginal increase in the percentage of qualified teachers within 200/01-2004/05 (from 61.4% to 61.5%) the percentage of unqualified teachers still remains at 38.5% as of 2004/05

- Expanding and Improving Early Childhood Care and education – one of the indicators of improvement is a factor of a generally improved pass rates in public exams from primary school to JSS. The increased enrolment at primary school level will only have meaning at this stage if there are increases in number of passes of pupils over the years. This is shown in table 5 below.

Table 5: No of candidates who sat to the NPSE

Year	Sat	Pass	% success
2002	34931	28181	81
2003	46861	37117	79
2004	61148	48077	79
2005	79380	55838	71.9
2006	87763	63917	73
2007	98623	69774	72.5

Source: Basic Education Commission Secretariat, Ministry of Education Youths & sports, Feb. 2009

For data available for the periods, 2002-2007, there is evidence of a steady increase in the number of children at primary school level who sat to the NPSE and passed. Thus, from 34,931 candidates in 2002 the number rose to 98,623 in 2007. This shows a percentage increase in sitting rates from 2002 to 2007 as 64.6%; .However, the pass rate for these exams has been fluctuating with marked decline in 2005.

It is evident that when there was massive international and government intervention in 2002, just after the war, the percentage of pass was 81%. The gradual decline in both government and donor support is ultimately reflected in percentage decline in passes.

GOAL 2 – Ensuring that by 2015, all particularly Girl, Children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities have access to complete free and compulsory Primary Education of good quality

Under goal 2, there was the need to determine what is contained in the definition of access to compulsory primary education for children particularly girls. A number of variables were used to assess the educational environment. The variables include availability, affordability, accessibility, in terms of distance to school , class room environment; adaptability and motivation to school going. Such variables we consider are best revealed by the review of policy documents on the one hand, and through primary data analysis of the views of the parents/ guidance and the girl child at the primary school level.

In Sierra Leone, consistent statistics over the years has shown the girl child has been lagging behind her male counterpart in terms of numbers and by every indicator to Basic education. In fact, primary data⁵ from the survey among 250 focus groups nationwide reveals the following situation as it obtains.

In terms of affordability, the study revealed that practical steps have been taken within the policy framework that has impacted on the Girl child Education. These include:

The institution of the free primary school policy 2001 has had a marked positive impact on enrolment of both boys and girls for the period for which data is available – 2001 to 2005. It was observed from records provided by the Ministry of Education that total enrolment gradually grew to 1.2m in 2005. Out of these, girls comprise 45% while boys accounted for 46.2% for 2004 and 2005 respectively. Table 6below shows the trend in growth of enrolment for girls and boys.

⁵ See Annex 1-Focus group Discussion guides

In addition government affirmative action by way of exclusive support to girl child education such as providing opportunities that encourage girls to go to and stay in school, has taken the form of providing uniform, other school materials (exercise books), provided girl-child education support in areas of the country where there was significant low level of girl-child enrolment – Northern and Eastern Provinces (supply of text books, for a whole year’s school tuition fee), free NPSE fees for all. This notwithstanding, government also provides subvention to all government assisted schools in all regions to the tune of \$ 2.00 per pupil per year.

As a consequence of the above the study revealed that the reduction in the expected education cost burden on parents through the provision of school tuition and examination fee have had positive impacts on the expansion and improvement of Girl Child Education as shown in Table 6 and 7 which cover the period 2002 – 2005 for which data is available.

Table 6 – Gross Primary School Enrolment rate (GER) 2002-2005

Years		Boys	Girls	Total
2002	Enrolment	545,109	444,227	989,336
	%	55.1	44.9	100
	GER	73	59.5	132.5
2003	Enrolment	624,731	506,683	1,131,414
	%	55.2	44.8	100
	GER	81.8	66.4	148.2
2004	Enrolment	709,869	581,386	1,291,255
	%	55	45	100
	GER	90.0	74.4	165.3
2005	Enrolment	686,123	589,526	1,275,649
	%	53.8	46.2	100
	GER	85.9	73.8	159.7

Source: Inspectorate unitt, Ministry of Education Youths & sports, Feb. 2009

Regional variations occur as shown in the table below.

Table 7 – Gross Primary School Enrolment rate (GER) 2002-2005

Year	Region	Total enrolment	Total Girls	% Increase of Girls
2000/01	North	148,555	57,870	
2004/05	North	455,724	186,350	68.9
2006/07	North	496,019	228,284	18.4
2000/01	South	163,184	71,695	
2004/05	South	316,796	139,233	48.5
2006/07	South	293,656	140,364	0.8
2000/01	East	95,397	38,138	
2004/05	East	315,496	137,326	72.2
2006/07	East	300,121	141,772	3.1
2000/01	West	74,493	34,736	
2004/05	West	204,056	102,618	66.2
2006/07	West	332,442	118,088	13.1

Source: Inspectorate Unit, Ministry of Education Youths & sports, Feb. 2009

However the intervention by government to provide assistance is not evenly spread among all categories of schools. The study revealed that Government primary schools receive 25%, 70% goes to Government assisted schools and 5% to private schools⁶.

Despite government efforts to reduce the burden of education cost, the study discovered that parents still pay other charges that are determined by the school management/ and administration for their children. In the 250 focus group discussions 79.4% admitted that they are required to pay extra charges, while 20.6% claimed that they are not required to pay such charges. Ten categories of expenditure were identified by school by the public for which they claimed charges were asked for. These are identified and ranked in table 8 of the types of charges

Table 8 – Categories of school charges

List of charges	Frequency	Rank
Development Fund	30	1 st
Games and Sports	28	2 nd
Extra Classes	26	3 rd
Report cards	21	4 th
Registration	19	5 th
ID cards	18	6 th
School materials	14	7 th
CTA	13	8 th
Condiment Fee (school feeding programme)	11	9 th
Passport Picture	9	10 th

Source: Field data – Assessment of progress on EFA goals, Dec. 2008

⁶ SLIHS 2003, 2004

These school charges, though contrary to government avowed policy were justified and explained in terms of the untimely payment and quantum (\$2 US per pupil per year) of school subsidy to schools during the validation exercise. In general, school subsidies are often paid one term in arrear and schools not getting the total subsidy per year do not get it again during the next financial year. The study was unable to determine schools which have suffered loss of part of school subsidy as there was no data made available.

Accessibility to schools: from records of others studies consulted, it was revealed that the average time taken by pupils to get to school is 45mins⁷. This indicates that the school facilities are located at far distances away from pupils. This is particularly important in the case of the girl child because of the vulnerability of girls to predators such as rapists on route to school in the rural communities.

Accommodation in class rooms: sitting accommodation provision affects the effectiveness of teaching and learning in primary schools. Sufficient sitting accommodation for pupils therefore becomes a critical factor for better learning outcomes. Because most schools are also mixed schools, proper sitting arrangements for the girl child will contribute to conducive gender friendly learning environment. Data obtained from focus groups show that 50.8% agreed that sitting space for children is insufficient. Further data obtained from literature reviewed relating responses from pupils in a school of an average class size of 65 pupils, it was revealed that 78% of children were allocated four per bench and desk; only 21.9% revealed three pupils share a bench and desk. The MEYS has no statistics on the ideal number of pupils per bench/desk. What the study actually discovered was that in the **22...**schools constructed by SABABU Education project, there are adequate number of benches/desks for all the pupils.

In the case of motivation to school going, government policy compel every parent with a child of school going age to send that child to school⁸. The response to this has been largely positive and has seen an increase in gross enrolment across the country⁹. However it was revealed from data collected from focus group discussions that the high enrolment rate recorded in schools as a result of this government policy is not sustained. From responses from 250 focus groups, 92.8% admitted there are children (particularly girls) in their communities of school going age that are out of school. A number of social and economic reasons were identified as listed below and ranked. Of these 60.4% of the focus groups admitted that more girls than boys are affected by this situation.

⁷ Report on Budget Resource Tracking survey, 2006/2007-EFASL

⁸ See Education Act 2004, Part II Article 3 (4)

⁹ See table 6 and 7

Table 9: Reasons for Dropping Out of school

Reasons	Frequency	Rank
Early marriage/sex/pregnancy	197	1 st
Poverty in the family	109	2 nd
Peer group influence & Social distraction	38	3 rd
Failure of External Exams	18	4 th
Petty trading (lust for money)	14	5 th
Lack of parental supervision in polygamous homes	13	6 th

Source: Field data – Assessment of progress on EFA goals, Dec. 2008

Goal 3: Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes.

In the process of defining and analyzing the context of life skills in Sierra Leone, the unit concerned with life skills Education within the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports was approached for a government position in relation to this. According to an interview with the life skills and HIV/AIDS coordinator, government aims in providing Life Skills Education in an effort to develop self-reliance and self actualization in individuals as well as the progressive development of society and the economy of the country through technical and vocational training in all areas of urgent need especially the agricultural, industrial and commercial sectors.

WHO and UNICEF define Life Skills as strategies and abilities one uses to get along with one's own personality, one's friends, family, society and the environment as a whole¹⁰. The strategies empower young people to interact with the society in which they live as effectively as possible. These two leading agencies (WHO AND UNICEF) in the promotion of Life Skills globally divide it into three categories: social skills (communication, negotiation, interpersonal, cooperation and creative skills), cognitive skills (decision making, problem solving and critical thinking skills), emotional skills (skills for managing stress, internal/self control) and coping skills (skills for resisting peer pressure)¹¹.

Life skills

Meeting the learning needs for young and adults for life skills in particular has been addressed by the Sierra Leone Government through policy and legal promulgations. Within the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports this goal is addressed by two units:

- Directorate of Non-Formal Education and the Division of Technical and Vocational Education – these two areas in the Ministry focus on the management and supervision of Technical and vocational education by working in close collaboration of the National Council for Technical and Vocational Studies.
- Guidance and Counseling/HIV focal point under the Directorate of Non formal Education Services – this unit is responsible for the planning, coordinating, supervising, monitoring and evaluating of the programme nationwide. .

¹⁰ Dondi & Amara: Assessment of life skills education in Sierra Leone primary schools.

¹¹ Ibid

Under this goal, the progress Sierra Leone has made in this direction amounts to the under mentioned accounts from interviews with heads of these units and documents made available:

Since 2001 some progress has been made to see life skill education become an important component of the education system as evidenced by the passing of three important Bills¹²:

- 1) The National Council for Technical Vocational and other Academic Awards Act (NCTVA) 2001. This Act was established for the evaluation and certification of certain Tech-Voc and other academic courses and programmes. Prior to this time, life skills education saw haphazard, unregulated, and therefore difficult to quantify and compare qualities of the product. The passing of this Act has standardized, led to growth and given due regard to the learners in the vocational and technical fields
- 2) The Polytechnic Act 2001 was established to make provision for the establishment of Polytechnic Council, the opening and management of Polytechnics throughout the country. This provides the enabling environment for promotion of technical vocational education at the tertiary level.
- 3) The most important legal framework which formally acknowledges the establishment and operations of Tech-voc institutions in the country was the 2004 Education Act. Specifically, the Act defines Tech-Voc Education under section 9 (1) as that which is provided in Government approved Educational Institutions in which the objectives were:
 - a. To fill the gap in technical and vocational manpower needs of Sierra Leone by substantially increasing the number of indigenous skilled lower middle level “blue collar” workers
 - b. To produce a more literate, numerate and enterprising lower middle level technical and vocational workforce and thus speed up national development and
 - c. To encourage women and girls to participate in national development through the acquisition of technical and vocational skills
 - d. To correct the present geographical imbalance in distribution of technical vocational resources
 - e. To develop appreciation and understanding of the increasing complexity of science and technology
 - f. To create an enabling environment for the development of appropriate indigenous technology
 - g. To provide training for technical and vocational instructors, teachers and Lectures
 - h. To develop an appreciation of cultural and aesthetic values in productive work

In translating these policy prescriptions into concrete actions, the research study was able to establish that government manifested its intentions in documents such as the Education Sector Plan (ESP) of 2004 which aims to improve on the following to meet this goal: .

¹² See Presentation , Ten Year Development Plan of the Tech-Voc Education Division of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports submitted by Godwin B. Samba, Acting Director 23rd September, 2006 pg 2.

Tech/Voc Education

The study was able to establish evidence of government's commitment to tech/voc education through the establishment of tech/voc schools. Pupils have accessed such schools for the period 2000/01 to 2007/08. This is shown in table 10 below.

Table 10: Number of Tech-Voc institutions and enrolment

Year	No. of Schools	*Enrolment	**Official Enrolment from BECE
2000	51	47,325	N/A
2002	N/A	N/A	N/A
2003	N/A	N/A	2,985
2004	196	22,797	4,382
2005	N/A	N/A	4,718
2006	70	11,918	5,602
2007	N/A	N/A	4,838
2008	N/A	N/A	4,660

Source: Inspectorate Unit, Ministry of Education Youths & sports, Feb. 2009

From the table above, there is evidence of scanty and incomplete official statistics on Technical /Vocational Education in MEYS. Secondly, from the data available (irrespective of its incompleteness), there is two tier approach in accessing tech/voc education; official and informal. The informal access in column 3 constitutes pupils documented to actually enroll in tech/voc on their own, and those that are sent there by the Basic Education Secretariat using the criteria 4 subjects including English and Mathematics passes, or 5 subjects excluding English and Mathematics. Column 4 represents the official access having met the Basic Education criteria. However, by both access avenues, there is declining number of enrolment contrasting with the expanding number of facilities available. This phenomenon could be explained by the fact that the learning environment in tech/vocs is not attractive as well as the fact that pupils have the tendency to force themselves into SSS WASSCE main stream and there is no mechanism in MEYS to monitor such conduct on the part of both the pupils and the school administrators.

Enrolment of Girls in Teacher Training Institutions

Government committed itself to getting more women with young children in teacher's training institutions. Of the five teacher training institutions for which data is available, there were a total of 2,603 women and girls pursuing various courses in 2000/2001. This number had increased to 4,250 by 2006/7. An increase of about 38.8%. However, these figures make no distinction between women with young children and those without having access.

Provision of Resource Centers

Government committed itself to provide Teaching and operational learning resource centres in all nineteen Local Government areas (LGAs). Despite the Ministry's claim in the Education Sector Plan (ESP) 2004, the study found no evidence of the presence and distribution of such facility in the 19 LGAs on the ground.

Establishment of Schools of Excellence

Government proposed to identify and establish Schools of excellence which offer science of technical/vocational education. The research found no evidence of such claim. Evidence that was found however was mixed results with figures unavailable, and sometimes incomplete records reflecting poor record keeping at this level. This was symptomatic of a lack of practical attention still paid to this level apart from policy formulation.

Establishment of Livelihood Schools for the disabled

Government committed itself to supporting more disabled with saleable livelihood skills. From the study in interviews with the inspectorate unit of the Ministry of Education, there is evidence that government has provided for the special for the needs education for the following categories of disabled as shown in table 11 below for the period 2006/07. It is however worthy to mention that the researcher was unable to determine such institutions, the number of disabled benefiting and when such institutions were established and the regional spread of such intervention was not also provided.

Table 11: livelihood skills for the disable

Category of Disabled	Number of Schools
The Blind	5
The Deaf	3
Polio Victims	1
Mentally Retarded	1
Total	10

Source: Inspectorate Division, Ministry of Education, Youths and Sports

In the formal education setting, the Integrated Sexual and Reproductive/Life Skills syllabus has been mainstreamed in the JSS and SSS syllabus through the efforts of the guidance and counseling HIV/AIDS focal point unit. The syllabus covers science, social studies, physical health education and vocational studies. At the JSS level, 5 core subjects are taken; P.H.E, Agriculture, Home Economics, Social Studies and Science. At the SSS level, the life skills subjects are Agriculture, Biology, Home Economics, Social Studies and Sierra Leonean languages. Sensitization of stakeholders (Community Teachers Association, SMCs and Board of Governors) is on life skills education is on-going.

Funding Arrangement

The research result shows that funding arrangement for life skills is very confused and difficult to analyze. The allocations over the years for which data is available shows mix results: from 4.3% of total budget allocated to MEYS in 2005, there was a drop for two years, 2006 and 2007, followed by an increase by 1.4% to 5.4% in 2008. Of these allocations, government contribution is about 94%.

Budget allocated to the Non-formal Education under the Ministry of Education, Youths and Sports as a whole reveals

Table 12: Allocation to non formal education and life skills 2005 - 2008

Area of Expenditure for life skills	Year							
	2005	% of total MEYS budget	2006	% of total MEYS budget	2007	% of total MEYS budget	2008	% of total MEYS budget
Tech-Voc Institutions	1,868.0	4.3	1,961.4	4.0	2,059.5	4.0	2,023.9	5.4
Physical Health Education	242.3		254.4		267.2		287.0	
Non-Formal Education	177.8		186.7		196.1		295.3	

Source: Budget profile, Ministry of Finance & Economic Development 2005-2008

The perception at the policy level as revealed in the study is that, the national approach to meeting the needs of young and adults for life skills has lagged behind development of other education sectors in terms of emphasis because it has been partly due to the priority in this sector and the cost of materials, training and retaining trainers/ teachers and the training needs of the trainees.

GOAL 4: Achieving a 50% Improvement in levels of Adult Literacy by 2015, especially for Women, and Equitable Access to Basic and continuing Education for all Adults

Government Policy on Adult Literacy

The study obtained information relating to this goal from field data and relevant documents in the Ministry of Education Youths and Sports. From these, evidence of efforts by the Sierra Leone Government on Adult literacy was identified in two legal documents. Firstly there is the National Council for Technical Vocational and other Academic Awards Act 2001. This Council sets examination standards and certifies all certificates in Adult Education and other examinations. Secondly, the promulgation of the Education Act 2004. Part II, Section 2 explicitly states thus:

“In order to make Education accessible to every citizen, and to improve the literacy rate, the Minister shall establish an autonomous council to be known as the Non-formal Education Council to be responsible for developing and implementing programmes for adult and non-formal education in Sierra Leone”.

To date a non-formal education council has been constituted to coordinate and give meaning to the efforts expressed in the legislation. It provides direction on the non formal and adult literacy efforts in Sierra Leone. Under the Directorate of Adult and Non-formal education, the ministry coordinates and monitors and encourages programmes that promote the re-enrolment of “Child-Mother” into the Formal Education System or enrolment into Adult and Non-formal Education System.

The Act alluded to, makes provision for the council which constitute representatives from eleven (11) bodies including UNDP. Under the directorate of Non-formal Education, the Government gives subventions to five (5) partners in Adult Education. These are listed below¹³.

Table 13: Partners in Adult Literacy

No.	Partners
1	Njala University College
2	SLADEA
3	Department of Extra Moral Studies
4	PEASL
5	Partners Women Commission

Source: interview with PADECO coordinator Jan 2009

On the operational side, interview and literature reviewed show that besides monitoring and coordinating adult education in the country, the Directorate in collaboration with INGOs implements adult literacy programmes in the country. There are 223 NGOs and CBOs providing Adult Education and skills training all over the country. For those facilitating centers directly manned by government, there is a complete dominance of volunteer teachers attached who get nothing more than Le 20,000 (approximately \$7.00) a month. Attendance and commitment is therefore expected to be low. Data on the status of these facilities, number of volunteer facilitators and the beneficiaries currently, is hard to come by.

In an attempt to assess the progress made by the Sierra Leone government in the area of providing for adult literacy, the study determined some indicators which will manifest such progress.

Prior to this assessment an earlier national census report of 2004 projected the literacy rate to be 39% for persons aged 10 years and over. The Core Welfare Indicator Questionnaire (CWIQ) survey report 2007, conducted by Statistics Sierra Leone also puts the Adult literacy rate for all persons in Sierra Leone aged 15 years and above to 36.9%. Among this percentage, the adult literacy rate for males was 47.9% and the corresponding rate for females was 27%.¹⁴ The study further concluded that there is a functional relationship between literacy rates and age. Thus the study observed that literacy rate by age was inversely proportional to age. This means that older people are less literate than younger ones¹⁵. Furthermore the study revealed a disparity between the urban areas and the rural parts of the country. On the whole literacy rate for persons living in the urban areas was 62.2% while for those persons living in the rural areas, the rate was 21.3%

The study further concluded that regional variations exist among the four regions in the country as shown in table 13 below.

¹³ Interview with P.O. Koroma – Coordinator PADECO

¹⁴ Core Welfare Indicator Questionnaire Survey 2007, Statistics Sierra Leone

¹⁵ Ibid

Table 14: Regional Adult Literacy Rates

Region	Literacy Rate (%)
Western Area	70.7
South	33
East	29
North	25.1

Source: CWIQ Survey report-2007

However, the results from the 2004 census and the CWIQ studies include ages of children and adolescence. There is no current reliable statistical data on adult literacy in the true sense of the word (persons aged 18 and above).

This study on the progress made on EFA goals obtained information from beneficiaries of Adult Literacy. Out of 250 focus groups across the country, which constituted the sample (which comprised on average 8 Adult Literacy Learners of both sexes) 61 or 24.4% were complete illiterates i.e. were unable to read and write in any language. In 45 focus groups, only one person could read and write in English. The highest number of learners who have advanced in Adult Literacy was only found in one focus group where all eight were somehow able to read and write. In all, out of 250 focus groups, the majority 190 or 76% had less than four learners who can confidently boast of being able to read and write in English.

Government Support to Adult Literacy Institutions in the country - The study revealed from interviews with Adult Literacy institutions that Government support to Adult Literacy Institutions in the country is only limited to subventions to the five literacy providers as listed in table 13 above on a quarterly basis. In addition, there is no evidence of support to other Adult Education providers in the country. In terms of personnel directly financed by government for Adult Literacy promotion, it is difficult to determine how many are on direct pay roll of government. No evidence was obtained on this issue.

The Adult and Non Formal Directorate continues to provide support to Adult Education but this seems to be limited to workshops and training facilitations in collaboration with the Ministry of Education; but the study was able to obtain incomplete data on the attendance, distribution of centers by regions and sex disaggregation of ultimate beneficiaries. The total number of 20,000 was given as the attendance for 2008 nationwide.

On the side on NGOs, the research revealed that their support has been limited to sectoral project initiatives. However, UNESCO support to adult education has been through the IFIT project. The form and quantum of which the Directorate was unable to provide any data to the researcher.

Furthermore, the study identified a major challenge facing adult education is the Directorate's attempt to implement adult literacy programmes without any adequate data on the relevance of the programmes and beneficiaries etc. As a consequence of the above situation, there is no reliable evidence to determine the impact of government effort on adult education in terms of enrolment, beneficiaries, materials used, methodology employed, provision of specialized training for tutors and a focus mechanism and structure to strategize for improvement.

The research found too that this situation obtains probably because of the two prong approach which underpin reduction of illiteracy in the country: more resource allocation to lower age sectors and institutional expansion and strengthening, so that by such expansion, the high illiteracy rate at the older population level will be gradually eliminated

Budget Allocation to Adult Literacy Education – the study revealed that Budget allocation to Adult Literacy has not been consistent. Table 15 below gives the allocations in the years for which information was available

Table 15: Budget allocation to Adult Education

Fiscal Year	Amount (Le'm)	% of Total Education budget
2005	177.8	0.07
2006	186.7	-
2007	196.1	-
2008	295.3	0.07

Source: Budget profile, Ministry of Finance & Economic Development 2005-2008

On the whole, budget allocation to the relevant sub units and facilities for non formal adult literacy all over the country is inadequate and irregular. Interviews conducted with the responsible ministry and NGO officials revealed a big difference between what is budgeted to adult education and what is actually received as actual monies transferred to this sector. Apart from the fact that budget figures are projected amounts, there is the endemic problem of lack of access to such allocation and provision of such access in relation to needs. In fact, the current practice adduced from interviews is that, the ministry gives financial support to the listed partners in terms of support on an arbitrary and irregular basis.

Of the 5 partners supported by Government, interview with PADECO head which is the umbrella organization for all five shows inadequate government funding.

Table 14 below shows the amount of government allocation compared with the contribution of other donors for period 2008 for which data was available.

Table 16: Partner contribution to Adult Literacy for the year 2008

Organization	SLG (Le)	Other Sources (Le)	% of Govt. contribution to adult literacy fund of partners	No. of Adult Literacy Centers/*Branches
PEA	33,000,000	183,000,000	18	21*
SLADEA	24,000,000	480,000,000	5	13*
PADECO	24,000,000	121,000,000	19.83	53
PWC	18,000,000	8,000,000	225	
Njala University College	N/A	N/A		

Source: Fact sheets of PEA, PWC, SLADEA and interview with PADECO Coordinator February 2009

From the table above, government's contribution to the provision of adult literacy has not exceeded 20% except PWC which has been the highest.

Non State Providers of adult literacy

Primary data obtained from 114 non state providers of adult education and from 250 focus groups all over the country produced the following results.

Distribution of non state providers – on the distribution of non state adult literacy providers, primary research data of the study shows that there is an uneven distribution of non state providers of adult literacy. Out of the 223 national providers nation-wide, when 50% (114) was randomly selected, about 37.8% is allocated in the North shown in table 16 below. Therefore, efforts by NGOs to correct the illiteracy rate in the country are directed to the appropriate region i.e. base on needs. See table 14 Adult Literacy Rates.

Table 17: Distribution of non state providers of adult literacy in Sierra Leone

Region	Distribution of Literacy Providers	Percentage
Western Area	21	18.9
Eastern	22	19.8
Northern	42	37.8
Southern	26	23.4
Total	111	99.9

Source: Field data – Assessment of progress on EFA goals, Dec. 2008

Assistance from Government to non state providers – the capacity of NGOs providing adult education can be improved if the state as well can make meaningful contribution; finance and material in a systematic manner to them. Primary data obtained from the field revealed that only 36% gets such assistance. 64% reported using own resources and support from INGOs. The form of support reported was cash (13.5%), learning materials and furniture (86.5%).

Financial support to Adult Literacy Providers - on financial support, whether such financial support was adequate or not the research result shows that the majority 98 of the 111 respondents to this question all over the country said they have inadequate funding to carry out their work. The majority of the regions registered an average of 89% inadequate funding. There are however disparities in the regional spread as shown below:

Table 18: Adequacy/ inadequacy of financial support distribution

	East		North		South		West	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Adequate	2	9.1	3	8.3	3	11.5	5	23.8
Inadequate	20	90.9	33	91.7	23	88.5	16	76.2
Total	22	100	36	100	26	100	21	100

Source: Field data – Assessment of progress on EFA goals, Dec. 2008

Current trend in Adult Literacy as seen by non state providers – the trend in adult literacy was observed to be directly proportional to the investment in it. On this, Out of 111 respondents 57.7% of non state providers believe that the trend of adult education in the country is declining

steadily while 42.3% saw the trend as expanding. The analysis further scoped the reasons for the apparent decline. Six reasons were given by the 57.7% who saw the trend as declining. These reasons are shown in the table 18 below.

Table 19: Reasons for decline in adult literacy

No	Adult Literacy	
1	Quick Reward not forthcoming	9
2	Irregular support from donor agencies	8
3	Lack of incentives for facilitators	8
4	Insufficient learning materials	4
5	Financial constraints	7
6	Domestic engagement of learners	6

Source: Field data – Assessment of progress on EFA goals, Dec. 2008

The most important reason as identified by respondent is that Quick Reward for Learners is not forthcoming. The result shows declining interest as directly related to the apparent delink between adult literacy methodology and androgogy which can give rise to such situation. This constitutes a major challenge to adult literacy planners and providers.

Nature of Adult Literacy Provided - The research also looked at the nature of adult literacy provided in order to determine the efficacy of the impact. From analysis of the field data collected from non state providers, the result shows that 86.5% of adult literacy provided by the 111 is a combination of adult literacy, numeracy and other skills (skills training – crafts, dyeing, weaving etc). 12.6% provided only adult literacy and numeracy. A negligible 0.9% provided only pure adult literacy-reading and writing.

Availability of specialized teaching and learning materials – this is necessary if the programme is to be successful because adults learn in different ways and environments from children. With this the study revealed that 66.7% of the 111 respondents admitted having specialized teaching and learning materials while about 33.3% developed any material for themselves whether suitable or not. To further qualify this, of those who admitted having such specialized teaching materials only 51.4% were able to display samples. In effect, where the lack of sample is evidence of unavailability of specialized teaching materials, it could be concluded that 48.6% of all non state literacy providers have no access to suitable teaching and learning materials for adult learners.

Attendance and Gender Disparity in Appreciation of Adult Literacy – Since consistent statistics has shown a relative high illiteracy among women, the study tried to determine the gender disparity non-state providers have observed in their appreciation of adult literacy. 73% of the non state providers reported more females than males were reported to appreciate adult literacy. Only 26.1% of respondents affirmed higher male appreciation. This was reflected in the number of female attendance in literacy classes, 67.6% responded confirmed higher female regular attendance. The study was unable to find any data in terms of gender disaggregation of adult literacy learners even though the first hand data obtained in the field from focus groups discovered more female attendance than men. In the validation of the report, it was pointed out that this phenomenon exists because women are motivated by the provision of micro credit to all women who attend adult literacy classes on the one hand, and on the other, men attend adult

literacy classes on a non sustained basis which makes it impossible to factor them into the attendance calculation. This opportunistic attendance of men usually means they attend just to be able to sign their names or just read their children’s report cards after which they leave.

Awareness of Adult Literacy Providers – the Awareness of the existence of literacy providers was necessary to determine how to motivate learners/ availability of opportunity to seek knowledge. The research found out that 76.8% were aware and only 23.2% were unaware of this opportunity for adult learning. There is also a direct relationship between knowledge about the opportunity to learn by identifying the opportunities available through adult literacy providers. In identifying non state adult literacy providers, 19 providers were named across the country as being providers of adult literacy by all focus groups. Of these, the best well known are 1st SLADEA, 2nd PLAN Sierra Leone, 3rd Action Aid. The rest was shared by 16 other organizations. SLADEA focuses in facilitating functional literacy, skills training and promotes civic awareness and Human Rights through the following: provision of Basic Education, Ecological promotion, skills training for youths, teaching/learning materials production, increasing women’s participation in development, promoting peace education, HIV/AIDS Education and establishing continuing education centers. **The focuses of PLAN Sierra Leone and Action Aid are to be filled by Patrick Zombo**

Willingness to read and write – even when the opportunity provided for adult literacy in the immediate environment and the learners know about it, the critical factor is the peoples willingness such facilities. On this issue the research results revealed that Out of the 250 focus groups, 85.2% were willing to learn 8% responded not willing. Of the number who were not willing to learn, seven important reasons were adduced by various focus groups with varying frequencies as ranked below in the table 20.

Table 20: Reasons for not attending Adult Literacy Classes

Reason	Frequency	Rank
Family commitment	72	1 st
No time	34	2 nd
Too old to learn	27	3 rd
Distance to learning center	20	4 th
Not allowed by husband	12	5 th
Ineffectiveness of programme including no motivation	5	6 th
Petty trading	2	7 th

Source: Field data – Assessment of progress on EFA goals, Dec. 2008

Payment for Adult Literacy classes - When adults pay for classes for which they apparently derive no immediate benefit, they are likely to retreat from the venture, especially when they are generally poor. The research result shows that 58.0% of all adult literacy classes are free, 20.4% pay cash for such classes, while another 6.4% pay in cash and kind. Only 3.6% pay in kind.

Arrangement for showing progress in Adult Literacy classes - One important way of motivating adult learners is to publicly or otherwise indicate that they have made some progress. All 250 focus stated that their efforts are acknowledge in some form as listed in table 21 below.

Table 21: Adult Literacy classes arrangement

Arrangement	Frequency	Percentage
We are given certificates in public	99	56.6
We are just told	36	20.6
Both	40	22.9
Total	175	100.1

Source: Field data – Assessment of progress on EFA goals, Dec. 2008

Goal 5: Eliminating Gender Disparities in Primary and Secondary Education by 2005, and achieving Gender Equality by 2015 with a focus on ensuring Girls full and equal access to and achievement of Basic Education of good quality.

This section of the survey investigates efforts made by government to promote equal opportunity for both boys and girls to achieve basic education of good quality. These are determined along the following indicators: legal and policy framework; implementation of legal and policy frameworks.

The result from consulting relevant documentation and interviews with Ministry of Education officials shows that government has established the legal framework as well as put some practical structures in place. First, Basic Education Act 2004 makes Basic Education compulsory (see Section 3, (2)). Furthermore, the same Act provides under (4) which states “A parent, including a guardian, who neglects to send his child to school for Basic Education commits an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding Le 500,000.00 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year or to both such fine and imprisonment”. Also, section 4 (1) (a,b,c) emphasizes the creation of conducive environment for separate institutions for boys and girls.

The first practical step taken by government is in the form of The girl child education support programme -an affirmative action - in the East and Northern regions where girl child attendance was very low - that supports response to addressing the gender disparities in primary schools through the provision of a fee free system; and material support to the girl child to motivate their increased enrolment and retention.

Efforts to eliminate gender disparity

Another plan intended by government was to increase the number of girl mothers back to school which was a government proposed strategy to eliminate gender disparity was to get girl mothers back to school. This was meant to go around the high dropout rate as a result of girl pregnancies recorded in the upper levels of primary schools and the junior secondary. There is no evidence from the study through recorded data of discrimination against the girl mother returning to schools. At the same time there is no evidence of the quantum of girl mothers who have accessed such facility.

Government also committed itself to eliminate gender disparity in access to education by increase in girls SSS – tertiary education transition rate. The research found no evidence of any mechanism to make this happen.

Government also committed itself to creating a friendly atmosphere for the girl child to be attending school¹⁶. The research further showed that by passing the Child Right Bill in 2007 and the HIV/AIDS Bill 2008 has succeeded in creating the legal framework that eliminates abuse of the girl child attending school. Some good progress has also been made in terms of looking at punitive measures for violators. What remain still to be done to a large extent is raising the awareness levels of communities about the provisions contained in these Acts so the vulnerable children in secluded communities can also be protected at that level.

The study further revealed evidence that there have been investment in the expansion and training of teachers (particularly females) to serve in the schools to act as role models in the classroom as well as to make such learning environment girl friendly. Supporting evidence of this strategy is found in the enrolment and possible recruitment of female teachers employed by government.

On enrolment, the survey found out that in 2000 there were 2,603 female teachers in all 6 teacher training colleges in the country. In 2006/07, for which data is available, this has grown to 4,250 indicating an increase of about **30.8%**. However, there is a big gap in the data available on number of female teachers actually serving in the schools for the periods 2002/03, 2003/04, 2005/06, 2006/07, 2007/08. The number of female teachers in schools for the period 2004/05 (only available data) is given in table 21 below.

Table 22: Number of female teachers in school 2004/05

Level	Total no. of teachers	No. of female teachers	% of total teachers
Primary	19,699	6,164	31.3
Secondary	6,483	1,787	26.6

Source: Inspectorate Division, Ministry of Education, Youths and Sports

From the data provided by the inspectorate division of the Ministry of Education, the growth in number of female teachers cannot be determined as there were no figures available; but by 2004/05, out of a total of 26,182 primary and secondary school teachers there were 7,951 female teachers representing 30.4% of the total number of teachers. The tables (22 & 23) below show the regional variations of female teachers in both primary and secondary in relation to training and qualification.

Table 23: Regional distribution of Female Teacher 2004 /2005 Primary Schools

Region	Qualified	Percentage	Unqualified	Percentage
North	828	19.1	647	35.2
South	965	22.3	453	24.7
East	1079	24.9	364	19.8
West	1456	33.6	372	20.3
Total	4,328	99.9	1,836	100

Source: Inspectorate Division, Ministry of Education, Youths and Sports

¹⁶ see page 28 of Education Sector Plan

From the table above it can be observed that the northern region holds the least number of qualified teachers and a correspondingly high number of unqualified teachers.

Table 24: Regional distribution of Female Teachers 2004 / 2005 Secondary Schools

Region	Qualified	Percentage	Unqualified	Percentage
North	94	5.6	11	10.1
South	163	9.7	13	11.9
East	852	50.8	10	9.2
West	569	33.9	75	68.8
Total	1,678	100	109	100

Source: Inspectorate Division, Ministry of Education, Youths and Sports

At Tech/Voc level (2004/2005) for which data is available, 50.2% or 578 out of 1,151 total number of teachers are female. Though in the year 2004/5 for which data is available there was some evidence in the reduction gender disparity among teachers serving at the TECH –VOC level on national basis, regional disparity were however does evident.

Table25 Regional distribution of female teachers

Region	Female Teachers	Percentage
North	213	36.9
South	145	25.1
East	110	19.0
West	110	19.0
Total	578	100

Source: Inspectorate Division, Ministry of Education, Youths and Sports

The Sierra Leone Government also stated in the ESP that a means of reducing gender disparity is to increase the number of girls receiving sponsorship in post JSS. The research was unable to discover any evidence of such sponsorship.

Another measure used by government to reduce gender disparity for basic education was to increase the enrolment of girls up to JSS 3. There is evidence that the number of girls accessing primary schools has increased in the years 2000/01, 2004/05 and 2006/07 academic years for which data is available i.e.increase in number of girls accessing primary schools.

Table 26: Percentage increase in girls accessing primary school

Academic year	Total No. of girls	Percentage increase
2000/01	230,384	
2004/05	581,386	60.4
2006/07	678,508	7.5

Source: Inspectorate Division, Ministry of Education, Youths and Sports

From the table above and in terms of real figures, there has been an over-whelming increase (nearly tripling) from 2000/01 to 2006/07 in the number of girl children now accessing primary school.

The Government decision to offer free primary education and free Basic Education Certificate Examination fees led to primary school enrolment to overwhelmingly increase for girls. However, JSS completion rate is still low by **75%**. There is therefore no significant progress in closing the gender gap at the post JSS level which constitutes the upper tier of universal primary education in Sierra Leone.

GOAL 6 : Improvement in all Aspects of Quality OF Education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy an essential life skills

Since 2000 when the Sierra Leone Government became a signatory to the Dakar World Forum which puts emphasis on the improvement in all aspects of quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all especially literacy numeracy and life skills. The progress made is determined by the following indicators in this study.

On the aspect of the quality of education, the study looked at

The adequacy of the learning environment

In examining the adequacy of learning environment, the study looked at the pupil teacher ratio as well as learning space within the 6-3 (the two first tiers in the educational system). The study revealed that there is inadequate space to accommodate the expanding enrolment rate at primary and JSS levels. The periods 2000/1 to 2006/7 saw an enrolment growth from 481,629 in 2000/01 to 1,292,072 in 2004/05 then to 1,422,238 in 2006/7¹⁷ pupils in primary schools. With only 5016 (2006/7) primary schools structures countrywide; this translates to the average of 284 pupils per school in 2006/7. This calculation is based on the assumption that all schools have classes from P1 to P6 which is not the case because no data was presented on the number of schools and the level of classes. The research therefore inferred from these circumstances that there is a marked level of overcrowding in schools thereby affecting the quality of learning in such an overcrowded environment. To add to this, in 2006 the country status report puts to 240,000 the number of out of school children of school going age.

The same situation was observed at the JSS level, where the structures available are dwarfed by the average of 75% transition rate of pupils moving from primary schools to JSS¹⁸. At this level there are only 412¹⁹ schools to accommodate the approximately 75% of pupils in transition amounting to 1,066,679 in 2006/7. The implication for this is that at this level too there is overcrowding amounting to approximately 284 pupils per JSS 1 class per school, which adversely affects the quality of learning. From interview conducted with the Ministry of Education Officials, Basic Education Commission, it was revealed that the problem is mitigated by the introduction of the afternoon shift system with autonomous administration to lessen the burden on staff and administrators. However the effectiveness of the afternoon shifts remains to be proven²⁰.

¹⁷ See pg 23 Education Sector Plan

¹⁸ Country Status Report 2006

¹⁹ Education Management Information System 2006/7

²⁰ Interview with parent (Focus Group Discussions)

Distance to Schools

On proximity to school, Government claims to have addressed the issue by the construction of primary schools in various locations and JSS in all chiefdom headquarter towns. This may have somewhat improved the problem of accessibility in terms of distance to school. The impact of addressing access in terms of distance however still remains to be seen. The Education Resource Tracking survey (2008) of the Education For All Coalition puts on average time taken to schools to be 45 minutes. There is also no evidence of the spread of schools and the opportunity this may have had in responding to the issue of density of school going age in any given locality.

Teacher effectiveness

The teacher is a critical factor in determining effective learning. The teacher's effectiveness depends very much on the work load and the number of children he has to teach within a given space and time. The preceding factors are ultimately influenced by the individual teacher's motivation which principally hinge on remuneration, expectations and training facilities. On the number of children being taught at a given time and space, the study found out that at the primary level, the pupil teacher ratio is recorded as 67:1²¹ while the government's aspirational goal is put to 45:1²². In reality, at the time of this study, it was revealed from documentation provided by the inspectorate unit and Education Management Information System that the total number of teachers at the primary school level recorded was 23,409 in 2006/7, an expansion from 13,381 in 2000/1. The general pupil teacher ratio within this period is calculated to give 61:1. This does not take into account the number of qualified teachers who can add more quality to the learning environment. In 2004/5 however there was a pupil qualified teacher ratio of 108:1. At this time the qualified teacher population constituted about 61.5% out of a total number of 11,876. At the JSS level the total number of teachers is given as 4,389²³. The pupil teacher ratio at this level is about 40:1. This does not disaggregate trained and qualified and untrained and unqualified teachers.

The teacher motivational environment has not been positive as admitted by government in the ESP document. This is evident by high attrition rate of trained teachers as the service remains unattractive. Teacher condition of service and salary payment has been generally unpredictable particularly for the newly recruited teachers²⁴. Furthermore, there is no code of conduct for the teaching service to determine teacher commitment and progress for overall quality.

Adequacy of learning materials

The quality of education is equally affected by the availability of teaching and learning materials. In this arrangement government proposed in it Education Sector Plan. The provision of adequate quality teaching and learning materials is a serious issue in striving towards the accomplishment of quality primary education. The Ministry of Education proposed to provide core text books at a 1:1 ratio as a policy of government. The objective is to provide books in sufficient quantity that

²¹ Education Sector Plan

²² Basic Education Secretariat - Basic Demographic Socio Economic and health data 2008. Pg 13

²³

²⁴ The financial year does not coincide with the academic year: teacher recruited in September have to wait until February the other year to know whether they can get paid.

each child will have a set and readers to not only use in school but to take home. There are serious challenges with the implementation of this policy.

This study revealed through consulting relevant data that the provision of learning materials in primary school still poses a challenge to quality basic education. The EFA coalition study on tracking budget resource at the beneficiary level revealed the inadequacy of these text books supplied and received by schools. Out of the total number of 314 primary schools sampled for the survey, 71.6% claimed the books were inadequate. The total number of 1,884 pupils interviewed, 88.9% acknowledged having text books provided by government free of cost to be used in school. However, the same interview revealed that 96.7% of respondents claimed the pupil text book ratio is 3:1. In this same study, the report showed that 100% of pupils responded the books are not meant to be taken home. In the SABABU Project constructed schools, there is much improvement as one pupil is allocated to one core text book. But such schools are few and the very exercise discriminates against children that do not have the facility in their area.

Opportunities for expansion and training of teachers and adult literacy facilitators

The number of teacher training institutions in the country could be an indicator for opportunities for expansion and training of teachers, hence contribute to the quality of learning generally. The research survey revealed that there are seven teacher training institutions in the country. The distribution of these institutions are shown in the table below.

Table 27: Teacher training institutions in the country

Name of Institution	Region	Level for which teachers are trained
MMCET	Western Area	JSS and SSS
Freetown Teachers college	Western Area	Primary and JSS
Fourah Bay College (Teacher Education Department)	Western Area	SSS
Northern Polytechnic	North	Primary and JSS
Port Loko Teachers College	North	Primary and JSS
Njala University (Faculty of teacher education)	South	Primary , JSS and SSS
Eastern polytechnic	East	Primary and JSS

Source: Inspectorate Division, Ministry of Education, Youths and Sports

From the table above, there is evidence that every region has a teacher training institution in the country and all of them are subvented by government. However, it was discovered in discussion with teachers in the provinces that because of the shortage of qualified teachers, especially in the provinces, some teachers trained to teach at the primary level, do teach at the JSS level. This could not be justified by the Ministry of Education. This state of affairs as is purported to prevail, affects quality because of the gap in competencies of those who are trained for a different level but are inadvertently engaged at a much higher level.

Even when teachers are trained in all the teacher training institutions identified in table 26, qualified teacher recruitment is endemically faced with the problem of replacement opportunity (ceiling on teacher recruitment). The recruitment process has been based by and large on teacher replacement which limits the room for the opportunity of expansion in real terms in the number of qualified teacher.

A new phenomenon that has emerged in terms of responding to opportunities for expansion and training of teachers at the primary levels is the volunteer/ para teacher. These have neither qualification nor training but find themselves attracted to the school because of the limited capacity they have within remote local environments, the need for teachers at that level and their resident status in such communities. These are largely unpaid community teachers who survive by community gestures in appreciation of their services but nonetheless stay in the classroom because they have the chance of benefitting from distance education programmes offered by the Ministry of Education and other education sector partners. The impact on the quality has not been determined in terms of learning outcomes, but there is a direct relationship between the output of such teachers and pupils performance.

Attaining Excellence in Basic Education

On the issue of ensuring excellence that recognizes learning outcomes the following were used to determine this.

Pass rate at class exams, pass rate at the National Primary School Examinations (NPSE), Junior Secondary School Exams,

Table 28: Pass rates at NPSE

Year	sat	Pass	% pass
2002	34931	28181	81
2003	46861	37117	79%
2004	61148	48077	79%
2005	79380	55838	71.9%
2006	87763	63917	73
2007	98623	69774	72.5

Source: Basic education Commission secretariat Feb 2009

The table above shows that while the number of candidates is steadily increasing, the number of passes is steadily decreasing -learning outcomes declining.

Table 29: JSS pass rate in Basic Education Certificate Examination

Year	Sat	Passes SSS WASSCE	Pass for SSS Tech/Voc		Pass according to 6-3-3-4 Policy	
			4 + E/M SSS Tech Voc	5 - E/M SSS Tech/Voc	Total Pass- All categories	% Pass
2002	24,517	8,150	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2003	29,693	11,322	1,069	1,916	14,307	48.2
2004	32,164	12,228	1,563	2,819	16,610	51.6
2005	37,798	17,492	1,929	2,789	22,210	58.8
2006	43,750	18,610	3,785	1,817	24,212	55.3
2007	50,202	22,658	2,267	2,571	27,496	54.8
2008	59,419	22,543	3,478	1,182	27,203	45.8

Source: Basic education Commission secretariat Feb 2009

The average % pass over the years for which data is available is 52.4%

Figure 1: Passes for SSS all categories

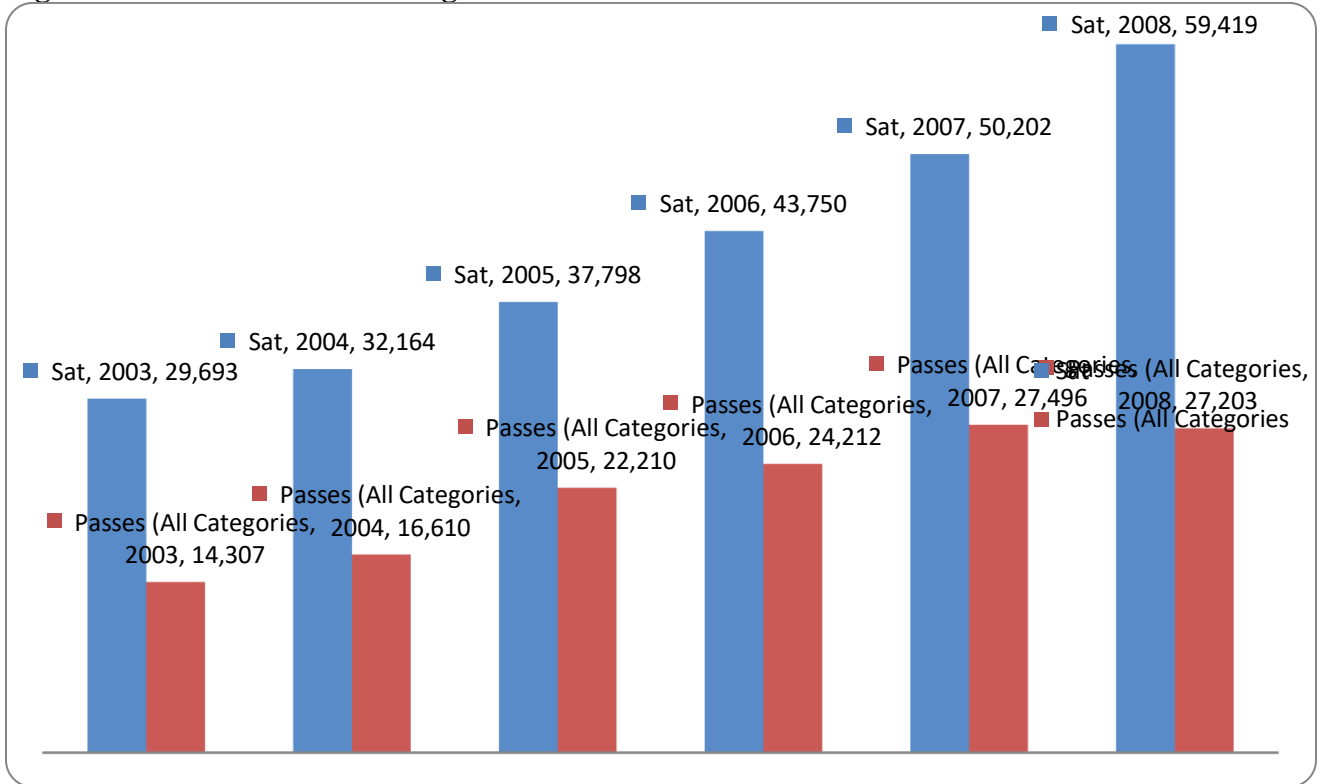
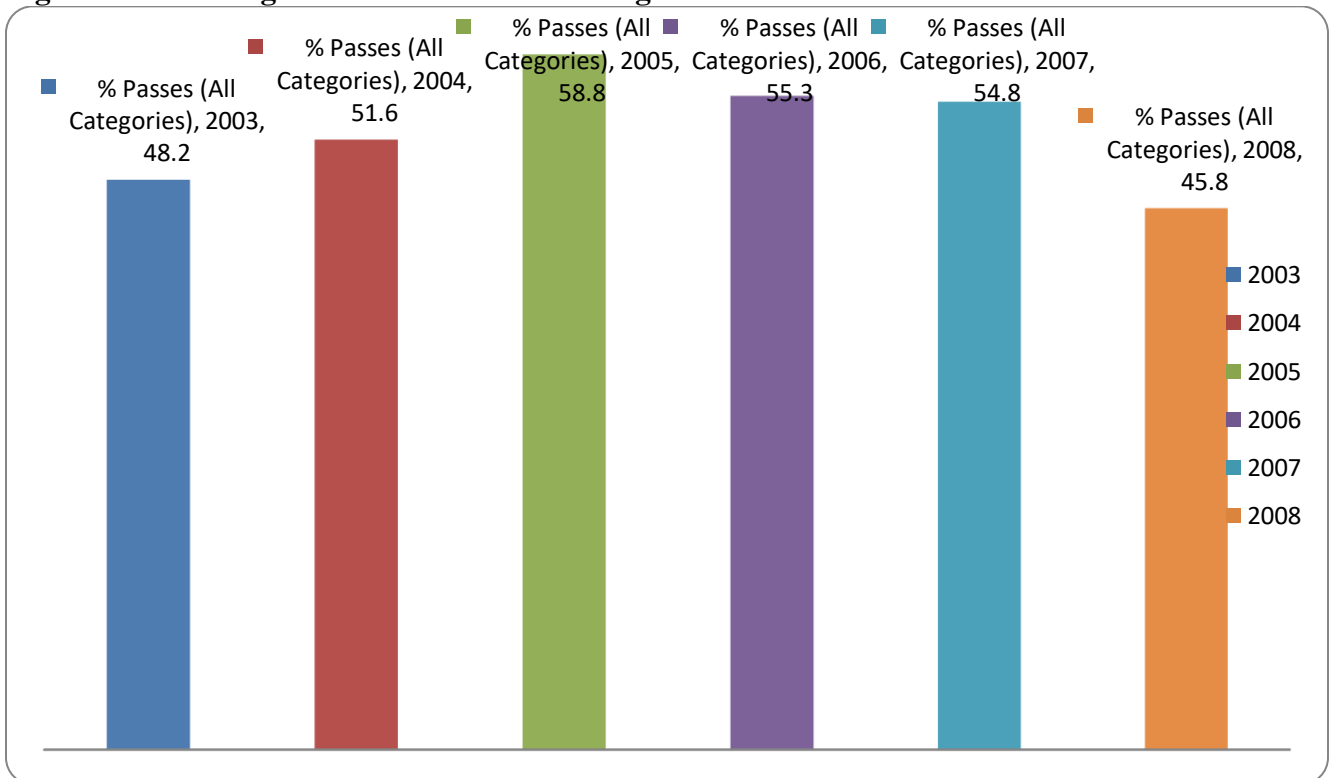


Figure 2: Percentage Passes for SSS at all categories



From the table above it can be deduced that of all those who took the exam on average 47.6% fail every year. Therefore, the output as learning outcome is not encouraging taken into consideration the length to which basic education secretariat goes just to ensure that as many pupils as possible make the pass grade.

Teacher Training in the country

Table 30: Total number of Qualified teachers

Year	Level	Total No. of teachers	No. of Qualified teachers	% of Qualified teachers
2000/01	Primary	13,381	8,492	63.5
	JSS & SSS	4,921	3,501	71.1
2004/05	Primary	19,316	11,876	61.5
	JSS & SSS	2,425	2,128	87.8
2006/07	Primary	23,409	N/A	N/A
	JSS & SSS & Tech Voc	8,879	N/A	N/A

From the table above, the number of qualified teachers for basic education grew by 14.4% within the years 2000/01 – 2004/05 for which data is available. Despite the growth in the total number of teachers from 2000/01 to 2006/07 i.e. 18,302 to 32,288, the percentage of growth of qualified teachers can not be determined because of incomplete data.

Gap in Number of Teachers

The short fall in the number of teachers can not be determined by this study because of incomplete data provided by the ministry officials and documents provided. However, base on the number of teachers from primary to SSS for the period 2006/07 for which data is available, the target ratio of 45:1 i.e. has not been achieved. With 32,288 teachers, qualified or not, serving the 1, 548,899 pupils, there is a short fall of 2,132 teachers. The implication is that the present ratio admitted by government is 61:1 leading to over crowding of classrooms and ineffectiveness of learning because teachers can not give assignments and mark all the papers in especially core subject areas as English Language and Mathematics.

Pupil Teacher Ratio in Regions

The research found no data on pupil teacher ratio on regional basis. As a consequence of this lack of data, the study could not determine any effort by government to close the regional disparity.

Percentage of Children missing out of Education

For the period for which data was made available (2004/05), there were 30% of children missing out of education (See Chap 4 pg 22 of Education Sector Project Report).

Reasons for 30% of children missing out of education

Primary data could not verify the main reasons why parents do not send their children to school even though they are of school going age. The government officials too of MEYS did answer the question (see questionnaire for state providers, question 14 pg 7).

Government practical steps to ensure that more children accessed education

Without identifying the reasons why parents do not send their children to school, there is evidence that government is making effort to increase enrolment.

“in order to achieve UPE by 2015, the GoSL intends expanding facilities to cater not only for the out-of-school children being attracted into school but also for anticipated changes in enrolment due to an increasingly positive attitudes towards schooling. As the GoSL intends achieving UPE of quality it will up grade existing facilities, provide textbooks and teaching/learning materials and increase the number of teachers”.

Ratio of boys to girls in school

The research also observed that there is a disparity in the ratio of boys to girls in schools.

Table 31: Ratio of boys to girls in schools

Years	Pre-school		Primary school		JSS	
	Boys/Girls	Boys/Girls	Boys/Girls	Boys/Girls	Boys/Girls	Boys/Girls
2000/2001	N/A	N/A	323,924	230,384	37,411	23,440
2002/2003	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2003/2004	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2004/2005	N/A	N/A	709,869	581,386	19,222	25,350
2005/2006	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2006/2007	11,989	12,818	693,730	628,508	103,628	71,239
2007/2008	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Primary School

Enrolment of boys dropped between 2004 / 2005 to 2006/2007 from 709,869 to 693,730. This shows a decrease of 16,139 or 2.3%. For the girls, there was an increase in enrolment from 581,386 in 2004/2005 to 628,508 in 2006 / 2007. An increase of 47,122 or 7.5%.

JSS Level

Enrolment for boys increased from 19,222 in 2004 / 2005 to 103,628 in 2006/2007. This represents an increase of 84,406 or 81.5%. For the girls' enrolment, over the same period increased from 25,350 to 72,239. An increase of 46,889 or 64.9%. The ratio of girls to boys is 1:15

3.0 CONCLUSIONS

In assessing the Sierra Leone Government's progress on the six EFA Goals, information obtained for both primary and secondary sources and analyzed have led to the following conclusions:

First, the GoSL has put in place the necessary enabling environment to ensure that the EFA Goals are worked towards and achieved. This is evident in a series of legislations each progressively strengthening its predecessor for the ultimate realization of the goals. The list of such legislation evidence includes:

- 1) Tertiary Education Act 2001 which was meant to develop tertiary education so that teachers and other personnel can be provided for in basic education. As a supporting tool, the TEC was established which has functions such as advising the government on tertiary education, fund raising for the sector, ensuring relevance of programmes offered, ensuring equity in admission, recommending modifications in conditions of service and ensuring parity in appointments and promotions of staff.
- 2) The polytechnic Act 2001 which established polytechnic institutions and the polytechnic councils
- 3) The National Council for Tech Voc and Other Academic Awards Act 2001 allowed validation and certification of awards in technical and vocational education and teacher training.
- 4) The 2004 Education Act which made provision for compulsory primary education and criminalizing the act of not sending children to school.
- 5) The University Act 2004 created room for the expansion in the university to further increase quality manpower in the country's education system.
- 6) The Child Right Bills 2007 which above all else protect particularly the girl child in school by way of reducing chances of abuse from teachers.

Thus, legal frame works have been followed by practical steps taken by government to ensure that the 6 EFA Goals are achieved by 2015. However, a close look at the operational side of the policies and legal frame work produces a mixture of successes, challenges and unfortunately serious gaps which need to be addressed. These are stated below as a form of conclusion.

Goal 1: Expanding and Improving Early Childhood Care and education especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children

- Until 2005, pre primary school education laid outside the formal system of Education and as a consequence, the sector did not receive the kind of support one would expect as a way of expanding and improving early childhood care. Even though after 2005 government made it a policy that every primary school should have attached to it a pre primary facility, the study found no evidence of the number of schools complying with this policy. What was evident was that government support to early childhood care and education was limited to the provision of school subsidy to some nursery schools, and even with these, there was no clear cut criterion for accessing such support. Furthermore, the study discovered no evidence of the existence of teacher training institution or curriculum catering for nursery teachers which are a specialized field I teacher education.

At primary level, there has been an increase in enrolment by 61.6% from 2000/01-2006/07 for which data is available.

- In providing learning environment for pupils, the number of primary schools has also expanded from 2,676 in 2000/01 to 5,016 in 2006/07. This represents an increase of 46.7%. Nonetheless, there are still 30% of children of school going age not accessing school.
- In terms of financial support to this system, the study discovered an apparent decrease of -8.73% within the period 2004/05 to 2007/08. Furthermore, in the critical year 2008 when financial resources for primary education for the 19 local councils was devolved, the projected budget was Le46,115.5Bn, the actual that was made available was Le16,665.6Bn for all four quarters. This represents a short fall of Le29,449.9Bn or 63.9%.
- The number of staff that should provide for the learning needs of children in primary schools has expanded from 13,000 in 2000/01 to 19,316 in 2004/05. However, the study reveals that the number of qualified staff for primary schools have only marginally expanded (61.4% to 61.5%) in the period under review.
- Pass rate from primary schools have been fluctuating from 2000/01 and 2006/07. Thus, though 81% passed in 2001/02, the study observed a gradual decline to 72.5 % in 2007/08.

Goal 2: Ensuring that in year 2015, all children, particularly Girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities have access to complete fee free and compulsory Primary Education of good quality.

On this goal, the study found evidence that government has taken several practical steps such as the fee free primary schools, affirmative action for the girl child in the North and eastern regions of the country and school feeding programmes for targeted schools.

- That government supply of textbooks and school subsidy of \$2 (at an exchange rate of Le3,000) per pupil per academic year has led to increase in girl child enrolment everywhere. However, the study further found out that this amount is too small, and that the payment is always in arrears of one term. This situation creates the demand for extra charges by school authorities to be able to run the schools even though such demands contravene government's avowed policy.
- The study revealed an expansion in the enrolment of the girl child from 44.9% in 2001/02 to 46.2% in 2005/06 for the periods for which data is available.
- Government effort to reduce the burden of education on parents for the disadvantaged and poor still faces the challenges of extra charges which dwarfs by comparison with government's contribution. This appears to defeat government intension of expanding primary school education by government undertaking most of the expenditure.
- There is insufficiency in space in schools. This is more evident in the urban areas than in the rural areas.

- That more girls than boys are dropping out of school.

Goal 3: Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes.

For this goal, the study found that despite the enactment of laws to ensure that this becomes a reality, life skills education faces the major problem of being under resourced to carry out the necessary personnel preparation to make this goal a reality.

- Evidence exists however that tech/voc enrolment of girls and women have increased by 38.8% between 2000/01 and 2006/07.
- The study further revealed that there exists a large failure rate of girls (87% for the SSS WASSCE) for the periods 2005 – 2008 in the BECE which would require that this number accesses facilities in life skills education and vocational training. However, only 112 such tech/voc exists and they are highly under resourced. Furthermore, there is no evidence of the national spread which would allow any intervention to be based on sound statistics impossible.
- Financial allocation to life skills and vocational training is arbitrary, and resources are only available on paper: as such they are only accessed in ad hoc manner by necessary the authorities in the directorate. The study revealed that this abnormally had to do more with the complicated budgetary process and the over reliance on budgetary support from donor partners who make commitments but are never able to comply in time. Since allocation to MEYS is projected and predicated on donor contribution, unavailability of resources in time unfortunately ensures that planned programmes are often derailed or implemented haphazardly.
- The study further revealed that there is emphasis on the production of suitable teaching and learning materials (with over reliance on donor support) but little effort to train the specialized staff to use these materials and even less to distribute them.
- The study found no evidence of government carrying out its commitments to provide teaching and operational learning centers in all parts of the country.
- There has been little or no sign of increasing in financial allocations out of the MEYS budget to non formal and life skills.

- Increased support to livelihood skills cannot be determined from the number of schools government claim to have constructed because there are no figures in those accessing those facilities over the years.

Goal 4: Achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to Basic and continuing education for all adults

The study found no evidence of government's concerted effort to address adult literacy. Thus:

- Budget allocation for the period 2005 to 2008 has never been more than 0.07% of the MEYS budget in any single year even though the Bamako Conference committed all member states to 3% of the education budget.
- Also, the study reveals that there is over reliance on partner activity to attain accelerated adult education in the country, and most of these partners have inadequate resources in terms of finance, trained personnel and other adult learning materials.
- In addition, the minimal effort of these INGOs seems to be directed more to regions of the country with high illiteracy.
- 57.7% of all non state providers believed the adult literacy is not expanding in the country.
- On the motivation of adults to learn, 67.6% of all adult learners are women.
- The study further revealed that 85.2% of adults are willing to take part in adult literacy but men need a form of motivation just as women are getting micro credit as one such, to be able to participate more.
- On literacy classes, only 30.4% of adult learners attending adult literacy pay in some form.
- The study further revealed that at present there are 20,000 adults attending literacy classes all over the country. But this figure provided by the Directorate of adult non formal education is of little value for any planning purpose since it is not disaggregated by region, district, and sex.
- Even though there are 223 Non State providers of adult literacy in the country, only 5 such non state providers are being supported by the government by way of annual subventions quite unrelated in quantum to the needs of such organizations.

Goal 5: Eliminating Gender Disparities In Primary And Secondary Education By 2005, And Achieving Gender Equality Y 2015 With A Focus Of Ensuring Girls Full And Equal Access To And Achievement Of Basic Education Of Good Quality

- The study revealed that government has made some effort to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary school education. Indeed, the study found no evidence of government support to the discrimination against the girl child to access education in the statutes relating to education.

- The study also found that expansion in the training of female teachers from 2000/01 to 2006/07, thus, there was an increase of enrolment in teacher training colleges by 30.8%. However, the study was not able to determine the number of female teachers serving in the schools because the responsible division has kept all such records for only 2004 and not for all other years under review.
- There is unequal distribution of qualified female teachers in the periods 2004/5 with the Northern region having the least (5.6%) even though the number of female teachers is highest in that region.
- Sponsorship of girls at post JSS level though a government intension has no evidence in the study.
- The percentage of girls accessing primary schools has also increased from 23,384 in 2000/01 to 67,508 in 2006/07. This represents a percentage increase of 188.7%.
- That gender gap elimination relating to quality remains a serious challenge as about 87% of all girls entering JSS 1 did not complete JSS 3 successfully for the years 2005 – 2008. This is so even if we were to use all pass criteria used by the Basic Education Secretariat to allocate pupils to SSS WASSCE and SSS Tech/Voc combine. Within the terms of reference of this present study, the study was unable to pinpoint any particular reason why girls fail such a massive scale.

Goal 6: Improvement in all aspects of quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy an essential life skills

- The study revealed that there has been tremendous increase in enrolment of pupils from class1- JSS3. However, this expansion has not caught up with the expanding facilities thereby leading to over crowding especially in urban schools. The over all impact is poor learning outcome as is evident in the average pass rate at BECE. Using all pass criteria, the pass rate by both sexes has never exceeded 56% on average. For example, in 2005, the pass rate was 47.5%, reaching a peak in 2006, 55.3%, and falling in 2008 to 45.8%.
- Quality is also affected by the high ratio of pupil to qualified teacher especially at primary level which stands at 108:1.
- The low pupil teacher ratio at JSS level of 40:1 is deceptive as there is no disaggregation by qualified and unqualified teachers.
- Support in terms of providing core textbooks is still inadequate. The two tier system – MEYS main stream supported schools as against SABABU schools creates room for disparities and distorts adequacy of supplies to schools. In the SABABU supported schools, there is 1:1 ratio of child to book, but in the former there is 1:3. Even more important is the fact that the books are kept in the schools compelling parents to buy text books if their children are to do any assignment or receive further tutorial at home.
- Recruitment of qualified teachers to meet the 40:1 standard in primary schools is hampered by the recruitment ceiling policy.

- There is wastage among qualified teacher pool which paradoxically continues to sustain the prevalence of volunteer teachers in the schools system especially in rural communities. The problem is compounded by the poor condition of service for teachers especially the newly recruited teachers whose pay time is unpredictable. This situation exists because the recruitment time (September when schools re-open does not coincide with the government's financial year) and the lack of contingency budget plans to factor the expanded pay roll in the previous budget.
- The study found out that the recruitment and reward for teachers is not transparent and has no mechanism to keep track of teacher's record on a sustained basis.