EXPLORING PARTNERSHIPS FOR EDUCATION FOR ALL: A STUDY ON THE SECTOR-WIDE APPROACH (SWAP) IN SRI LANKA
ABOUT ASPBAE

The Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE) is a regional association of more than 200 organizations and individuals working towards promoting quality education for all and transformative, liberating and life-long adult education and learning. It strives to forge and sustain an Asia-Pacific movement dedicated to mobilizing and supporting community and people’s organizations, national education coalitions, teachers’ unions, campaign networks and other civil society groups and institutions in holding governments and the international donor community accountable in meeting education targets and commitments, ensuring the right of all to education, and upholding education as an empowering tool for combating poverty and all forms of exclusion and discrimination, pursuing sustainable development, enabling active and meaningful participation in governance, and building a culture of peace and international understanding.

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EXPLORING PARTNERHIPS FOR EDUCATION FOR ALL:
A STUDY ON THE SECTOR WIDE APPROACH (SWAP) IN SRI LANKA
EXPLORING PARTNERSHIPS FOR EDUCATION FOR ALL:
A Study on the Sector-Wide Approach (SWAp) in Sri Lanka

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This study is published with support from the Education Support Program of the Open Society Institute (OSI) Budapest.

The views expressed in this study do not necessarily reflect those of all ASPBAE members and of OSI.
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# ACRONYMS

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<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>ADB</td>
<td>Asian Development Bank</td>
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<td>ALCs</td>
<td>Accelerated Learning Campaigns</td>
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<td>ASPBAE</td>
<td>Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education</td>
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<td>CBOs</td>
<td>Community Based Organisations</td>
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<td>CRU</td>
<td>Curriculum Restructuring and Upgrading</td>
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<td>CSOs</td>
<td>Civil Society Organisations</td>
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<td>DEOs</td>
<td>Divisional Educational Offices</td>
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<td>DFID</td>
<td>Department for International Development</td>
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<td>EAG</td>
<td>Examination and Assessment Guideline</td>
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<td>EFA</td>
<td>Education for All</td>
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<td>EMP</td>
<td>Environment Management Plans</td>
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<td>EPTD</td>
<td>Education Publication and Textbook Development</td>
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<td>ESDFP</td>
<td>Education Sector Development Framework and Programme</td>
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<td>ESDP</td>
<td>Education Sector Development Project</td>
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<td>ESSAF</td>
<td>Environment and Social Screening Assessment Framework</td>
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<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization</td>
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<td>FC</td>
<td>Finance Commissions</td>
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<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<td>GNP</td>
<td>Gross National Production</td>
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<td>GTZ</td>
<td>German Development Bank – The German Technical Cooperation</td>
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<td>HRD</td>
<td>Human Resource Development</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communication Technology</td>
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<td>IDA</td>
<td>International Development Agencies</td>
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<td>INGO</td>
<td>International Non-Government Organisation</td>
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<td>IRAQUE</td>
<td>Improving the Relevance and Quality of Undergraduate Education</td>
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<td>JICA</td>
<td>Japan International Cooperation Agency</td>
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<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
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<td>MFP</td>
<td>Ministry of Finance and Planning</td>
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<td>MOE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
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<td>NEC</td>
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<td>NEREC</td>
<td>National Education Research and Evaluation Centre</td>
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<td>NIE</td>
<td>National Institute of Education</td>
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<td>PEA</td>
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<td>PEM</td>
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<td>PEQEDTS</td>
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<td>PMOE</td>
<td>Provincial Ministry of Education</td>
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<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<td>PSI</td>
<td>Program for School Improvement</td>
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<td>SDC</td>
<td>School Development Committee</td>
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<td>Sector-wide Approach</td>
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<td>UNESCO</td>
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<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>United Nations Population Fund</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
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<td>WB</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
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<td>ZEO</td>
<td>Zonal Educational Office</td>
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There is need for greater exploration on the interface between resources and programming, aid harmonisation and the power relations among the different players especially within the context of SWAps

The issue of education aid cuts across the whole Asia region and is not limited to South Asia. The scale of overall poverty and deprivation, however, as linked to huge education deficit and severe governance problems (due to prolonged conflict, instability), exerts tremendous pressure on the ability of national governments to mobilise and effectively deploy adequate resources to ensure the right of all its citizens to education. Thus, meeting the financing gap through increased quality aid is a big concern in the subregion. While much work in this area has been developed and pursued by the Global Campaign for Education (GCE) globally, the capacities to take this forward at the national level are very thin. Earlier work of the Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE), supported by the Open Society Institute (OSI) had begun to deepen understanding and analysis by the national education coalitions of this area of policy, especially in aid sources, flow, composition, priorities and conditionalities. However, these need broader understanding nationally and within the key constituencies of the coalitions. Furthermore, there is a need to deepen analysis on a range of governance issues within education aid: sector-wide approaches (SWAps), lack of civil society participation and transparency, external funding that exacerbate inequalities for neglecting some goals of the Education For All (EFA) initiative at the expense of other goals and for promoting rampant privatisation of education. There is need for greater exploration on the interface between resources and programming, aid harmonisation and the
power relations among the different players, especially within the context of SWAps. And overall, there is need to examine how all these link up to poor quality education and very low retention of children, youth and adults in poor learning environments.

SWAps have gained much currency especially as a means to move away from the traditional project approach, enabling greater possibility for generating support for recurrent costs e.g. teachers’ salaries, facilitate greater donor coordination and harmonisation and lower transaction costs. The understanding on how these processes really play out at the country level—and the analysis on whether they promote or actually retard progress in EFA—has been rather thin. The fact that, in most cases, these processes have excluded civil society organisations (CSOs) already indicate gaps in transparency—and also point to the challenge CSOs and coalitions will face in engaging in this process as the lack of access to even basic information of SWAp processes is rampant. So analysing the design and impact of SWAps is envisaged to equip the coalitions with enhanced knowledge on crucial issues like aid harmonisation, the extent to which donor priorities influence and at times dictate the sector-wide plans (Why is it that despite the scale of adult literacy gaps in South Asia, this remains a neglected, poorly resourced area?) issues of transparency in optimum level of utilisation, and coordination, participation issues among the government, donors and civil society, including teachers’ organisations.

With an objective to explore the aforementioned areas, three case studies on SWAps, in Sri Lanka, Nepal and Pakistan, have been completed, this being one of them. These are timely initiatives: in Sri Lanka, the ongoing Education Programme has been hailed as the one that most closely adheres to the key
attributes of a SWAp. Nepal has a core document which outlines aspirations, funded by a pool of seven donors giving sector budget support according to an annual plan, with many large and small projects operating in parallel, outside the framework. In Pakistan (Sindh province) the Asian Development Bank is making headway to support SWAps in national education planning. It is therefore hoped that, through this scoping initiative, education campaign coalitions can build competencies to enable them to start engaging with the SWAp processes and contribute to the broader EFA goals.

The studies were not envisaged to be academic researches into SWAp technicalities, but rather organised as endeavours to review the SWAp design and identify policy entry points for the coalitions to engage with the governments and donors in meaningful dialogues, reflecting on a vital role in design, implementation and monitoring of the SWAps.

Interesting findings have emerged from the scoping studies. It appears that all the countries are on the way to adopting SWAps as the dominant approach in their plans to reach EFA goals. While all the studies affirm that the basic principles of SWAps are sound, there are concerns about the capacity of existing players (state, municipal and district level systems and functionaries, teachers and school management committees, as examples) to implement them. There are also concerns about sustainability, as these processes are significantly donor driven. Disproportionate power relationships are also being called into question, as donors seem to have the upper hand in SWAp processes. There is also very limited participation of civil society bodies in the process.

While preliminary, these studies and the discussions of the coalitions concerning their outcomes have deep significance for advocacy engagements: Nepal, in its School Sector Reform programme beginning this year, is moving closer to a more comprehensive education sector plan. In Pakistan the federal, provincial and district structures do not allow for one sectoral plan or accompanying budget. In this context, the SWAps are an important policy instrument since they can allow federal, provincial and district-based planning, with complementary budgeting. In Sri Lanka, the ongoing Education Programme has an impressive record of bottom-up planning (which started at school level and consolidated as the process moved upwards) and a comprehensive framework moving away from a narrow project approach. But regrettably, the government seems to have incorporated a low level of CSO participation in the design phase.

This joint initiative of ASPBAE and the coalitions that explore the SWAp modalities is expected to position the coalitions to participate in the developing SWAp processes, which are vital for ensuring one of the key attributes of SWAp—full country ownership. It is also expected that the education advocates and practitioners will gain useful insights into the dominant model of education programming and will be able to find advocacy entry points. This will also hopefully open up pathways to engage a tripartite dialogue among donors, government and civil society to ensure mutual cooperation and accountability in pursing the goals of Education For All.

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Sector-wide Approach (SWAp) is a state-of-the-art way of financing developing countries, replacing the existing project approach. While this has been in operation for a long time, developing countries’ desire to highlight their needs and own the activities propelled this change in funding principles. Practiced in the African countries since 1990s, the SWAp reached Sri Lanka only in 2004. The key features of SWAp are the following: (a) country ownership, (b) partnership and consultation, (c) comprehensive sector policy framework, (d) expenditure framework and resource envelop, and (e) uniform implementation of structures and procedures. These positive aspects were meant to replace the shortcomings of the traditional forms of lending. Some of the shortcomings were related to the following aspects: (a) inadequate local ownership of development programmes, (b) overloading local capacity to coordinate and proliferation of donor relationships, (c) lack of sustainability and institutional development waste of resources, (d) weak public sector management and (e) patchwork management of development assistance.

In order to better understand the present status of education, it would be pertinent to briefly summarise the educational development in Sri Lanka, which dates back to centuries, with the temple as the centre for education. Sri Lanka’s progress in education and high achievements in literacy over the rest of the countries in the region—reaching as high as 93% in 2005—has been responsible for an increase in Gross National Production (GNP)—which was around US$ 1,400. This advance in social development led to improvements in quality of life.

But so much is yet to be done. There are pockets of disadvantaged areas and communities in the country that are backward resulting in low income and poor achievements in education. The organisational structure of the education system in the country is based on the 13th Amendment to the Constitution made in 1990, whereby education is a devolved subject providing provinces more opportunities to oversee the development needs in that sector. The basic facts on education indicate a student population of four million serviced by over 200,000 teachers in almost 10,000 schools, with a teacher-student ratio of 1:20.
There have been many educational reforms. One of the most important was the 1943 Reforms, which provided free education to all from kindergarten to the university. This is being done along with the construction of facilities, provision of free textbooks and mid-day meals, subsidized transport and scholarships from grade 5 to the university level. All these factors combined have been responsible for the current high levels in literacy rates.

However, there have been flaws in the management and provision of quality of services, resulting in a skewed supply of resources. In addition to this, there has been major disparities in achievements, specially in the rural areas.

In order to bring about a more regularized and even distribution of resources in quality, these programs were introduced: Education Sector Development Framework and Programme (ESDFP) and Sector-wide Approach (SWAp). The ESDFP is organised under four themes namely (a) promoting equitable access to basic and secondary education, (b) improving quality of basic and secondary education, (c) enhancing economic efficiency of resource allocation, and (d) strengthening education governance and service delivery. Aside from this four-pronged approach, other steps taken are the following: enhancement of the quality of personnel, improvements in resources and delivery of the same on time and in quantities, change of management to that of a proactive nature. All these are expected to bring about equity, quality and better outputs all over the country.

To achieve the objectives of the above four themes, all players and stakeholders were informed and trained. In 2006, the focus of the government was “To invest in people to build a productive and efficient human resource base with a knowledge and skills in their respective fields of employment.” Thus, the National Education Commission (NEC) and the National Institute of Education (NIE), in collaboration with the Ministry of Education (MOE) and Provincial Ministry of Education (PMOE), worked together in the planning and implementation of the ESDFP.

Many changes were in order. Inevitably, traditional ‘project’ and ‘programme’ modes of planning and development were replaced. One of the major weaknesses of the earlier funding system relates to the fact that projects ended when funding for the project has ceased. This left the stakeholders of the program in the lurch, not knowing what to do and how to provide for the programs. To resolve this, the ESFP was developed using a bottom-up approach. All principals of schools, along with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), were involved in formulating short- and long-term activities of the school, based on which plans for the Zone and Province were developed. This empowered the
people, ensuring that the ability to continue development is held by stakeholders.

The key characteristics of the new policy were the development of the following: (a) a comprehensive education sector development framework, (b) multi-year educational expenditure and long-term plans (c) streamlined management systems at all levels, and (d) monitoring and evaluation system, based on inputs and outputs.

Some aspects have to be examined. The role of the CSOs was not as contributory as expected, due mainly to reservations on the part of the authorities about their agenda and to the novelty of the approach in planning. Nevertheless, the School Development Societies proved to have a greater say in the disbursement of funds at the lower levels. The contributions of some International Non-Government Organisations (INGOs) were also very marked in the provision of funds to Education Sector Development Framework and Programme (ESDFP).

Funding for the ESDFP were received from World Bank (WB), Asian Development Bank (ADB), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), The German Development Bank-The German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) and Department for International Development (DFID). Other funding came from: Save the Children, Plan Sri Lanka, World Vision, American Red Cross and Indian Credit Line. The MOE had discussions with all of these donors, avoiding separate offices and places for discussions and decision-making. Large donors were encouraged to have joint donor missions twice a year and provide Joint Aide Mission memos rather than individual ones. These steps enabled better congruence with ESDFP, led to a better system of education operating in Sri Lanka, facilitated the achievement of both Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The overall approach of ESDFP is to supplement the budgets directly to the Central Ministry of Education and to the eight Provincial Ministries of Education. This resulted in many advantages. Delays were reduced and mismanagement of procurement procedures were streamlined to ensure the timely delivery to the stakeholders. A provision, which did not exist previously, for purchase of certain items and disbursement of funds at the school level, was also made.

Policy comparison between players and coherence among the partners of SWAp were reflected in the project design. International Development Agencies (IDA) supported an overall country framework. This was meant to enhance basic and secondary education by the establishment of a coherent, internally consistent set
of policies to develop the school system. All these have resulted in facilitating the greater achievement in the quality of the educational outputs indicated in the four themes referred to earlier. Aspects which were meant to be changed are: number of drop-outs; greater participation rates; improvement in the supply of data by the PMOE; the enhancement of the professional institutions like the NIE and MOE, in relation to curriculum development; National Testing systems; textbook development, promoting social coherence; establishment of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and school libraries; support for English education; and economic efficiency and equity of resource allocation. All of which lead to achieving EFA. Further, programs for school improvement (PSI) using special budgetary processes are functioning satisfactorily, with the principals improving their decision-making capacity in relation to management aspects of the school. As a result of these quality inputs, the development of quality of education vis-a-vis socio-economic development of the country is improving.

With all the progress made in relation to Human Resource Development (HRD), Sri Lanka should be moving towards a better development stage in the years to come. This would result in the increase in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) leading to an overall improvement in the socio-economic life of the community. However, all is not too well in the development sector, including education. There are gaps and disparities in income distribution, with the poor sectors sharing a low percentage of the total national income while a small affluent sector shares a great portion of the national wealth. Almost half of the population receives subsidies. In the field of education all children do not achieve high marks in their examinations. Results indicate that children fair poorly in subjects like Mathematics, English, and Language. Hence, there is a need for greater focus on these areas, especially those from deprived groups and living in marginalised areas.

The paper delves into the relationship between the four themes under ESDFP and EFA goals, where EFA goals are directly focused and measurements are taken to achieve the tasks set by EFA goals. This analysis enables the understanding of the move towards meeting targets and the gaps that prevent planners from taking corrective steps. In the discussions, it is highlighted how ESDFP is implemented through various mechanisms of the supporting institutions, like the MOE, NIE, PMOE, and the operations that are involved in working with the donor community under the SWAp principles. Thus, at the Central level, the government maintains a Steering Committee chaired by the Secretary, MOE with representation from PMOE, Ministry of Finance and Planning, the Finance Commissions (FC) and the NEC with IDA. The agencies and their supporting areas/activities are also indicated, with some background regarding institutional implementation arrangements. The notable achievements of ESDFP are seen in the mid-term reviews/aid memoire conducted by the WB, specifically in relation to quality aspects, capacity development of personnel, interest of politicians at the provincial level, the PSI program, logistics and streamlining of communication barriers. The paper also discusses the elements that support the sustainability of the ESDFP, including the growing national consensus, flexibility of the plans, reviewing of the programs regularly and identifying the critical risks.

The paper also briefly indicates the corrective steps that CSOs should take to engage with SWAp process, where CSOs should be collaborative to collectively promote the achievement of the EFA goals.
EXPLORING PARTNERSHIPS FOR EDUCATION FOR ALL:
A STUDY ON THE SECTOR-WIDE APPROACH (SWAP) IN SRI LANKA
SECTION I:
INTRODUCTION – WHAT IS SWAP?

Sector-wide Approach (SWAp) seems to be the latest, state-of-the-art, development in relation to disbursement of funds and the responsibilities of the donors and the governments in the utilization of funds in developing countries. SWAp is a means to an end, leading to improved development cooperation in a special context. This approach aims to strengthen the state ownership, leadership and coordination of activities while facilitating the provision of funds, rationally reducing operational costs and encouraging integrated investments. SWAp represents a shared approach by development partners in helping a country initiate and determine development programs. The resulting ownership by the stakeholders leads to greater commitment. In brief, the key features of SWAp are as follows:

1. country ownership,
2. partnership and consultation,
3. comprehensive sector policy framework,
4. expenditure framework and resource envelop, and
5. uniform implementation structures and procedures.

The sector-wide approach is a new way of working between governments and donors. It is one that a large number of donors is starting to favor. SWAp work differently in each country, they are typified by the following features:

- All significant government and donor funding for the sector supports a single sector policy and expenditure program.
- Government leads the process and its implementation.
- Common approaches are adopted across the sector by all funding parties, both government and donors.
- There is visible progress towards relying on government procedures to disburse and account for donor funds.

FAILURE OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AID MODALITIES
AND INTRODUCTION OF SWAP

The past few years have seen significant changes in thinking and policy regarding aid effectiveness and aid modalities. The focus has been on the importance of promoting approaches that follow country policies and use country systems as means to ensure ownership and sustainability through long-term capacity- and institution-building.

One response has been a gradual shift away from project-based assistance towards program-based approaches, which are considered to promote country leadership and increase the use of local systems for program design, implementation, financial management and monitoring and evaluation.

The 1990s was the turning point for the traditional or project form of aid or assistance. The project method contributed fragmentation of development assistance since a multiplicity of donors pursue their own interventions, regardless
of the intra-sectoral and inter-sectoral issues and in deference to the needs and preferences of recipient country.

It would be pertinent to also know the negative aspects of the traditional investment loans for a better understanding of the differences. These aspects include:

1. inadequate local ownership of development programs,
2. overloading of local capacity to coordinate a proliferation of donor relationships,
3. lack of sustainability and institutional development waste of development resources,
4. weak public sector management, and
5. patchwork management of development assistance.

Program-based approaches, such as the Sector-wide Approach (SWAp), are already operating or being developed in many countries for the health sector as in some countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa.

SECTION II: BACKGROUND – DEVELOPMENTAL POLICY CONTEXTS OF THE SWAP

Sri Lanka is fortunate to have a positive background for educational development for long centuries and a culture of learning which emerged with Buddhism. The establishment of libraries, ‘potguls’, was part of the tradition. This was supported by pirivenas, religious institutions. Some of which were converted into universities in the 1960s. However, there were disparities in the provision of educational facilities and benefits of the system were skewed in favor of privileged areas, traditionally the anchor belt of education—coastal belt and stretch to Kandy with Jaffna as a special favoured location—while the greater parts of the country were left with mediocre resources. Inevitably, this resulted in power and privilege being confined to the well-fed and well-read groups in Sri Lanka. Many policies such as the right to universal suffrage vote (1931), free education to all (1943), school take-overs (1958), curricular reforms (1972) opening of more teacher education colleges (1982), and the opening of more universities (1990’s) are factors that are expected to provide better quality opportunities and access to children. However, some of these remained a misnomer in the educational scenarios. Quality achievement was still confined to privileged areas and communities.

It would be pertinent to analyse the educational development of Sri Lanka in the context of the above background. Consequent to the historical advantages resulting from the culture of learning that prevailed, Sri Lanka forged ahead of many nations in the region. The factors of low population and the decline in the rate of growth of the population, higher social indicators, and increasing GDP have fostered increased levels of educational achievement over the decades. Moreover, the support of the state in pursing the responsibility for education throughout the last century to the present has resulted in higher levels of educational outputs. Thus, the national literacy level steadily increased from 40% in 1940 to 93% by 2005. Similarly, the non-school-going population had
declined from 68% in 1940 down to 8% in 2004. The participation rate in secondary education, as of 2004, has gone up to 62% from a mere 11% in 1940. Recent studies also indicate that 78% of children enter secondary education (ESDFP, page 7, 2007). Gender-wise the data is more impressive. As of 2005, more women enter the university based on the figures where 33,700 who enter are male and 55,000 who enter are female. However, the literacy rate for women is 90.7% as against 94.5% for males. The increase in GNP (US$1,355 in 2006) and decreased unemployment rates (8.9% in 2004) changed the GDP structure across agriculture, industry, service sectors specially with the open economy policy since 1978, where increase in foreign employment have been positive factors that have contributed to increased educational levels specially at the secondary levels.

In spite of the positive figures, there are gaps and pockets of education-deprivations in disadvantaged areas. There are also disparities in income distribution. Still 50% of the people receive subsidies and those who live below the poverty line—below Rs.1,400—was 22.7% in 2002. The richest 30% gets almost 66% of the national income. Although Sri Lanka has very satisfactory social indicators including education, the over all figures do not reveal the disparities that prevail in the countryside. These relate to socio-economic factors and education of rural areas. For example almost 33% of the schools in Sri Lanka fall into the category of small schools, which have the least resources, in terms of both quality and quantity. In addition to the disadvantaged areas, urban areas also have income disparities.

The need for reforming education arose due to the following factors: (a) ‘issues related to equity, quality and relevance of education and (b) changing demographic, socio-economic and ethnic dynamics. These required seeing education from a new perspective—conceptualisation, planning and implementation. All these resulted in the need for a new dynamics in policy formulation and implementation. SWAp seems to be the answer to these issues that confront both policy-makers and politicians.

The organizational structure of the education system is based on the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution made in 1990. The governance has thus devolved into nine provinces, with additional powers in the management and supervision of schools. This created a five-tier administrative structure:

1. Ministry of Education (MOE)
2. Provincial Ministries/Departments of Education (PM/DE)
3. Zonal Educational Offices (ZEO)
4. Divisional Educational Offices (DEO)
5. Schools

The Schools were divided into Type 1AB (classes up to 13), Type 1C (classes up to 13 without science streams), Type 2 (classes up to 11), and Type 3 (classes up to 5).
The average teacher-pupil ratio is 1:19. The total student population is around four million, with a teacher population of 185,000 as of 2004.

The current policies related to disparities led to the introduction of Education Sector Development Framework and Program (ESDFP)/Sector-wide Approach (SWAp) to solve the inadequacies and inequalities seen in the quality and quantity of disbursement of education referred to above.

The ESDFP was organised under four themes. These are as follows:

**THEME 1 – PROMOTING EQUITABLE ACCESS TO BASIC AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

The strategies to achieve the objectives of this theme include: (a) implementing demand side initiatives to promote school attendance and completion of basic education cycle (1-9), (b) upgrading the network of public schools to relax geographical constraints to equitable access to high-quality basic and secondary education, (c) strengthening special education programs for children with special training needs and (d) strengthening non-formal education programs for adolescents, who either never attended school or dropped out when younger, require skills to enter the labor force.

**THEME 2 – IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF BASIC AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

This theme is designed to promote cognitive achievement levels, associative competencies and attitudinal skills. It includes: (a) curriculum restructuring and upgrading to reflect modern trends in curriculum practice, (b) development of teacher framework and system to enhance motivation, competencies and performance of teachers and (c) modernization of examination and testing systems to promote higher order cognitive skills and associative competencies and to better align the education system with the world of work.

**THEME 3 – ENHANCING ECONOMIC EFFICIENCY AND EQUITY OF RESOURCE ALLOCATIONS**

The key components of this theme are the following: (a) establishing a medium-term expenditure framework or education, (b) developing a long-term indicative rolling plan for the education sector and (c) establishing a public expenditure and quality education tracking system for public investment in education.

**THEME 4 – STRENGTHENING EDUCATION GOVERNANCE AND SERVICE DELIVERY**

The key components are the following: (a) introducing a balanced control model of school-based management, (b) an organizational capacity analysis of the education system and the implementation of capacity-building at the central- and provincial-levels and (c) developing a human resource strategy to strengthen the skills of educational managers and administrators (ESDFP, MOE, 2007).
In spite of the positive development aspects related to development in general and specifically education, the progress lacked focus on the development of human resources. This can be considered as a major gap. Hence, the focus of the 2006 government budget was ‘invest in people to build a productive and efficient human resource base with knowledge and skills in their respective fields of employment.’ All along in Sri Lanka the system of educational development lacked quality and relevance. As a result the National Education Commission (NEC) has focused on the need for (a) decentralised planning and decision-making, (b) appropriate data collection and analyses, (c) training of educational personnel, (d) proper division of labor and (e) reduction of time from planning stage to the implementation process. The recommendations of NEC were implemented by the government, with the objectives of extending educational opportunities and the quality of education (NEC 1997). They were supported by the World Bank (WB) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) through educational projects.

The above recommendations and changes were results of earlier attempts of NEC, since 2000, to provide a comprehensive report on ‘Proposals for a National Policy Framework on General Education in Sri Lanka’ (2003). The main focus of this report was to improve the quality by promoting equity and excellence through reducing disparities. The report was clear on the significance of the equitable allocation of funds to the regions. It stated in unequivocal terms the importance of resources in achieving the above aims. Thus, government finances as well as funds generated at school-level should be distributed to schools in an efficient manner, for the benefit of all children.

This study and recommendations were followed by another comprehensive analysis of the education system in Sri Lanka by the WB, titled ‘Treasurers of the Education System in Sri Lanka’ (2005). National Education Research and Evaluation Centre (NEREC) of the University of Colombo, along with the WB and other studies, local and international, had cogently pointed out the gaps in the achievement of Education For All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), inefficiency of the service delivery and the need for better systems of educational governance. These studies also highlight the relevance and quality of educational inputs that the policy-makers aim to merge with other positive development aspects, such as ‘social stability, national unity, human values, and individual orientation of the world of work.’ Economic gains include promoting competencies demand in labor market. Social goals include skills in ‘learning to live together,’ leading to improvement of social cohesion between different ethnic and religious communities.

With the assistance from the educational institutions and organizations and findings of the World Bank sector-review public consultations, the government designed a comprehensive medium-term ESDFP from 2006 to 2010. The critical characters of this plan were the bottom-up approach, commencing from
the primary school, and the top-down supportive planning process, engaging everyone to be partners in the exercise and sharing equal responsibility and commitment. The ESDFP focused on the critical issues and lapses in basic and secondary education referred to above. Funds for these were provided through the International Development Association (IDA), which included UNICEF, DFID, SIDA, GTZ, JICA, JBIC and ADB, along with the World Bank. All these facilitated the modernisation of education under ESDFP. Hence, from 2006 onwards, ESDFP was the only source of IDA financial assistance to the Sri Lankan primary and secondary education. It should be mentioned that IDA supports the tertiary education sector through another credit. This was called “Improving the Relevance and Quality of Undergraduate Education (IRAQUE).” As part of the agreements, IDA assistance will enrich the technical quality of ESDFP implementation by making available good practices from other countries. IDA is one of the flagship-operations to promote equity, growth and peace in the country.

The current perspective on trends in international funding is to follow sector-wide programs and development approaches elsewhere in the world. The Government of Sri Lanka likewise opted to follow the same path and holds the view that an investment in education using SWAp would be the most appropriate means to address sector-wide development issues. The advantages of SWAp over the traditional funding methods such as ‘projects’, ‘programs’, and ‘fast track initiatives’ with their shortfalls and weaknesses commencing from 1980s, were better and efficient to sustain development inputs by mainstreaming and better coordination of external donor investments with government budgeting.’ One of the greatest weaknesses of the aforementioned funding system relates to the fact that the projects ended when the project funding ceased.

The major policy themes of SWAp are as follows:

a. delegating resources, power and authority to implementation levels, as they are the real beneficiaries of the system;

b. widening access to education to promote equity between regions and groups;

c. building human resources needed to drive economic development in an increasingly knowledge-based global economy;

d. decentralising education management to empower service providers and strengthening delivery mechanisms;

e. encouraging innovative initiatives and practices; and

f. enabling development partners to support the government to implement a wide range of activities from the central- to the school-level.

The key characteristics of SWAp are as follows:

a. a comprehensive education sector development framework

b. a multi-year educational expenditure framework and a long-term, output-oriented educational plan

c. streamlined management systems central to the school level

d. monitoring and evaluation system, based on inputs and outputs, and

e. partnerships between Government of Sri Lanka and partners
FORMULATION OF ESDFP

ESDFP was a bottom-up approach in planning. The participatory approach was the most common feature wherein teachers and parents, under the leadership of the principal, participated in the planning. All schools had planning teams. The same approach was adopted at the zonal- and provincial-levels where the Ministry was also involved at the final stages. The final plans included: (a) consolidated schools/zonal plans and (b) institutional plans at the provincial level. The Provincial Director of Education had established planning teams which included subject specialists. The Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the Provincial Education Authorities and the National Institute of Education, developed planning guidelines for all stakeholders—school-, zone-, provincial and national-level. The planning had three characteristics, namely: (a) aligning plans to available budgets, (b) planning for known resources and (c) aligning activities to expected outputs and outcomes of the results framework.

The outputs and outcomes of ESDFP are ‘related to medium-term and annual educational plans of national and provincial agencies and overarching education sector development plan for 2006-2010.’ Education and human development were to be tied together closely and a redefinition of these areas, including economic growth and income distribution, were taken up by the planners in relation to quality of learning. Both formal and non-formal sectors were involved in this redefinition and new-thinking which ultimately would lead to human resource development of the country. All these will ensure high quality of life of the people.

The outputs and outcomes of ESDFP include the following: (a) equity in access in learning becomes essential in this road map, (b) high quality of education, (c) equity and efficiency in resource allocation and (d) effectiveness.

Players of policy-making who influence the SWAp formulation includes:

AT THE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

a) officers from the school level to the provincial levels
b) officers of the National Institute of Education
c) officials of the Ministry of Education
d) to some extent, members of Civil Society Organisations—parents and guardians at various levels

AT THE FUNDING LEVEL

the funding agencies previously mentioned

SECTION IV: ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN SWAP CYCLE

The engagement of CSOs occasionally occur at different levels in different locations. The focus, in relation to Safeguard Policy Issues (SPI), is a point of concern that deals with the safety of locations of schools and the reactions of CSOs. Thus, the Environment and Social Screening Assessment Framework (ESSAF) has been shared by the MOE with concerned non-governmental organisations, civil society and potential stakeholders. The document is written in all languages, and available at the
World Bank’s Information shop. Relevant subproject specific safeguard documents/ mitigation plans, such as Environment Management Plans (EMPs), prepared subsequently are available to the public. Community consultation is an integral part of the overall program. The local communities and institutions are involved in identification, planning, design, implementation, operation and maintenance of schools and other program activities. Consultation with schoolteachers, experts, NGOs and other stakeholders will continue throughout the implementation period.

School Development Committees (SDCs) have a great say in the disbursement of funds. As part of the supervision strategy of the Province/Zones in the disbursement of funds for procurement, the members of the SDS should be satisfied with the way funds have been utilized by the authorities. This is a safeguard strategy at the lowest level that provides breaks to any mismanagement of funds.

Under strengthening Education Governance and Service Delivery, the ESDFP envisages the development of a balanced management system, referred to as Program for School Improvement (PSI). This initiative enabled the school to forge links with the local communities, to give greater opportunities to the stakeholders, give them greater voice in schools affairs and the ability to raise resources to help the school.

If we include INGOs as part of the international civil society, one could include the contributions of Save the Children, Plan Sri Lanka, World Vision, American Red Cross and several others similar INGOs. Their contributions are directed to the development of the quality aspects of SWAp and ESDFP. These are referred to as development partners.

SECTION V: ROLE OF TRANSNATIONAL DONORS IN PARTNERSHIP PROCESS WITH SWAP - RESOURCE ALLOCATION VIS-A-VIS DECISION-MAKING POWER

The external sources of funding are both multilateral and bilateral donors. Among the multilateral sources are WB, ADB, UNICEF, UNESCO and UNFPA. On the other hand, JICA, GTZ and DFID are among the major bilateral agencies that have provided external aid. The contributions from INGOs are also noted, although the consistency and the volume vary from time to time, depending on how their donors provide funds. Funders such as GTZ and JICA had prioritised infrastructure while others were more focused on quality development of the educational system. The details are as follows:

- GTZ, JICA, Indian Credit line—Construction and equipment, disaster-alleviation.
Sri Lanka’s achievements in the field of education have been very satisfactory. However, gaps exist in relation to human resource development for achieving a better status in the field of global economy. This demands HRD of Sri Lankans, which can be achieved through education, providing modern technology to students and teachers that will strengthen technological qualities of education. For this, funds are needed. The coordination of the funds and programs by the government of Sri Lanka becomes vital. ESDFP’s aim is to serve that purpose by coordinating all finances to achieve efficiency in program implementation.

There is a code of conduct between donors and the state. This includes all large NGOs that contribute to the development of the educational sector. All large donors are encouraged to have Joint Donor Missions twice a year and produce Joint Aide Missions rather than individual mission memos. The joint memos help bring about better congruence within ESDFP.

Further, the MOE has held consultations with all donors, avoiding separate project offices. These will also provide technical assistance directly to the respective departments/divisions of the MOE and Provincial Councils, enabling development of efficient systems/divisions to provide on-the-job training to key officials and to permit sustainable capacity to the provinces. This will enhance better efficiency, transparency and effectiveness in programs. Monitoring of results-based program implementation will also be possible. On the other hand, the development partners, i.e., donors are encouraged to carry out independent assessments and evaluations to assist the government in achieving a better level of transparency. This leads to a better education system in Sri Lanka, while at the same time taking greater strides to achieving universal goals of both EFA and MDGs.

Thus, one would observe that SWAp has built in mechanisms for greater reliance on the fiscal arrangements adopted by the Central Government and Provincial Councils. This would deter flaws that may emerge in the process of implementing activities. The measures adopted by the above institutions help mitigate risks.

The overall approach of ESDFP is to supplement the budgets directly to the Central Ministry of Education and the Eight Provincial Ministries of Education. The standard procedures adopted by these institutions will be used to report expenditure patterns. Once funds are disbursed to the Central Ministry and to the Provinces, such proceeds will be indistinguishable from the regular government funds and expenditure categories. The focus instead will be on monitoring the basic secondary education sector results in terms of performances. The components under which funds are expended relate to the four themes under project description, namely:

(a) Promoting Equitable Access to Basic and Secondary Education,
(b) Improving Quality of Education,
(c) Enhancing Economic Efficiency and Equity of Resource Allocation, and
(d) Strengthening Education Governance and Service Delivery.

The disbursement of funds without undue delays and bottlenecks was considered important for the smooth functioning of the programs, especially in view of the need for procurement to execute without delays. After carefully studying the existing Financial Management Capacity Assessments, which was a uniform computerised system across the central and provinces, it was agreed to follow the same procedure since staff were
also familiar with the prevailing system. Besides that, the accountants were also trained in the new procedures and were assigned to the provinces and zones.

The public sector budgetary processes are reasonably well-established in Sri Lanka with well-defined time targets prior to the approval of the final budget and before the start of financial year in January.

Supervision strategy was considered of great importance since, from a financial management perspective, there was intensive supervision during the initial years. This was achieved through field visits and desk reviews. The specific areas included a test of expenditures reported against the planned amounts, review of transaction documentation for fund flows to the zones and schools, analysis of fixed assets and a review of internal controls processes and any issues raised by School Development Committees on the use of funds.

The procurement procedures were also well-laid since large consignments of goods had to be purchased and this required transparency, efficiency, organisation at various levels, and monitoring and supervision at many levels, even up to the door of the school.

The grant provided for the procurement of goods, works and services under the ESDFP. The partnership arrangements with IDA provided overall support for ESDFP through Education Sector Development Project (ESDP). The other educational development partners provided specific support to identified areas within the overarching framework of ESDFP. The support given by each institution is as follows:

- ADB – development of secondary schools through the Secondary Modernisation Project
- JBIC – upgrading essential aspects of school facilities related to construction logistics
- UNICEF – various education development activities
- BMZ/DFID/JICA/SIDA – technical assistance

The procurement will be carried out at three levels:

- Central level – MOE and related department
- Provincial level – Eight provincial councils
- School level

The quality of education includes improvement of cognitive achievement levels, including improvements of language skills and numeracy skills.

SECTION VI: POLICY COMPARISON BETWEEN AND COHERENCE AMONG SWAp AND OTHER NATIONAL STRATEGIES

The lessons learned by SWAp were reflected on the project design. Rather than concentrate on selected areas of operation, the International Development Agencies supported an overall country framework to enhance basic and secondary education. This established a coherent, internally consistent set of policies to develop the school
Scientifically followed and developed complex reforms, which were taken through a gradual evolutionary process rather than a revolutionary process, were introduced. These education development initiatives were carefully pilot-tested before they were included to the policy design. This was further augmented through a process of capacity-building of the provincial level officers, without such exposure and provision of skills, the institutions would have been overloaded. In this manner, ESDP supported the HRD aspect of the provincial-level institutions. The support for implementation of programs were made through the allocation of budgetary provisions and resources needed for monitoring, evaluation, research and studies to areas that were critical. Such process did not exist under earlier educational development projects and activities. In the past, projects were merely carrying on, regardless of the outputs and without financial support conduct studies about the progress or quality of the outputs.

It would now be relevant to focus on the progress of issues that lead to the achievement of EFA goals and other development plans in the field of education. Under Theme One ‘Promoting Equitable Access to Basic and Secondary Education’ during the period from 2006 to 2008, the government made strong progress in reducing by 20,000 the cumulative national target of the number of out-of-school children in the compulsory school age range—5-14 years: grades 1-9. There has been an improvement in the consistency in the data provided by the Provincial Education Authorities and the MOE on the number of out-of-school children brought back to formal schools. Before 2006, the information from school census data was available almost after a year in order to inform and make policy decisions. This delay was due to technical reasons at the zonal level—lack of personnel to enter data. With necessary changes and attending to the causes, the same data for the year 2007 was available for policy-planning on time. The MOE is now in a position to get these vital data. As a result of the timeliness, the data reveals that the survival rate of compulsory education cycle, which was 84% at the beginning of the project, had increased to 87%. This is a positive trend aimed to be continued in the process of achieving the targets set for 2010. Further, support to achieving targets was seen in the results of the independent sample survey, carried out under the EFA unit of the MOE, to identify areas that need special attention, such as the conflict-affected areas.

Another step towards improving EFA goals under ESDFP relates to the establishment of School Attendance Committees (SAC). SACs’ main responsibility is to identify and to get students into the school. As a result of the progress, NFE department had been able to achieve 107% of the initial target. Another progress observed by the mission in their review relates to getting students into the formal education system.

Under Theme Two (Improving Quality of Education) aspects that had assisted EFA, National Development Plans relate to the following:

(a) Curriculum Restructuring and Upgrading (CRU) - Under CRU a major five-year upgrading of the curriculum, made in order to prepare students for the world of work and the knowledge-economy, has been underway by the NIE (2006), the support of ESDFP financial support. The upgrading is meant to focus on the following: (i) encouraging activity learning, (ii) facilitating students in acquiring knowledge, (iii) fostering higher order of learning, and (iv) encouraging non-cognitive aspects of students’ learning.

(b) Teacher Management and Teacher Development - This was another area that ESDFP was very much concerned. Under this area, it is envisaged
that teachers will undergo high quality development programs by using the resources of Universities and the NIE.

(c) Modernisation of the Examination-Testing System
The two main objectives relates to modernising the examination and assessment systems and to making school examinations and other examinations more efficient, effective and informative. To achieve these, a set of Examination and Assessment Guidelines (EAGs) has been developed. Constructing an Item Bank is to follow soon. In addition, the introduction of a classroom-based assessment system is expected. All these changes have to be part of the new training needs for the staff, that is also identified and planned.

(d) Education Publication and Textbook Development Department (EPTD)
For this aspect, materials—textbooks and other educational materials—are continuously being produced and distributed. A study had been conducted on the EPTD to ensure that both the quality and the distribution are at a high level of efficiency, supporting EFA goals.

(e) Promoting Social Cohesion
This is an important area, especially in the present context of Sri Lanka, without which EFA and other National Development Plans may not achieve the targets. ESDFP is very concerned and supportive of social cohesion and harmony and peace-building. This is to be achieved through the following: (i) producing a diverse range of culturally-sensitive teaching and learning materials, (ii) supporting schools and other institutions with media-instruction, (iii) providing instructional materials and aids and (iv) encouraging innovative educational programs.

(f) ICT in Education
This has become the pressing need in response to global demands. The steps taken by the MOE to facilitate the expansion is satisfactory. However, the extent to which it is known and used is less at the moment. The availability of computers and the introduction of the school net seem to have provided the foundation for ICT in Sri Lankan schools. The MOE Master plan (2008-2012) indicates the need for e–learning in the context of supporting EFA and other development plans and activities of Sri Lanka. In connection to this, the support of the NIE in the development of a curriculum and provision of logistical needs at the peripheral areas along with the establishment of e–libraries are welcome steps in the direction of educational development in Sri Lanka.

(g) Establishment of School Libraries
This aspect forms yet another vital need in promoting EFA and other national development programs. The Library Development Unit at the MOE has taken steps to develop school libraries all over Sri Lanka.

(h) English as Second Language and Bilingual Education
These are two aspects that have been considered important vehicles in a multi-lingual society like Sri Lanka. The ESDFP has taken the following initiatives: (i) conducting national-level English language competitions, (ii) creating pilot programs for all school-leavers, (iii) providing teacher-training through Regional English Support Centres.
Bilingual Education was introduced in 2006 to all schools. Under this policy students are provided the option of following subjects in English from grades 6-13. Each Province has a Bilingual Education Program Coordinator. Textbooks are published and distributed by the Educational Publications Department. Teacher training is provided at the provincial level.

**Theme Three** relates to Economic Efficiency and Equity of Resource Allocation. This area affects the implementation of EFA programs and other similar educational development plans. All these work together for a better output. The MOE, Finance Commission (FC), Provincial Education Authorities (PEAs) and Ministry of Finance and Planning (MFP) have worked in coordination under the medium-term budget framework for the improvement of basic and secondary education. The targets for the years 2006-08 were met in relation to the allocation of resources and the replacement expenditure. The MOE and Provincial Councils have also allotted resources in line with the targets of the budget in 2009. This is meant to augment any shortfalls that may arise in the processes.

In addition, actions have also been taken to strengthen the budget formulation in the Provinces through the following measures:

(i) conducting workshops and undertaking field visits, and
(ii) creating awareness in the relationships between budgetary inputs and implementation processes to the provincial personnel.

As a result of this, the understanding and the capacity of the provincial officials including Chief Secretaries had improved considerably. Their understanding of new responsibilities and challenges has been expanded. Development of education has been understood as a critical need of development of the country. Hence, each province will allocate a minimum of Rs.40 million from the ESDP for the enhancement of the EFA and improvement of the quality of learning and teaching. These provincial allocations will assist Accelerated Learning Campaigns (ALCs) in relation to the improvement of subjects, such as First Language, English, Mathematics, Science, ICT and Library Development. The most innovative input and long-felt need since the inception of formal schooling in Sri Lanka is the Wall Divider program—a division of classrooms using mobile partitions.

Another point of great importance in the drive for quality education and achieving EFA and other developmental goals is the introduction of the tracing system of expenditure, referred to as Public Expenditure and Quality Education Tracing System (PEQEDTS). Almost all schools receive funds through the education quality program. The main sources of funds include those which come from the central government and the provincial councils. Funds from NGOs and CBOs vary widely across locations in the country. Although there are constraints and issues in the preparation of the budgets at the school level, the most positive factor in this budgetary process relates to the idea that the planning is done at the grassroots level, which was never done before.

**Theme Four** deals with Programs for School Improvement (PSI), following the aforementioned budgetary processes. This aspect fits neatly in the continuum of support of the EFA and other development targets of the State. As of 2006, the number of schools in the country that followed the PSI method numbered to 50%—which is nearly 4,500 out of a total of nearly 10,000 schools in the
country. The review of the progress of PSI activities relates to the following positive aspects:

(a) providing awareness on PSI to zonal offices and principals, including long-term training for principals
(b) reviewing of the progress by MOE and zones/schools
(c) giving of seed grants to difficult and very difficult schools, allowing flexibility in the use of the funds
(d) providing opportunities for schools to look for local funders and raise local resources to help the school
(e) improving the decision-making capacity of schools.

Capacity-building of all key personnel involved in the ESDFP, from the level of the Chief Secretary to the level of Divisional Director, has been completed. This was accomplished along with the review of the officers of the provincial and zonal level. The review includes the following analyses: (a) their responsibilities b) the nature of the conceptual framework in relation to actual work and c) capacity-building of the various institutions.

Different aspects—in terms of fields and disciplines—of human resource development have been examined. This is a positive signal needed to support EFA and other educational development programs of the MOE under ESDFP. Over 150 officers from MOE, NIE and the Provinces had been sent abroad on specialised programs—short-, medium- and long-term training in institutions in Asia and other countries. Meanwhile, action has been taken to streamline the positions of the principals in terms of promotional prospects. Various programs relating to the induction programs, professional development, changing role and instructional leadership are other new areas of empowering principals. Human resource development plans have been prepared at central and provincial levels. These aspects are to be increased in the future, enabling better output from schools.

SECTION VII: REVIEW OF INTENDED EDUCATION OUTCOMES IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PREVAILING SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY

BACKGROUND

It is appropriate to focus on the current socio-economic scenario of the country before reviewing the type of education the country requires. This is because some of the emerging trends in population, economy and social system influence the educational system. Unlike previous decades, global factors pose as a powerful influence on the economy. This requires changes in the nature of the skills and knowledge that the country has to provide the population to enable them to be competitive in an ever-changing market.

DEMOGRAPHY

As of 2005, the population of the country is 19.5 million. The rate of increase is 1.2%. Other social factors are as follows—as of 2003, life expectancy for males was 70.7 years
while for females it was at 75.4 years. Infant mortality, as of 2005, was pegged at 11 per 1000. One of the favorable factors in the change of demographics was the decline in the birth rate of population. This has resulted in the reduction of the younger population. Since the cost on the education will be reduced, more resources could be diverted to the quality development aspects of education. The reduction of the population growth rate has also affected changes in the parameters of dependency rates. This, too, has declined. Another positive factor is that over the period of the last 40 years, the average household size has decreased from 6 persons to 4.3 persons, as computed by the Central Bank in 2004. This affects the school system because there is a clear indication of the trend in the declining of children to primary schools. For example, in 1953, the under 13 population was 52 % while in 2003/04, this figure has decreased to 24 %. These will have a significant impact on policy issues in the planning of educational reforms.

LITERACY LEVELS

There is a direct correlation between literacy rates and level of education of the people. Literacy rate of the population increased from 40 % in 1940 to 93 % in 2005. The literacy rate of the younger population is higher than that of the older generation. There has also been a decline in the percentage of out of school population while the percentage of those entering the secondary school cycle has increased considerably. However, the percentage of those entering universities remains stagnant, due mainly to the limitations of space in the universities. The establishment of private universities with affiliations to foreign institutions has provided greater opportunity for continuing education. The results of these is that Sri Lanka is now at par with most of the developed countries in the field of education.

With respect to gender, Sri Lanka enjoys parity in the field of education. Enlightened educational policies since the 1930s, with the grant of universal franchise has helped achieve this progress. Education was provided to all, without any discrimination, and for free. Not only is there parity in all stages of the education system at secondary and beyond but one would also see that females abound in all sectors. This is patently seen in the admissions to the universities. The attainment of higher education of the female population has led to other social development aspects, such as the increase in the age of marriage of women, contributing to the reduction of population in the country. All these could lead to a change in the literacy profile in Sri Lanka.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Sri Lanka is a developing economy with a per capita income of US$1030 per person. The growth of the economy has been around 4.5% per annum over the past decade. The growth of the economy has been the result of market-oriented development policies, which enabled the private sector to enter the development foray, especially the industrial and service sectors. Throughout the upsurge of the new policy, the trend has been to integrate the economy with the global trends, to expand human resource development sectors, expanding human capital and reducing bottlenecks in infrastructure. These increased the demand in the financial services, communications, information technology, port services and leisure services. Sudden demand from these sectors has sharply increased the need for skilled personnel in Sri Lanka. These, in turn, influence the education portfolios of the country.
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The increase in the dependence on industries seems to be the trend, although agriculture is still the backbone of the economy. Over the years the per capita income has been increasing, from US$ 120 in 1948 to US$ 1,355 in 2006. After a number of decades, the unemployment rate has significantly decreased. From 24% in 1970 and 15.5% in 1986/87, it has decreased to a rate of 8-9% in 2004.

Foreign employment is one of the main avenues of employment. This has accounted for the highest in foreign exchange in the country today. For this reason, it is important that educational planners provide the needed skills to those who seek employment abroad. This could include career guidance to school-leavers and vocational guidance. This will enable them to seek foreign employment with a better income.

In spite of these positive trends, disparities in income distribution prevail. Although the average monthly income is around Rs.17,000 (US$ 170), 6.6% consist of those who earn around US$ 1 a day. On the other hand, 50% of the population receive state subsidies. Although the income of the lowest 10% has increased over the last decade, the poorest 50% of the population gets only 17.6% of the national income. Meanwhile the richest 30% enjoy over 65% of the national income.

The educational outcomes as anticipated by ESdFP were discussed earlier. Thus, the immediate output of the ESdFP are medium-term and annual educational plans of the national and provincial agencies and the overarching educational sector development plan for 2006-2010. These plans help streamline educational development programs and establish good governance practices. These will ensure improved learning outcomes in both equity and quality.

In terms of outcomes in education, ESdFP program ensures equity in access to education, provision of quality education, equity and efficiency in resource allocation and effectiveness in the use of resources. In relation to quality, the key task is to raise achievement levels through provision of materials/inputs for every child and the efficiency with which these materials are orchestrated to raise pupils' ability to understand what is taught. Quality of education, according to ESdFP, pertains to the extent to which these materials and teachers are efficiently used to raise the achievement of each and every child. Thus, the pupils' achievement is solely judged by the “knowledge, skills, attitudes and added with values.” The responsibility of ESdFP is to support the achievement of these skills, leading to the improvement of standards of education.

Equity and efficiency are two important concepts that ESdFP has been keen to sustain. These contribute to enabling each child to access education for the maximum development of his/her potentials. On the other hand efficiency, as a corollary to equity, expects the ‘optimal relationship between inputs and outputs’ bearing in mind the cost-effectiveness of the operations. The role of ESdFP has been to bring a balance between equity and efficiency without sacrificing either.

Effectiveness is measured in terms of the achievement of the intended outcomes. The indicators to measure the level of achievement relate to the following: (a) net enrolment, (b) net completion rates, (c) net enrolment in relation to different subjects, (d) learning achievements in basic and secondary grades and (e) resource allocation according to the designed formulae. The outcomes are monitored by the provinces/zones and ethnicity, gender and medium of instruction. In addition to these, there are studies undertaken to assess the progress in grade 5 and other
In view of the intended educational outcomes, the government has adopted a rolling facility plans to be of use to children who have lesser means to achieve the intended outcomes.

To summarise, the context of prevailing socio-economic aspects of the country is important in evaluating developmental goals. Firstly, disparities in the income distribution and educational outcomes may be influenced by these aspects. The state has taken cognizance of these disparities and provided support to children. The aim of the state is that poverty will not affect the teaching-learning process and outputs if children diligently focus on their learning processes. These benefits include free education, from kindergarten to the university, provision of scholarships, at grade 5 and at the university level, to deserving students. Aside from the provision of no tuition fees, the state also gives textbooks at all levels in primary and secondary levels, supply of spectacles, school transportation subsidies and school uniforms for all children. Subsidies are to be increased for children in primary and lower secondary schools since the poorer children are attending these schools. These are given to those who comprise 70% of the children belonging to lower income groups.

SECTION VIII: DESIGN PARAMETERS AND PRIORITIES IN THE SWAP

This section focuses on how EFA goals are to be met. EFA is the universally accepted protocol, goals of which are the ideals that nations strive to achieve. These goals are integral parts of the ESDFP in Sri Lanka. The goals of EFA are the following: (1) Expanding and improving comprehension early childhood care and education for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children, (2) Ensuring that by 2015, all children have access to and complete free and compulsory education of good quality, (3) Providing youth and adults skills, and expanding opportunities in the global economy, (4) Achieving 50% reduction in adult illiteracy, (5) Achieving gender parity, and (6) Improving all aspects of education and ensuring excellence of all.

Although some of these have been met over the decades, there are areas which have yet to be more focused in the field of education. ESDFP seems to be concerned in goals that have been met less successfully than others. Thus, under the four themes there is less coverage on issues related to equity, quality and relevance of education. There is a need to look at the delivery of education due to changes that have taken place in relation to demographic, social, economic and ethnic dimensions. The ESDFP attempts to examine these issues and take a fresh look at them so that changes that may result would assess education more rationally and efficiently. The ESDFP looks at these issues very pragmatically in the perspective of both MDGs and EFA goals to enhance efficiency. This is the first time such a massive task, involving all sectors and focusing on international guidelines, has been attempted, bringing about a significant overhaul of the education system in Sri Lanka.
The parameters and priorities of SWAp and ESdFP are indicated in its four themes. These are the following: Theme 1 relates to increasing equitable access to basic and secondary education, Theme 2 focuses on improving the quality of basic and secondary education, Theme 3 emphasises enhancing economic efficiency and equity of resource allocation and Theme 4 looks into strengthening governance and service delivery.

Focusing on the themes vis-à-vis the EFA goals, theme 1 is a reflection of EFA goal 2 that attempts to provide complete and free and quality primary education for all by 2015. Currently, the five issues identified and promoted under theme 1 of ESdFP are the following: (a) existence of out of school children in spite of the high literacy rate and availability of opportunities, (b) inequity of the school system, (c) provision of special education needs in areas short of institutions and quality, (d) need for a coordinated approach facilitating school-dropouts at various stages, with provision for a second chance to enter the formal system and the need for appropriate interventions, and (e) lack of proper criteria for allocation of funds to needy groups and children rather than be relaxed requirements for benefitting underserved groups.

Under ESdFP, many initiatives have been taken to reduce and rectify anomalies that have arisen regarding the above issues. These are briefly indicated as follows:

**ESDFP THEME 1 RELATES TO EFA GOAL 2 AND 3**

- Step 1 – ensure that by 2015, almost all children under 14 years of age attend school
- Step 2 – rationalise the school system to avoid wastage. This includes the need for both large and small schools to be of a manageable size.
- Step 3 – provide equitable access to O and A levels at all divisions by the year 2010
- Step 4 – provide access to special education to all needy children by 2015
- Step 5 – provide career guidance to potential school-leavers and link them to public and private entrepreneurs by 2015
- Step 6 – provide NFE opportunities for out-of-school youth to develop vocational skills by 2015
- Step 7 – educational subsidy to be rationalised enabling higher subsidies for lower income groups

**ESDFP THEME 2 RELATES TO EFA GOALS 4 AND 6**

Under theme 2, it is expected that there be an increased relevance of curriculum, reduction of disparities in achievement, address inequity in deployment of teachers, provide leadership at all levels of the education system, adoption of supply-driven teacher recruitment, improvement of teacher motivation and professional growth, better congruence between textbooks and teacher guides and emphasis on ethics and morale of the teacher community.

- Step 1 – bring about curriculum and examination reforms–relevance and higher order in achievement
- Step 2 – reduce disparity in achievement levels through divisional- and school-level planning and allocation of resources to divisions
- Step 3 – introduce on site school based teacher-training
- Step 4 – re-organisation of National Colleges of Education to ensure teacher effectiveness at school level
- Step 5 – enhance quality of textbooks
- Step 6 – promote ethics and values into education at all levels
ESDFP THEME 3 RELATES TO EFA GOALS 1, 3 AND 4

It is expected under Theme 3 to improve equity in the distribution of resources and ensure that issues related to access, quality and governance themes are addressed properly and efficiently, ensure proper disbursement and utilisation of resources and establishment of a proper tracking-system of expenditures.

The key steps planned to be undertaken are as follows:

- Step 1 – improve equity in the distribution of resources by developing sector policy and investment policy
- Step 2 – ensure multi-year planning and monitoring of the education sector
- Step 3 – promote accountability and transparency

ESDFP THEME 4 RELATES TO EFA GOALS NUMBER 2, 3 AND 4

Theme 4 under ESDFP expects to increase efficiency of human resource management, provide job descriptions, increase transparency by increasing community participation, and enhance efficiency and effectiveness.

The strategies adopted to achieve the abovementioned goals are as follows:

- Step 1 – set performance targets to enhance efficiency in all offices
- Step 2 – improve transparency by increasing community participation at all levels, from school to divisional
- Step 3 – analysis of capacities of personnel in relation to efficiency and effectiveness of coordination amongst partners/agencies

SECTION IX: ANALYSIS ON SWAP’S IMPLEMENTATION PLAN IN RELATION TO DEVELOPMENT OF POLICY, ORGANISATIONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXTS

As pointed out earlier, the Education Sector Development Project (ESDP) is organised according to four themes.

The ESDFP will be implemented by several branches of the same institution, with National Ministry of Education at the apex level, supported by a number of national institutions, such as, MOE, NEC and NIE. The responsibility for implementation of the ESDFP at the Provincial level would be with the Ministries of Education at the Provincial council. They will be supported by apex-level institutions in addition to the support of the Finance Commission (FC). The Ministry of Finance and Planning will oversee the overall disbursement of funds for education. The FC will distribute funds directed to the Provincial Councils in relation to education.

As a central control mechanism, the government will maintain a Steering Committee chaired by the Secretary of the Ministry of Education. This committee will be composed of representatives from the Ministries of Education in the Provincial Councils, the Ministry of Finance and Planning, the FC, and the NEC. The IDA will be invited to attend all meetings of the Steering Committee.

In order to facilitate the Implementation Plan adhering to the principles of planning, a number of other measures are adopted so that the ESDFP activities run smoothly in keeping with the accepted norms and procedures demanded by the Center. In brief,
these relate to (a) Basic and secondary education budget covenant, (b) Annual updating of the ESDFP rolling plan, (c) Monitoring and evaluation of mid-term reviews, and (d) Formulation of the financial covenant and environment and social covenant.

Preparation of the basic and secondary education budget covenant will be the responsibility of the Ministry of Finance and Planning. On the other hand, the FC will maintain public expenditure on basic and secondary education to the baseline year of 2004. The government will maintain what has been provided as incentives to children in all public schools. The performance of the Provincial Councils related to implementation, results, policies and outcomes will be studied for further funding by the Ministry of Finance and Planning and FC.

The MOE, the FC and each Provincial Ministry are expected to submit their respective rolling plans annually to the International Development Association (IDA) for comments. Dates are fixed for submission of these reports so that the schedules are adhered to strictly. The MOE, Provincial Education Ministries (PEM), FC, Ministry of Finance and Planning and NEC will carry out an annual review of ESDFP, providing the progress in accordance with the plan of action agreed upon with the IDA.

For financial arrangements, the MOE, PEMs and the FC will ensure the following: (a) satisfactory financial arrangements are in place, (b) semi-annual management reports are submitted, and (c) audit reports are made.

For the environment and social covenant, the MOE and PEMs will implement the environmental and social assessment framework prepared for the Project.

IDA support and role of other donors in relation to implementation

The overall assistance to the ESDFP will be provided through IDA while other development partners provide parallel support to specific areas within the overarching framework of the ESDFP.

These are illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1: International Development Partners, INGOs, NGOs Supporting the Education Sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of agency</th>
<th>Main area of support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World Bank</td>
<td>increase in access and participation in basic and secondary education improve quality of education, enhance efficiency of resource allocation and strengthening management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADB</td>
<td>secondary education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>primary education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>Education For All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTZ</td>
<td>both primary and secondary education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JICA</td>
<td>both primary and secondary education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Credit line</td>
<td>secondary education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Save the Children</td>
<td>primary and secondary education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan Sri Lanka</td>
<td>mainly primary education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Vision</td>
<td>primary and secondary education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Red Cross</td>
<td>improvement of Tsunami-affected schools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ESDFP, MOE Sri Lanka, 2007
INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The ESDFP will be managed and implemented at the national level by the MOE, and at the provincial level by the PEMs. Others involved in the management and monitoring of ESDFP are the Ministry of Finance and Planning and FC. These activities are managed at both at national and provincial levels.

Table 2: Institutional and Implementation Arrangement
Level and Institution Functions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level and Institution Functions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.0 National level</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>establishing national policies, norms and standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>formulating school and pre-service teacher education curricular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>publishing and establishing school textbooks (free) providing school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uniforms (free) conducting public examinations establishing national</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>norms and standards for higher-order spaces, teaching-learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assets, teaching-learning materials management of national schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>employment of teachers in national schools, monitoring, evaluation,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>research and studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.0 Provincial level</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>establishing provincial policies, norms and standards managing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>provincial school systems implementing teacher development programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>implementing special and NFE programs conducting provincial monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Project appraisal document, November 2005

The ESDFP mid-term review 2008 Aide Memoire by the World Bank clearly indicates the progress of the new program. The overall assessment is satisfactory both in terms of implementation and expected achievement of objectives. The notable achievements of ESDFP highlight the progress of the SWAps implementation plan in relation to planned policy are as follows:

1. There has been a steady progress on the objective of expanding equitable access to basic education. The rates of compulsory education (grades 1-9) had increased from 78% to 87% by the end of 2007. This rise was observed in all provinces of the country.
2. Improvement in the quality of education is another aspect that was observed by the mission team. Thus, in relation to the critical subjects in the schools, such as Language, English and Mathematics in grade 4 under National Assessments of Learning Outcomes, there has been an improvement in all the nine provinces, both urban and rural areas. At the same time the passing rate in the O level, taken at the end of 11 years of schooling, has also increased from 47.7% in 2005 to 49.1% in 2007.
3. The curriculum changes and upgrading have been consistent to schedule from primary and junior secondary.
4. Examination guidelines of the core subjects, such as First Language, Mathematics, and Science has been completed and the preparation of bank test items is on the verge of being completed.
5. There has been significant progress in the publication of books and the delivery of the same to provinces and schools. A review of the texts had also been instituted so that errors can be corrected before the textbooks reach the child.
6. The capacity of the provincial education authorities has been considerably improved at the zonal levels. These are reflected in the achievement levels of children during examinations.
7. The interests of the Chief Ministers at the Provincial level have substantially increased. This has had a positive effect on the morale and the quality of the education sector in the provinces.
8. The expansion of the Program for School Improvement (PSI) has made good progress.
9. The implementation of the Human Resource Development Plan for educational personnel at all levels has progressed, providing exposure to a large number of officers in different countries, in relation to various aspects of educational development.
10. Other aspects relating to operations at the MOE (pertaining to payments and others), accounting systems have improved with the assistance of the MOE and FC. Efficiency levels of procurement and disbursement have increased considerably with the appointment of additional officers.
11. The operational committees convened at the provinces, led by the Chief Secretaries and Directors have helped in the improvement of the HRD Plan. The communication strategies between and amongst ESDFP and MOE and other relevant departments and sectors have improved the efficiency and quality of services. A substantial number of research studies on this have been conducted.

However, it was noted by the review mission that the progress of work in the Northern areas has not been as satisfactory as it should be. This is traced to the conflicts that prevailed in that part of the country. But this is a temporary and suitable action has been made to these areas.

SECTION X: ISSUES OF FEASIBILITY, IMPLEMENTATION CAPACITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Obviously, an ambitious program such as the ESDFP requires efficient monitoring, research, evaluation and analysis. Such approaches will provide the nature of the progress and shortfalls which require urgent attention. The monitoring and evaluation will reflect on inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes. The log frame analysis of the ESDFP includes the following key items. An example of the above is given below Table 3.

**Table 3: Project Development Objectives**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project development objectives</th>
<th>Outcome indicators</th>
<th>Use of outcome information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>enhance equitable access, quality, efficiency and service delivery</td>
<td>net enrolment rates in primary and basic education</td>
<td>information will be used, whether the programs require change, adjustment of funding and provide a foundation for continuous policy development in education sector</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Every theme has been analysed to get in-depth understanding of the progress and shortfalls as bases for relevant action.

The monitoring activities will be undertaken by government educational agencies, such as the MOE, NEC, FC, and PEMs, along with NIE and National Education Research and Evaluation Centre (NEREC) and private consulting firms. Policy research will be the main responsibility of NIE and NEREC.

There is always a high-level of monitoring and implementation support. The monitoring team is chaired by the Secretary of the MOE with additional Secretaries, heads of departments, DG NIE and representatives of the FC, with the participation of the Bank. In addition, there are other meetings led by the Chairperson of FC with several other technical teams who have field experiences in the provinces. There are also collaborations with subject specialists.

Sustainability of a program depends not only on funding and other resources but also on logistical support to the program. Under ESDFP, these elements are looked into carefully, not only by provision of needs but also by regular monitoring and evaluation.

SEVERAL ELEMENTS OF ESDFP SUPPORT SUSTAINABILITY

These are as follows:

1. **High priority awarded by policy-makers**
   
   The ESDP supports the program of ESDFP and enjoys high priority in the overall education development framework of Sri Lanka.

2. **Strong national consensus on policy measures to improve basic and secondary education**
   
   This has been strengthened by the consultations carried out with the beneficiaries which strongly supported ESDFP at all levels, through school-based planning and supporting plans from the central and provincial education agencies. The strong support from all sectors ensures the sustainability of the program.

3. **Flexibility of the program design of ESDFP based on a five-year rolling plan**
   
   The ESDFP allows for pilot-testing and fine-tuning of programs before implementation. These also allow for changes to be integrated as the program proceeds, enabling sustainability.

4. **Review arrangements assist sustainability**
   
   Reviews indicate any shortfalls in all aspects of the program reviews regularly conducted by the IDA provide support to implement programs effectively. A wide range of stakeholders is present at the review meetings.

5. **Identifying critical risks and possible controversial aspects of the program**
   
   Through ESDFP, extensive public consultations were carried out. The ESDFP is based on a flexible rolling plan that allows the country to adapt the program in light of new circumstances.
Understanding of the new approach, its vision and objectives is not clear to all officers in the education sector. Hence, this may affect the program in the long run, as what happened to new changes introduced in Sri Lanka (1972 Reforms) and elsewhere in the developing countries (e.g., Tanzania). All should be on board to get a better impact.

Some of the critiques and concerns raised about the SWAp are as follows:

• Lack of awareness of the volume of funds by the stakeholders was a problem in the preparation of budgets. It is not possible to develop plans in a vacuum. Some may get discouraged and disgruntled.

• Some Provincial Departments of Education found it difficult to coordinate the implementation of school development plans since the Provincial Ministry of Education handled the capital component.

• Schools are not indicated and the limits in the preparation of the yearly development plan and the zonal budget are based on these types of school plans.

• In the allocation of funds, the schools with the least resources do not receive adequate funds to compensate for the anomalies that prevailed earlier. They are placed at a disadvantaged position when compared to those schools that had resources earlier.

• Lack of qualified teachers result in the low effectiveness of the EQI expenditure.

• Other problems relate to the lack of technical knowledge of the principal in developing plans and use of the EQI funds.

• Funds not reaching the schools at the beginning of the year is another problem the principals encounter.

• There are allegations of corrupt practices on the part of the principals and the inability of the zonal officers to track these down on time.

• Both political patronage and poor storage facilities are also hindrances in the use of resources.

• Lack of awareness of the probable income for the school by the principals was another issue in the preparation of the plans and budgets.

• The lack of flexibility in the transfer of funds among different budget-lines also posed as a challenge.

Civil Society Organisations, also referred to as NGOs, mostly include local-and national level organisations. These also include organisations with few activities and large ones with comprehensive coverage of programs. Some of these could be focused on emergency response and therefore may not be permanent. These include international organisations. The larger ones would tend to also focus on emergency issues but once the emergency is over, these organizations return to their normal programs.
1. In all these activities, there seem to be two weaknesses, both in relation to the recipients and service-providers. The recipients are unable to use the resources provided by the CSOs. Moreover, they seem to be unaware of the exact nature of the role of the CSOs. This lack of information seems to be a great hindrance to seeking and utilising resources, and pursuant of further linkages with CSOs. The source of this gap relates to lack of information and awareness of resources beyond the government sector. All teachers, principals, and officers at all levels should be provided with an exposure to such aspects in their formal training programs. Thus, in teacher education, management courses, a strong component of pragmatic programs should be introduced by the MOE as part of the HRD. A curriculum comprising of all elements that would allow learners to develop their skills and equip them with the knowledge they need, should be developed by the NIE, in collaboration with CSOs and other relevant institutions. In fact, such programs should be mandatory in all courses at the universities, similar to what is done in some of the universities in Asia and elsewhere.

2. The contents of such courses should include aspects on health and nutrition, agriculture, vocational education, and leadership roles. The initiative could be taken by the CSOs based on the needs-analysis of the SWAp system in Sri Lanka. Using the Aide memoires, these areas could be identified, and related training exposures could be provided by the CSOs. This would also be an exposure for the CSOs to get in-depth understanding of the real issues, approaches to be adopted, resources to be identified, methods of avoiding inefficiency and corruption, and working relations with government institutions at the ground-level.

3. On the part of the schools and through both MOE and PMOE, the CSOs should be encouraged to get involved in the development of programs that facilitate skill-development of children. However, these activities and experiences should be linked to the curriculum as far as possible. There should also be absolute openness and transparency in what CSOs undertake at these levels. Hence, there is a need to commence with small actions which are not subject to controversies. Gradually collaborating with the school community and the parents will become critical at the initial stages for the CSOs, which are, at present, under a heavy cloud of suspicion.

4. It is also possible for CSOs to encourage children to seek employable programs and such related skills, enabling the students to learn relevant skills through NFE programs which are, at the moment, open mainly to school-dropouts. A collaboration between NFE and FE would be ideal, since this is likewise encouraged by UNESCO. CSOs could harness the good practices prevailing all over the world and provide exemplary materials and exposures to the teacher community, enabling them to link development directly to learning at school-levels. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has developed materials for the agricultural sector, including practices on pollution, environment protection and harnessing of natural resources. The CSOs
have greater access to such literature and practices that should be optimised by the school system, for the benefit of the children. The school holidays and weekends could be utilized for such programs, converting the school into a dynamic institution, contributing directly to the development of the community and the economy of the country. In this way, learning becomes meaningful and rewarding. This is a challenge that CSOs should face so that they may be acceptable to the formal system. After all, these constitute the society, and the nation.

5. CSOs in Sri Lanka face another inherent obstacle in dealing with the State and the community. This is related to lack of confidence and the growing suspicion that the State has on the CSOs. This is traced to the hidden agenda of some CSOs. When both, the people and State, become suspicious, the operations of CSOs become difficult. These two groups feel that most CSOs are not transparent and have hidden agenda that are detrimental to the sovereignty of the State. This is very unfortunate and tragic. These suspicions have arisen due to the greater interest shown by the CSOs and resulting biases towards minority groups. The CSOs seem to show a keener interest and to provide resources to the minority groups rather provide funds to all impoverished groups in general, including others from different ethnic and religious groups. The people of Sri Lanka have been living peacefully for centuries. This policy addressing only specific groups by CSOs should be avoided if they are to be acceptable to the State and the general public. Earning the trust of the people is an imperative for all who work in community development. These steps have been interpreted by the State and the people as threats against the sovereignty of the country. Hence, CSOs need to align with the socio-cultural ethos and conduct themselves above board. Of course, this does not mean that the CSOs should be mere appendages to existing political leadership and policies of the ruling parties and avoid exposing any shortcomings related to governance and discrimination.

However, a word of caution for the readers in that CSOs are mistrusted by the State since the State itself is not always transparent in its human rights track and the democratic processes adopted. The State fears that exposures will harm its power and deflate images through exposures of its misdemeanors vis-à-vis many undemocratic social and political actions. The CSOs have take cognizance of these positive and negative elements, exposing the negative ones in a transparent manner and not getting involved in international diaspora.

6. The Chief Minister welcomed *gratis* services by the CSOs to assist in the teaching of Mathematics and English in schools where teachers are not available. On the other hand, he was averse to organizations whose aim was conversion.

Further the CSOs could take over the development of village-level small schools and its village under their wing, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education.
7. Another expectation from the CSOs was related to their acting as pressure groups (political, social opinions on issues that relate to the best interest of the community) and also their ability to provide expert opinions on technical matters.

From this paper, we learn about the relationship between the four themes under ESDFP and EFA goals, where EFA goals are directly focused and measurements are taken to achieve the tasks set by EFA goals. Using SWAp principles, the implementation of the programmes were spearheaded by IDA, INGOs and government agencies, and collaborated by Civil Society Organisations. The improvements in the management and distribution of resources, coordination and collaboration of government and civil society, and streamlined and better focus on specific aspects of education have resulted in facilitating the greater achievement in the quality of the educational outputs indicated in the four themes under ESDFP. However, other challenges need to be faced. The needs of disadvantaged areas and communities still have to be addressed. Disparities in the achievements of urban and rural areas have to be balanced. Policies for better management of resources have to be drawn. While stakeholders are optimistic about the effectiveness and efficiency of ESDFP hinged on SWAp principles, all must remain committed to continual reviewing of programs, to identifying critical risks, and to engaging national consensus for the betterment of Sri Lanka’s educational system.
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LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

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ANNEX: STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

STUDY ON SECTOR-WIDE APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT (SWAP) COALITION FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, SRI LANKA

1) Does SWAP planning differ from other planning strategies? Yes / No
   If ‘Yes’ indicate 3 differences
   1.
   2.
   3.
   4. any other

   If ‘No’ what are the similarities
   1.
   2.
   3.
   4. any other

2) Indicate 3 factors that influenced introduction of SWAP
   1.
   2.
   3.
   4. any other

3) Were any civil society organizations involved in SWAP? Yes / No
   If ‘Yes’ what were their responsibilities?
   a.
   b.
   c.
   d. any other

   If ‘No’ what were the reasons for not involving CSOs?
   a.
   b.
   c.
   d. any other

4) What were the roles of international donors in SWAP?
   1. resource allocation
   2. decision-making
   3. providing agendas
   4. any other
5) What are the comparisons between SWAP and other similar national / regional level planning?
   1. 
   2. 
   3. 
   4. any other

6) What are the educational outcomes expected from SWAP?
   1. 
   2. 
   3. 
   4. any other

7) How are priorities determined in relation to other planning/development policies?
   1. 
   2. 
   3. 
   4. any other

8) What are the salient features of SWAP in relation to other planning/development programmes

9) How does SWAP facilitate implementation?
   1. 
   2. 
   3. 
   4. any other

10) What are the suggestions to engage CSOs in SWAP?
    1. 
    2. 
    3. 
    4. any other