

THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM  
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING  
JAPAN INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGENCY

**VIETNAM  
SUPPORT PROGRAM FOR  
PRIMARY EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT  
Phase I**

**FINAL REPORT  
ANNEX 2**

**National Primary Education Development Program (National PEDP)**



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*For currency conversion,  
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*Annex 2 accommodates the “National Primary Education Development Program”, which is prepared by the Ministry of Education and Training, Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam with assistance from Government of Japan through the Japan International Cooperation Agency.*

*At the time of the final report preparation, the Program is expected to be approved by the Vice-Minister of Education and Training by the end of April 2002.*

**The Socialist Republic of Vietnam**  
Ministry of Education and Training

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***National Primary Education  
Development Program***

# PRIMARY EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (PEDP) 2002 Edition

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## ABBREVIATION

ABE	Alternative Basic Education
ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AUSAid	Australian Agency for International Development
BAPI	Broad Area of Possible Intervention
BOET	Bureau of Education and Training
BTC	Belgian Technical Cooperation
CBR	Community Based Rehabilitation
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CPRGS	Comprehensive Poverty Reduction Growth Strategy
CRS	Catholic Relief Service
DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
DOET	Department of Education and Training
DWG	Donor Working Group
E&T	Education and Training
ECE	Early Childhood Education
EDSP 2010	Education Development Strategic Plan 2010
EFA	Education for All
EMIC	Educational Management Information Center
EMIS	Educational Management Information System
EPCB	Education Planning Capacity Building
EU	European Union
F&P	Finance & Planning
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
GOV	Government of Vietnam
GSO	General Statistical Office
HCM	Ho Chi Minh City
HDI	Human Development Index
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IM	Issue Matrix
INSET	In-service Training
IRDS	Institute for School Research & Design of School
IT	Information Technology
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LTFP	Long Term Financial Plan
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MPI	Ministry of Planning & Investment
MTFP	Mid Term Financial Plan
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NF	Non-formal
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIES	National Institute for Education and Science
NIM	National Issue Matrix
NOK	Norwegian Krone
NORAD	Norwegian Aid Development
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PA	Prioritized Area
PED	Primary Education Department

PEDC	Primary Education for Disadvantaged Children
PEDP	Primary Education Development Program
PHC	Primary Health Care
PMU	Project Management Unit
PPBS	Planning-Programming-Budgeting System
PPCs	Provincial People's Committees
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
PRESET	Pre-service Training
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PTA	Parents Teacher Association
PTD	Primary Teacher Development
RIED	Researching Institution of Educational Development
SCF	Save the Children Fund
SCMF	School Construction and Maintenance Fund
SEN	Special Education Needs
T&L	Teaching & Learning
TA	Technical Assistance
TD	Teacher Department
TOT	Trainer of Trainer
TPR	Teacher-Pupil Ratio
TTC	Teacher Training College
TTI	Teacher Training Institute
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	US Dollar
VLSS	Vietnamese Living Standard Survey
VND	Vietnamese Dong
VSO	Voluntary Service Overseas
WSD	Whole School Development
WB	World Bank



# **Ministry of Education and Training**

## **Acknowledgement**

To meet the human resource needs of the modernization and industrialization of the country, it is understood that improvement of not only secondary and higher, but also basic education, especially, primary education, is crucially important. With such understandings, "Vietnamese Education Development Strategic Plan to Year 2010" ensures the universalisation of primary education and the quality improvement of primary education.

The Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP), which is a part of the EFA National Action Plan, is an outcome of efforts to develop broad areas of intervention that support the plan, and focus them into feasible and concrete programmes/projects for the development of primary education.

In the process of developing PEDP, PMU (Program Management Unit) has involved many stakeholders at various levels, such as governmental, non-governmental organizations and provincial authorities, which contributed greatly to the formulation of the Broad Area of Possible Intervention for the development of primary education. In developing this program, the JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) Program Team supported PMU's work technically, and we are grateful to them for their dedication.

It is our intention to gradually integrate all on-going and planned primary education projects and programme activities into the PEDP in order to achieve better co-ordination of efforts to attain the goals of the plan to 2010.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all those who have contributed to the preparation of this development program.

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Le Vu Hung  
Vice Minister of Education and Training

## **INTRODUCTION TO THE PRIMARY EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (PEDP)**

The provision of 'appropriate' human resources for modernization and industrialization of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam is a key development issue. Improvements in education are therefore given prominence in the 'Strategy for Socio Economic Development 2001-2010' document. The consolidation of the primary education sector and further development of secondary and higher education is important to meet the resource needs of a country which is in the process of modernization and industrialization.

The Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) is now preparing the national Education for All (EFA) Action Plan (2000-2015). This Action Plan will address the following issues: Early Childhood Education, General Education (Primary and Junior Secondary), Out-of-School Children and Youth, and Adult Literacy. The proposals of the PEDP (2001-2010) document are consonant with those contained in the primary education section of the 'EFA Action Plan'.

The 'Education Development Strategic Plan for 2001-2010' (EDS 2010) addresses several key solutions to further develop and enhance all levels of Vietnamese education. The Primary Education Development Program (PEDP) presented here is a comprehensive action program, which aims to achieve EDS 2010 targets for primary education in Vietnam. The PEDP (1) presents necessary activities to be taken to achieve EDS 2010 targets in order to consolidate and develop primary education, (2) provides a referring framework for the Government of Vietnam (GOV) and international donors to identify and address areas of needs, and (3) facilitates coherent coordination and collaboration between the GOV and international donor organizations through its use.

The PEDP will assist international donors to formulate planned interventions on a systematic basis for the next decade in line with the EDS 2010. The PEDP document is an evolving working document subject to continual revision according to needs and changing situational and developmental circumstances. Stakeholders will be involved in its development.

The PEDP document has six sections. Section 1 is a situation analysis of primary education. Section 2 describes the results of the needs assessment in matrix form and summarizes them under six 'Key Constraint' statements: (i) Education Management; (ii) Teacher Training; (iii) Facilities; (iv) Quality in the Classroom: Teachers, Curriculum, and Teaching and Learning Processes; (v) Accessibility to School; and (vi) Finance and 'Socialization'. Section 3 thereafter presents a series of 'Broad Areas of Possible Interventions' (BAPIs). Section 4 describes how MOET will coordinate donor intervention under the PEDP; Section 5 shows how MOET will monitor progress in realizing EDS 2010 targets; and Section 6 describes lessons learnt from the PEDP process.

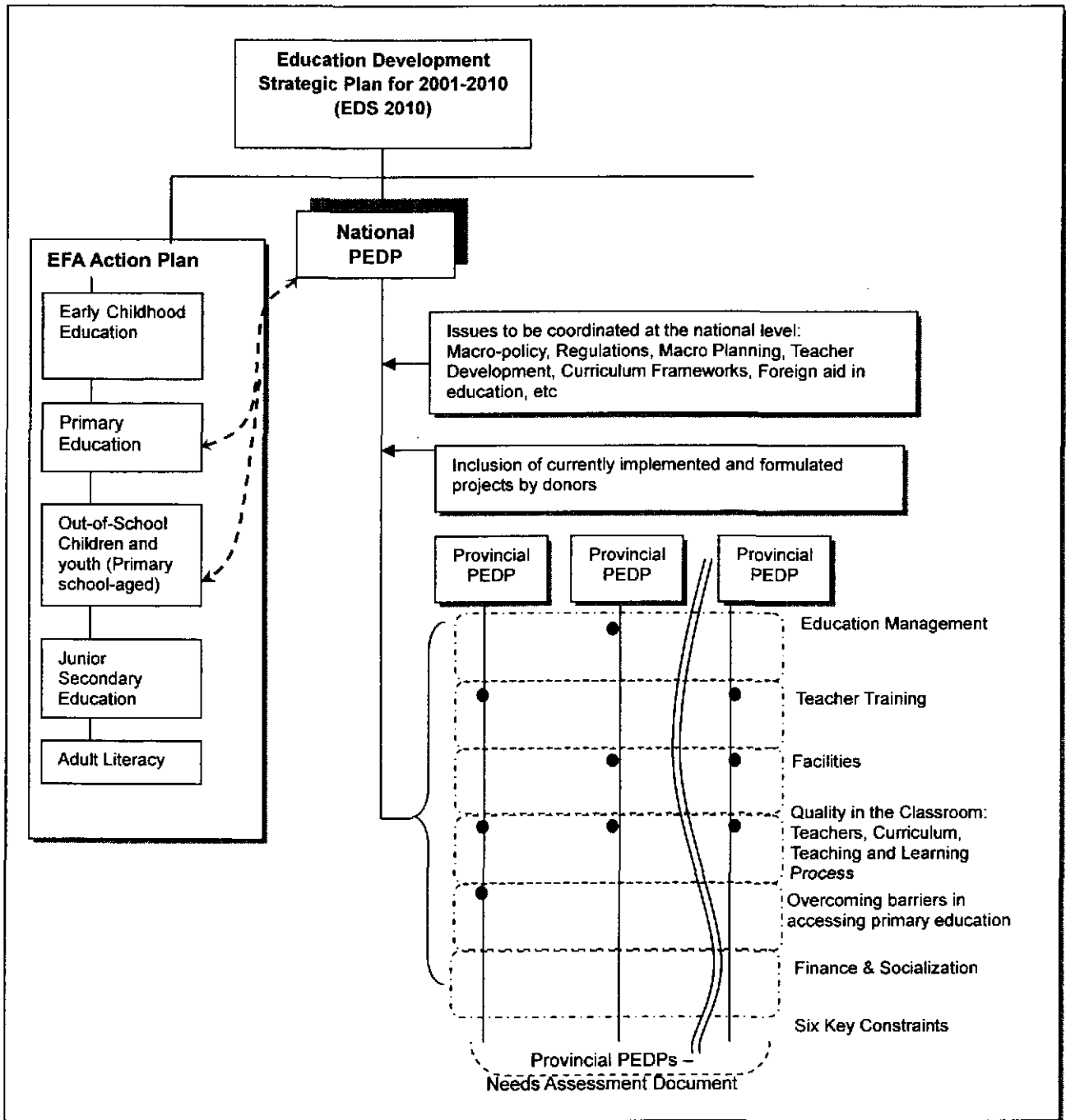


Figure: Conceptualizing PEDP

# **1. SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS**

## **1.1 Government Education Policy Context**

Article 35 of the 1992 Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam stipulates "Education is the first priority in the national policy. In addition, the 'Education Law' (1998) provides the structure for the national education system, its organization and operation of educational institutions, and the duties and rights of teachers/, learners, families, and of schools and society.

The Government's education policy is operationalized through the 'Education Development Strategic Plan for 2001-2010 promulgated on 28 December 2001 (EDS 2010), which provides a series of goals to be attained by the Year 2005 and 2010. The document seeks to address Vietnam's present situation, its future positioning, and means of strategy implementation and indicators of progress. The context of the EDS 2010 is within the framework of the 'World Conference on Education for All' held in Dakar, Senegal (April 2000).

The Government of Vietnam identifies its overall areas of needs in the context of the region's globalization and to direct educational needs towards the requirements of a knowledge-based 'smart' economy, and thus to accelerate the industrialization of Vietnam within its national context. The Government forecasts an annual average GDP increase of 7% and that by "2010, the GDP will increase twice of the year 2000" (EDS 2010). Furthermore, the Government anticipates a likely redistribution of the contribution of various key sectors of the economy to the GDP as well as changes in the structure of the country's labor force: a likely fall in the agricultural labor force (61.3% in 2000 to 50% in 2010), a slight increase in services (22% to 26%), and substantial increase in industry (16.75 to 24%).

Vietnam's efforts to upgrade its education resulted in raising its HDI position ranking from 121 in 1990 to 108 in 2000. State budget expenditure on Education and Training (E&T) for 2000 is put at 14, 256 Billion VND and anticipated to rise to 23, 421 Billion VND in 2005 and to 37,813 Billion VND in 2010 which represents an increase of 5% (15 to 20%) in the rate of state expenditure on E&T, and a per capita E&T rise from USD 12 to 27 at present value. However, inclusion of financial resources outside the state budget raises the total amount of financial resources for E&T in 2000 to 20, 005 Billion VND rising to 36, 301 Billion VND in 2005, and 62, 390 Billion VND in 2010.

## **1.2 Education Context for the Implementation of EDS 2010**

Quantitative indicators and qualitative situational analysis suggest that the 1990s was the decade of progress for primary education in Vietnam. Though the quantitative expansion of primary education has nearly achieved Education For All (EFA) goals in the 90s, there are many requisites to achieve qualitative expansion and enhancement to meet international standards.

The key primary education target (derived from the EDS 2010 and Comprehensive Poverty Reduction & Growth Strategy; CPRGS) is the consolidation of universal primary education (UPE). This is to be achieved through:

1. Increasing the proportion of primary school-aged children in primary school to 97% by 2005 and 99% by 2010;

2. Increasing primary completion rate to 85-95% by 2010 compared to the 1998 rate of 68% (MOET).

The Ministry of Education and Training's (MOET) policies will seek to achieve the following targets with regard to primary education by 2010:

1. Further enhancement of enrolment of pupils to achieve 99% of net enrolment rate (NER)
2. Redressing disparities in the enrolment and transition rates of primary pupils, with emphasis on achieving educational equity for all pupils.
3. Enhancing and ensuring quality of education.
4. Improvement of the management and assessment of the primary school system.

The EDS 2010 falls within the broad domains of the Education For All (EFA) and the Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (CPRGS) initiatives.

Vietnam participated in the World Conference on Education for All (2000). Several EFA goals were agreed to in the Dakar Framework of Action that have implications for primary education, the main ones being: 1) Completion of primary education; 2) Improving the quality of education; and, 3) Achievement of learning outcomes.

These targets are similarly identified in the draft document Providing Quality Basic Education For All (Nov 2001) and three key challenges are established: 1) Elimination of socio-economic and geographic disparities in access, coverage and participation; 2) Expansion of basic education to meet international targets of UPE; and, 3) Improvement in the quality of teaching/learning outcomes.

The CPRGS (January 2000) provides a wide-ranging action plan that "translates the Government's general policies, mechanisms and measures into specific concrete measures" (CPRGS: Jan 2002, p2) with emphasis on realizing economic growth and poverty reduction. It identifies sectors where poverty predominates and targets areas where poverty is concentrated (mountainous areas and among ethnic groups), as well as the causes of poverty.

The EDS 2010, the goals of EFA and the multi-sectoral focus which the CPRGS document brings to the various aspects of poverty reduction are important referring documents. They provide a context to the Needs Analysis conducted in the provinces, and underpin the identification of the Broad Areas of Possible Intervention (BAPIs) for primary education in the 'Primary Education Development Program' (PEDP) document.

## **1.3 Education System**

### **1.3.1 Government**

MOET (Appendix 2, diag.1: MOET organization structure) is the institution of Government which is responsible for the planning and implementation of education policies and programs at all levels. To carry out its educational programs MOET operates centrally through the Planning & Financing Department (P&F), the Primary Education Department (PED) for the primary sector, and the Teacher Department (TD), as well as through 61 Departments of Education and Training (DOET) at provincial level, and Bureau of Education and Training (BOET) at district level. MOET is also responsible for state education inspection through the Education Inspection Board and the National Inspection Board, which regulates on inspection activities and professional inspection skills.



### 1.3.2 Primary Education

The school system (Appendix 2, diag.2) has 4 levels – pre-primary; primary 5 yrs; lower secondary 4 yrs; upper secondary 3 yrs with students leaving school at 18 yrs. Primary Education is considered as a basic level- the first phase of formal education (grades 1-5) for children aged 6-10 and aims to prepare pupils for secondary and higher levels of education.

There are 3 basic kinds of primary schools. Most students enroll in public primary schools, which are non-fee paying though parents are expected to pay for textbooks, uniforms, school construction fees, insurance fees etc. In addition, there are semi public schools (Ban Cong) which are managed and regulated by the state but with all costs met through student fees, and people founded schools (Dan Lap) schools which are non- government (cooperatives, unions etc) with full cost recovery.

The national curriculum for primary education consists of 9 compulsory subjects (Vietnamese, Mathematics, Morality, Natural and Social Science, Music, Technology, Arts, Physical and Health Education) and in some schools optional subjects (Foreign Languages and Computers-Informatics, and Family Economy) are also offered.

In the school year 2001-2002, five types of curricula are currently being implemented in primary schooling:

- 165-week curriculum, which is the national standard curriculum consisting of the nine subject areas.
- Educational technology curriculum.
- Primary curriculum (pilot curricula). Pupils follow a modified standard curriculum: A number of schools are piloting curriculum 2000, the new primary curriculum due to be introduced in school year 2002-2003.
- 120-week curriculum, which is a condensed version of the standard curriculum and developed for pupils in ethnic minority areas.
- 100-week curriculum, which is for children who have missed or dropped out of primary school and are too old to attend normal school. The curriculum focuses on subjects: Vietnamese language, Mathematics and Natural and Social Science. The reduced curricula target disadvantaged groups, and was implemented to address specific social circumstances in order to meet Universal Primary Education targets.

The new primary curriculum consists of six subjects in Grades 1 through 3 (Vietnamese language, Mathematics, Moral education, Natural and Social Science, Physical education and Art), and nine subjects in Grades 4 through 5 (the six subjects of Grades 1 to 3, plus History and Geography, Music and Fine Art). The curriculum will be followed by all schools and is designed for a one-shift teaching day. For schools able to offer full-day schooling (two shifts per day), the standard one-shift curriculum will be compulsory, but such schools will also offer a foreign language, informatics, and additional subjects according to the school's capacity and facilities.

In principle the government requires a single half-day teaching shift Monday to Friday from teachers (7.30-11.30) or (12.00-16.30), but a second shift is often organized by the school/BOET and paid for by the parents. The ACER report (March 2000) shows that the majority of "2-shifts day" is in the Red River Delta and Central Northern regions as well as in the Hanoi and HCM areas. The proposed shift to all-day schooling is generally welcomed by students and parents and by teachers in poor rural areas where they have few opportunities to add to their income through private work, but some teachers in urban areas believe this would impact negatively on their opportunity to give private tuition and thus on their income (DFID Stakeholder Analysis:1998).

### **1.3.3 Teacher Deployment**

#### **1.3.3.1 Teacher recruitment**

Distinction needs to be made between Government paid teachers (full time and who have passed the Government examination which came in as from 1995) and contracted teachers (temporary though most probably full-time in practice but who have not passed the Government examination).

Recruitment of primary teachers is based on needs, which are assessed at BOET level. Submission proposals are then put forward to DOET/MOET and to the Provincial People's Committees (PPC) for consideration. However, Government staff numbers are fixed at central level and therefore difficult to increase, thus the PPCs take on extra contract workers when additional teachers are needed. In practice, the decentralization process has created a division between the planning function of MOET and the authorizing function of the PPCs with regard to disbursement of teacher emolument. In many instances BOET becomes subsumed within the administrative machinery of the Provincial People's Committees, which then directs BOET to recruit new teachers. Recruitment may not necessarily be in accordance with MOET/ DOET requirements or according to the education needs of the province, and teacher emoluments may not necessarily be derived from the government budget but through tuition fee from the schools and from the communities.

#### **1.3.3.2 Salaries, benefits and promotion**

Teachers' pay is according to 16 separate grades, and the salary scale is the same for all across the civil service list irrespective of seniority. Salary is calculated according to grade (from 1.57 to 4.12) with various allowances added: regional allowance for all (0.1 – 1.0%) added to the grade level, and a further allowance (40-70%) for mountainous, island, or very remote areas. There is no subsidized housing allocation, nor are city allowances provided, the government's intentions being to encourage teachers to take up postings in remote areas where well-qualified teachers are difficult to access. Reimbursement for travel costs of one return trip per year is given subject to government authorization. A 1% salary deduction as contribution to health care is made with a further 5% deduction made for contribution to a social insurance fund (sickness, pregnancy leave, accidents, and pension fund) with the government adding a further 15%. Retirement pensions are according to a graduated scale of number of years in service. Early retirement can be taken by any person having worked for 20 years or for reasons of poor health.

Entrance to the salary grade at primary level is the same for everybody irrespective of entry qualification (though during the period 1985 to 1993 entry salary was linked to entry qualification), and there is automatic progression through the pay grade every two years thereafter.

### **1.3.4 Teacher Training**

#### **1.3.4.1 Pre-service**

Standards for training qualifications and laws regulating training institutions are set out in the Education Law (Articles 67 & 68).

Primary teachers usually go for training on a 2-3 year non-university program (12+2/3) after completing secondary education. Lower Secondary teachers study for 3 yrs upon completion of secondary. National level teacher training at bachelor degree level is done through 9 pedagogical universities and through some 5 other universities with education faculties. In addition there are training institutions which offer specific subject training (Music, Physical education, and Art).

Teachers are trained in a 9+3 system (i.e. a 3-year program after completion of lower secondary school) in those provinces that experience teacher shortages. In certain disadvantaged areas, such as at Lai Cau, teachers are trained on a 5+3 system whereby trainees are taken in immediately after completion of their primary schooling, and such persons are usually posted to teach in the first grades. Training institutions frequently compensate for the educational background of disadvantaged students by putting on extra classes.

#### 1.3.4.2 In-service

Approximately 23% of teachers in the primary sector are under-qualified according to the (draft) National Standard Document 2001-5 (Appendix 1, Table 1). Vietnam is now focused on upgrading teachers' qualifications to meet National Standards (12+2).

In-service provision is twofold: firstly, there is the upgrading of teacher qualifications to meet national standards. This is done through the provincial teacher training colleges. The main concern for most participants is to attain the next level of accreditation. Secondly, there is an in-service program to upgrade teaching skills through distance education.

The regulation on Regular In-Service Education and Training for General Teachers' (together with the Decision 726/Qs, 727/Qs and 728/Qs 14/04/92) requires all teachers (50 yrs & below) to take part in regular in-service through the study of self-learning materials. The in-service program is organized as a series of in-service training cycles (Cycle 1 - 1992-1996; Cycle 2: 1997-2000). MOET is in the process of developing and programming the distance education Cycle 3 for 2002-2005 (as per Resolution 40&41/2000/QH). Cycle 3 will be a modular self-study program developed with EU support. Materials production is anticipated to start September 2002, and to consist of 3 main thematic areas (professional knowledge; pedagogical skills; special provincial needs).

MOET issues the official training materials and oversees the program at a national level, whilst DOET is responsible for formulating and organizing training plans/plans at a provincial level, and for the provision of finance, facilities and equipment for in-service. The district education office organizes the implementation of in-service plans in its area in accordance with DOET's plans.

#### **1.3.5 Inspection Services**

The regulations for the inspection of schools are laid down in MOET's Decision 478/Qs of 11 March 1993 and are governed by the Education Law (Articles 98 through to 103). The document outlines procedures for the organization of school inspection and outlines the roles and responsibilities of DOET and BOET. Guidelines are also given on the criteria to be applied in the appointment of people to the inspectorate. There are two types of primary inspector: 1. full-time inspectors; and, 2. concurrent inspectors, that is inspectors who hold other education posts (school heads, senior teachers, teacher training staff) but who act as inspectors when they are needed.

Inspection of schools should occur on a regular cycle, but they can also be subject to a surprise inspection if this is deemed necessary. An inspection is usually carried out by 4-6 inspectors. One of the team acts as lead inspector, and an inspection usually lasts two days. There are standardized criteria on which schools and teachers are inspected. The criterion for the school largely pertains to the school meeting the government's UPE targets, though assessment is also given on head teacher and teacher performance. After the inspection, the result of the inspection is fed back to the school; and also a report is sent to management (BOET, DOET). Recommendations from the inspection are expected to be followed up by the head teacher.

Established national standards relate to what is being taught, how it is being taught and the quality of learning achievement. Inspection is intended to focus on these areas by monitoring teacher and school practices and achievements. In this way, inspection provides a picture of what is happening within schools. Together with improved supervision and better-targeted school and teacher development activities, inspection contributes to quality assurance within the education system and has an important supportive and advisory role to play in the process of change. Anecdotal evidence would indicate that the inspection service as it currently operates is not sufficiently developmental and only partially meets the quality assurance needs of MOET.

### **1.3.6 Educational Management**

The decentralization process of the management system continued throughout the 1990s. Management of education is at three levels: national, provincial, and district, the roles and functions of each level being inter-dependent and overlapping. The division of roles and functions can be viewed as follows: MOET is responsible for policy setting, establishing monitoring standards, and ensuring accountability within the overall system, as well as managing higher and vocational education. MOET issues the annual and five-year education plans and budgets, which are formulated on the basis of inputs derived from DOETs, BOETs and schools. DOET is mainly responsible for higher secondary education and the supervision of BOET functions. BOET manages pre-school and basic education (primary and lower secondary) on a day-to-day basis. Each level is accountable for its work and reports to the level above.

### **1.3.7 State Educational Finance**

Expenditure on education has increased throughout the 1990s to 14.9% of the state's budget in 2000. In nominal terms, the percentage of the State's education and training (E&T) budget to GDP has risen from 1.6% in 1991 to 3.2% in 2000, with some 30 % of the budget allocated to primary education. Estimated per pupil primary costs in real terms (2000) has increased from VND 161,000 in 1991 to 440,000 in 1998. Approximately 90% of the education budget is managed at local government level, which reflects positively on the Government's decentralization processes.

Government guidelines allocate approximately 80% of the budget to recurrent costs, and 20% to fixed expenditures. The proportion allocated to fixed costs has increased throughout the 1990s. Increases in the State's budget allocation to education have mostly been expended on teacher emolument rather than on fixed expenditure given the need to raise existing teachers' salary to a more attractive level.

Existing budget itemization does not always match actual disbursement at provincial and district levels, and consequently non-salary expenditure can be disbursed from current expenditure items. This "flexibility", allows provinces and districts to pursue more optimal allocations of education budget. However, it is difficult for the government to track actual budget expenditures beyond existing budget itemization. Current budget itemization needs to be improved to achieve proper accountability and consistency, whilst maintaining the flexibility of regional authorities in their decision-making.

It is estimated that approximately 5% of Education & Training (E&T) expenditure was derived from external sources. The EDS 2010 document targets ODA to cover an amount equivalent to 20% of the Government's E&T budget, 35% from cost recovery and contributions from the community, and 10% from other sources for the Year 2010. It is to be noted that funding through "socialization" is anticipated to become a major source of income to the external off-budget resources available to education.

Table 1.1: Key governmental revenue resources of Vietnamese Government

Level	Sole revenue resource for respective level of organizations	To be reallocated through central to other provinces	To be reallocated through province/district to other district/communes
• Central	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Import/export tax</li> <li>• Value added tax</li> <li>• Profit tax</li> <li>• Oil tax and other revenue from oil-related enterprises</li> <li>• Various fee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sales tax</li> <li>• Profit tax</li> <li>• Income tax for high-income household</li> <li>• Money transfer tax</li> <li>• Natural resources tax</li> <li>• Rent fee revenue from national enterprises</li> </ul>	
• Province	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land rent fee</li> <li>• Revenue from governmental estate rent / disposition</li> <li>• Various registration fee</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farm land tax</li> <li>• Land transfer tax</li> <li>• Property tax</li> <li>• Land rental fee</li> </ul>
• District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Various license fee</li> <li>• Slaughter tax</li> <li>• Various registration/ commission revenue</li> </ul>		
• Commune	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Various license fee</li> <li>• Slaughter tax</li> </ul>		

Source: CLAIR Singapore (1998)

Vietnam has both national and provincial government resources (see Table 1.1). However, only 8 of the 61 provinces have a budget surplus and do not need to rely on centrally allocated funds, whereas the remaining provinces depend on reallocated funds from central government<sup>1</sup>. The dependency on central government has worsened throughout the second half of the 1990s. It is noted that the government's system of revenue collection used to discourage those provinces which were efficient in raising funds, but recent reforms to this system has boosted the revenue of better-off provinces, and made more resources available to them for various provincial social services. MOET is now considering further fine-tuning the system to ensure equitable provision of governmental education resources to 'deficit provinces'.

The budgetary process follows a similar sequence of consultation between MOET, DOET and BOET to that of education management and planning (section 1.3.6). 'Pupil norms' are used as the main criteria for budgeting during the information collection process from provinces. However, allocation of funds by central government to the provinces is according to 'population norms'. Population norms allocations are problematical for two reasons:

1. Population norms do not reflect actual size of primary education in respective provinces. Population distribution is different from that of school-aged population distribution. The existing budgetary process which is based on population norms does not lead to an optimal distribution of the budget.
2. There is less incentive for data accuracy because information on pupil numbers is not reflected in the budget allocation.

Tuition fee for primary education is free of charge. The state budget meets government contracted teacher salaries which takes precedence over all other costs. District (BOET) and local communities are mainly

<sup>1</sup> The surplus provinces in 1999 were: Hanoi, Hai Phong, Da Nang, HCMC, Binh Duong, Dong Nai, B.Ria-V.Tau, and Can Tho. (GSO 2000)

responsible for financing school construction, rehabilitation and maintenance, and other recurrent costs. BOETs frequently have insufficient budget allocation for capital and recurrent costs, and thus depend on the income of community members to meet such expenses (Appendix 1, Table 2). In addition to the school construction and maintenance fund (SCMF) and registration fees, there are other fees and cost to be borne by parents (Appendix 1, Table 3).

### **1.3.8 Socialization of Education**

'Socialization of Education' is a movement initiated by the government to invite a wider participation by stakeholders in society so as to enhance (1) resources to education, (2) diversity of educational services, (3) social integration through education. From a financial perspective, socialization is synonymous with cost-sharing.

The promotion and implementation of socialization enables a 'school open door' policy, and it is mobilized through party mechanisms and community involvement so that it becomes institutionalized within society. It is to be operationalized through the development of non-public schooling, and the promotion of self-financing for education, but there are mechanisms to support poorer sections of society to ensure equitable and ready access to schooling. However, most people view socialization as a form of 'cost-sharing'. It is also evident that many local educational administrators have little idea of how to put the policy into effective practice.

## **1.4 Situation Issues**

Table 4 (Appendix 1) and Maps 3.1 to 3.17 (Appendix 3) provide a statistical and visual backdrop to the report findings and analysis in sections 1.4 (Situation Issues) and 1.5 (Projections).

### **1.4.1 Background Context**

Common problems in providing sufficient and high quality education are threefold: Participation (access, equity etc.); Effectiveness (achievements); and Resources (the minimum essential school inputs - suitable textbooks, qualified teachers, improved facilities).

School effectiveness can be expressed as the outputs of the school as measured in terms of average pupil achievement at the end of a period of schooling (*Lockheed: 1993*), and which are influenced by external and internal factors (*Carasco et al: 1996*). An effective primary education strategy gives emphasis to the entire process rather than on one aspect - *Inputs* (policies, finance, staff training; school management and ethos, parents and communities, curriculum materials), *Process* in terms of classroom teaching and learning (time in class, teaching approach/methodology/activities, instructional materials, assessment) and *Outputs* (learning achievement, pupil experiences, transition to lower secondary), (*Scheerens: 2000*).

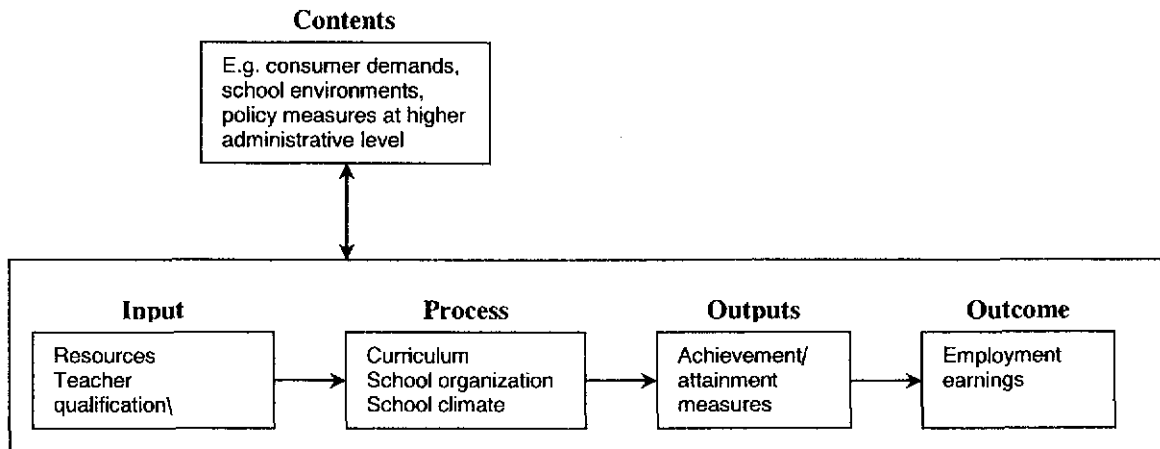


Figure 1.1: Contents > input > process > outcome model of schooling

Evidence indicates that curricula subjects and their relative weighting of importance are similar across most countries, the exception is with regard to the amount of instructional time given to mother tongue and non mother-tongue languages. Multiple language instruction, such as in non-Kinh areas, decreases the amount of time accorded to mother tongue instruction with consequent impact on literacy acquisition in multilingual countries (Lockheed: 1993).

Definition of the curricula in developing countries is most often done through textbooks, which provide the subject matter content, as well as the grading and sequencing of the material. In addition, textbooks should provide activities to reinforce cognitive and meta-cognitive skills. Important to emphasize are “the cognitive skills children develop in school – not simply the exposure to schooling” (Levin & Lockheed: 1993). There is a positive correlation between sufficiency of learning materials for pupils and student achievement; e.g. more time for pupils engagement in active learning rather than chalkboard copying and rote memorization. Teachers’ guides which are well-integrated with textbooks also have a positive impact as these assist teachers in terms of what to teach, how to teach, providing diagnostic tests, and accompanying suggestions on classroom management and activities.

Time availability for learning is related to how much pupils learn, especially in the earlier grades and with regard to low performers. Moreover, ‘time-in-school learning’ is important for pupils whose ‘out-of-school’ learning environment is poor - usually coming from poorer families, areas of high illiteracy, and ethnic groups. Learning time is directly affected by three considerations: length of the official school year, which on average increases according to the economic status of a country; proportion of teaching contact hours assigned per subject; and time lost in terms of absence from school, schools closing (e.g.. because of floods) and poor teacher attendance or absenteeism.

Effective classroom processes depend upon the professionalism of the teacher and interaction between teacher-pupil, pupil-pupil, and pupil-text. The teacher’s subject content knowledge usually correlates to the teacher’s level of formal education, thus the move to upgrade 9+3 teachers to 12+2 to meet the minimum standard is viewed positively. Classroom practice effectiveness, however, is more nebulously defined but several factors are important. These are: 1) the presentation and explanation of material in a rational and sequenced way suited to the level of the pupils; 2) the achievement of active pupil participation through group and peer-work, and, in multi-grade classes, through cross-age peer tutoring. This entails a move away from continual reliance on teacher-fronted activities to more balanced classroom managed activities;

3) enabling pupils to practice, apply, and internalize the knowledge acquired; 4) adequate monitoring and feedback from the teacher through an ongoing variety of tests.

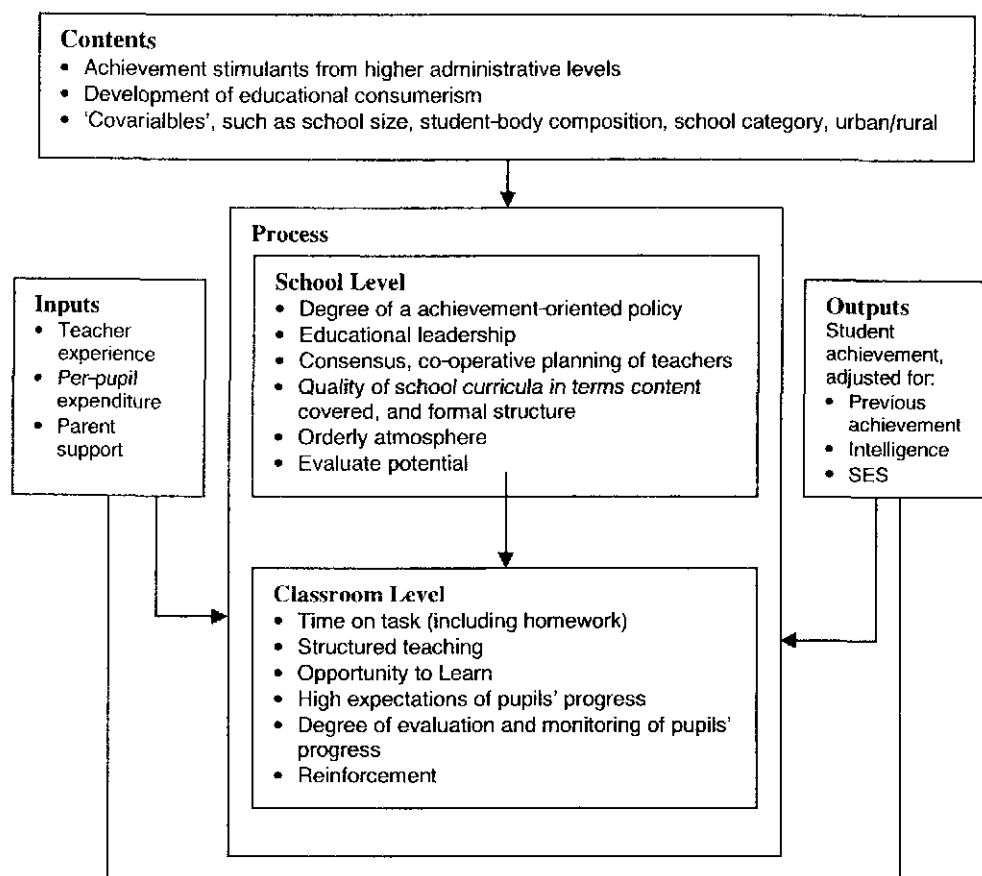


Figure 1.2: An integrated model of school effectiveness (From Scheerens (1990))

Conditions to achieve school effectiveness require a combination of factors: 1) parent/community involvement; 2) the promotion of school-based professionalism so that schools take responsibility for the enhancement of their development within the framework of a national/provincial effective school program; 3) organizational flexibility (e.g. time-tabling); 4) professional flexibility to try out new ideas and approaches to teaching; 5) a relevant curricula which allows for adjustment to pupil levels and pace of learning; and 6) the determination to move forward through provision of resources, and promulgation of a vision of intended practice in the classroom and school ethos.

The consequences of ineffective primary education are: internal inefficiencies whereby grade 1 entrants do not complete the primary cycle; standards of learning achievements are poor and with pupils sometimes remaining illiterate; high rates of repetition, especially in the earlier years before dropping out; and poor transition rates to lower secondary. The outcome for a nation is a poorly educated workforce unable to meet the economic and technological competitive demands of globalization.



## **1.4.2 Issues of Effectiveness and Efficiency**

### **1.4.2.1 Access**

Statistical data concerning access is given in Appendix 1, Table 4. The total number of pupils at primary school level as of 30/09/2000 is 9,751,014; total number of primary schools is 13,737; total number of classrooms is 213,490; gross enrolment rate (GER) for 1999/2000 country-wide is 109.9 %; total number of teachers at is 347,822 of which 78.3% (i.e. 272,380) are female teachers although there is considerable fluctuation country-wide (Mekong R Delta - 57.4%; Red River Delta – 90.4%).

The efforts of Vietnam to achieve universal primary and equitable education have been considerable and are not to be underestimated, and the following issues below are noted within this context of endeavor:

- The declining school-aged population and stabilizing enrolment rates indicates that primary education in Vietnam is entering a consolidation decade in the 2000s from an expansion decade of the 1990s.
- EDS 2010 targets an increased rate of primary pupils (in age cohort) from 95% in 2000 rising to 97% (2005) and 99% by 2010. However, primary education universalization in Vietnam must be seen in the context of a five-year primary education cycle whereas many other countries have a six to seven year primary cycle. Furthermore, the Vietnamese school year is only 33 weeks (in near future it will be 35 weeks) in comparison to an average of 40 weeks in neighboring states.
- The net intake rate of new entrants in grade 1 has increased from 83.9% in 1990-1991 to 96.1% in 1998-1999, though regional discrepancies exist. 99% of 6-year olds are registered in Hanoi, the Red River Delta Region and HCM, whilst only 89% are enrolled in the NW Region, 92% in the Central Highlands and 94% in the Mekong River Delta Regions respectively (ACER study).
- The gross intake rate to grade 1 decreased from 113.6% in 1990-1991 to 112.6% in 1998-1999. In 1998-1999, approximately 84% of grade 1 enrolment was 6 years of age, the balance being mainly over-aged children. In terms of participation rate in the entire primary education cycle, the NER increased from 86% in 1990-1991 to 94.8% in 1998-1999.
- There is still a considerable out-of-school population. The World Bank (2001) estimates that approximately 1.6 million children in the 6-14 age cohort do not attend school (including 0.6 million in the Mekong Delta; 0.3 million in Northern Highland, and 0.2 million in the Central Coast) in 2000. An estimated 1million pupils of the out-of-school population (1.6 million) lie within the poorest 2 quintiles. Similarly, transition from primary education to lower secondary education is lowest at the poorer levels of society in Vietnam. Less than 50% of pupils from the poorest two quintiles continue on to lower secondary education as compared to 94% in richest quintile.
- There is insufficient capacity in the more remote areas to provide access to adequate and equitable education in terms of distance to schools and time traveling to schools (PEDP Needs Analysis). The Government has established satellite schools, which are administrated by a central school, but many of these satellite schools operate multi-grade classes and are under-resourced.

### 1.4.2.2 Equity

The State guarantees social equity within the Education Law (Article 9).

#### Ethnicity

There are 54 different ethnic groups within the country, of which 13.8% (1999) of the population is minority ethnic groups.

Those minority ethnic groups face the difficulty to receive educational opportunities fully. Most of difficulty exists in language and geographical isolation. As a certain number of minority ethnic groups speak their own language that is different from Vietnamese. Only 24 of the 53 minority groups have written scripts for their language. Education in Vietnamese language causes difficulty for those children. As a result many children do not understand the language of instruction. Certain minority ethnic groups inhabit the most remote areas, thus the distance from school is far from children's house and mostly transportation means are difficult to obtain.

Children from Non-Kinh groups are generally exposed to a poorer educational background, with higher illiteracy rates, which often leads to poorer pupil performance (Vietnam Primary School Monitoring Report, 1998). Research from the 'Primary Education for Disadvantaged Children' (PEDC) project, which looked at educational disparities between regions (socio-economic, geographic and ethnic regions - Region 1: Developed; Region 2: Rural/Less developed; and Region 3: Remote and Under-developed), revealed the following:

Table 1.2: Educational indicators by Region 1-3 classification

Areas/ Indicators	NER	6-14 non enrolment	Repetition rate	g1-g5 Retention
<b>Region 1: Developed</b>	98%	4.65%	2%	95%
<b>Region 2: Rural/Less Developed</b>	95%	7.26%	3%	93%
<b>Region 3: Remote and Under-developed</b>	75%	10.0%	7%	64%

Source: WB-PEDC Study

Wide regional disparities are reported, with some enrolment rates being as low as 30% or lower in some areas in the Northern Mountains, Central Highlands, and Mekong Delta regions (UNICEF). Moreover, while primary enrolment is generally high, dropout rates are also high with approximately one-third of children failing to complete their primary education (World Bank, *Better Education for All*, 2001).

There are a higher proportion of satellite schools and multi-grade classes in ethnic areas. Satellite schools normally provide fewer numbers of teaching contact hours (often as low as 2-3), and they are usually under-resourced and have lower qualified teachers (78% of teachers are 9+3) and with lower levels of teaching experience. There is a shortage of appropriately trained staff in a number of remote areas as it is difficult to attract non-locals to teach in such areas given that the general living conditions are poor. The situation is exacerbated by a housing problem as teachers find it difficult to find local housing, and they often have to rely on staying with a family in the village or on living in the school.

#### Gender

Enrolment rates in terms of boy-girl education in Vietnam is near parity on a countrywide basis. The NER to primary education for boys (1998-9) was 94.7% (84% in 1990-1) compared to 94.5% for girls (83.8% in 1990-1) (Monitoring EFA: Feb 2000). There is Government recognition that investments in education for

girls yield high economic and social benefits that accrue to individuals, families, and society at large (increases women's labor force participation rates and earnings; lower fertility rates and infant, child and maternal mortality rates; and inter-generational educational benefits).

A regional survey, however, indicates that there are still areas where female attendance is low, most especially in ethnic minority areas. For example, *the Stakeholder Analysis* (1998) gives an example of extreme differentials amongst the H'mong with only 16 girls enrolled for every 100 boys in 1996. The reasons for non-enrolment differ according to regions but are usually because of poverty when parents are confronted with high direct costs (purchasing textbooks, writing supplies, uniforms, transportation fees etc), as well as opportunity costs which are incurred by a household when releasing a girl from household/agricultural tasks. "Many ethnic minority girls are disadvantaged by a combination of late enrolment in grade 1 and a tradition of early marriage," (*Poverty Task Force Report, 2001*).

In addition, parental, teacher and student perceptions of both the role of women in society and the economic returns they can expect from their investment in education affects their willingness to enter and continue on in school. In poorer, rural areas, employment opportunities for women are likely to be very limited and it is culturally unacceptable for women to migrate in search of employment.

*The Stakeholder Analysis* (1998) also cites limited access and inadequate infrastructure for girls (such as poor hygiene facilities) in some schools. Programs to increase educational opportunities for girls would be greatly enhanced through provision of 'safe schools' which are close to their homes and through measures to reduce direct and opportunity costs – e.g. scholarships and stipend programs, provision of free or subsidized textbooks and instructional materials, abolition of school uniforms, and subsidized transport. In addition, system-wide improvements in education quality, including curriculum reform, provision of appropriate textbooks and instructional materials, and enhancements in teacher training and instructional modalities, are therefore important measures in convincing parents to enroll girls in school.

#### **Financial Equitability**

The system for the allocation of the education budgets is dependent on the population rather on the needs of the education system within a particular province, and favors the poorer regions. It is estimated that this has increased the budget towards poorer communities and has consequently served to lower the disparity index (per-pupil) between provinces from 3.04 in 1997 to 2.50 in 2000 (*Tai Chinh Giao Duc Vietnam (1999), MOET (2001), GSO (2000)*).

Regions with high repetition-dropout rates tend to receive larger proportions of budget in relative terms. The pro-disadvantaged nature of the primary education budget is also demonstrated in a study conducted by the *Donor Working Group*, (2000). This showed that: (1) a bigger increment in NER is found in poorer consumption quintile, and (2) the poorer population sector (lowest 2 quintiles) has benefited from increased primary education expenditure, (comparisons of VLSS 1992 and VLSS 1998). MOET policy is to redress regional and socio-economic disparities through a pro-poor program of primary education.

However, a variety of grass-roots mutual help activities exist to redress the imbalances occurring within such communities. For example, in Binh Thuan Province, parents in urban (richer) districts collect textbooks to donate to rural (poorer) communes. Similarly, richer families in communes raise funds for scholarships to award to pupils from poorer families. The inclusion of such initiatives within the formal system is one way to mitigate the opportunity costs borne by poorer families.

### Special Education Needs (SEN)

Vietnam as a signatory of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is committed to providing education for all its children. There are an estimated one million children with disabilities in Vietnam with speech, hearing, motor and visual impairment being the most common. Since 1975, the government's approach to providing education for children with disabilities has been to create a parallel system of specialist schools. A result of this approach is that there are some 70 special schools found throughout the country, which cater for approximately 4,000 children of whom half have hearing impairments (UNICEF, 2000). More recently, due to both the high cost of the present system and the inability of such provision to provide access to education for the majority of the disabled, the policy has changed towards mainstreaming children with disabilities into normal schools. This inclusive approach is articulated in the 1991 Law on the Protection and Care of Children and the Education Law of 1998. The EDS 2010 seeks to achieve a 50% enrolment ratio in 2005 and a 70% ratio in 2010 for disabled and handicapped children.

While there has been a commitment to integration at policy level, practical implementation has been slow, with only 10% of children with "non-serious" disabilities integrated into normal schools (PEDC, 2001). With the exception of areas where pilot programs have been initiated, few teachers have received training in order to enable them to work in an inclusive classroom environment. In addition, DOETs, BOETs and communities lack awareness of the needs of the disabled and the inclusive education strategy, and are thus unable to offer the support services such integration demands.

In addition to the disabled there are also an estimated 150,000 orphaned or abandoned children and an estimated 20,000 street children whose social and educational needs have to be provided for if EFA, EDS 2010 and CPRGS are to be met.

### Internal Efficiency

Data on internal efficiency disaggregated per region is given in Appendix 1, Table 4: grade 1-grade 5 national repetition rate is 2.79%, drop-out rate is 4.67%, and promotion rate is 92.54%. These have been further disaggregated on a gender basis in Table 4, Appendix 1. The graduation rate for the primary cycle is 98.98% (1999/2000), and disaggregated per region.

From the statistics presented, it is noted that:

- The repetition rate for grade 1 is deemed to be high but declining (8.1% in 1995/6; 6.7% in 1999/00). Repetition rates for grades 2-4 are moderate, and low (0.5% in 1999/00) for grade 5. This follows general trends world-wide.
- Grades 1- 5 repetition rates indicate that areas with larger ethnic populations have the highest levels of repetition - the Central Highlands at 5.86% and North-West Regions at 4.48% in comparison to Red River Delta with 0.38%. These high repetition rates correlate with those areas which are considered to have a poorer learning environment and higher illiteracy.
- The promotion rate of pupils throughout the 1990's has improved proportionally across the grades with consequent declining drop-out rates. It is to be noted once again that the higher drop-out rates are in the three ethnic minority areas of North West Region (10.45%) and the Central Highlands (7.31%), as well as in the Mekong River Delta (10.14%) which is adversely affected by flooding and is one of the poorer regions with a higher than average number of children out of school. Although the national wastage rate is deemed high on a cumulative basis

(4.67%), and therefore reflects on the efficiency of the system, there is the expectation of a certain level of literacy and innumeracy acquisition, and thereby contributing to poverty reduction.

- The transition rate from the primary cycle to lower secondary (grade 6 enrolment in 1999/2000 compared to grade 5 enrolment in 1998/99) was 97.3%. This represents a high rate and indicates that for those pupils who completed primary education, they have an excellent chance to continue on to lower secondary.

### 1.4.3 Issues of Quality

#### 1.4.3.1 Quality of curriculum

A major outcome of EDS 2010 was the recognition of the need for a revision of the existing curriculum. As a result, a new curriculum and supporting textbooks are due to be introduced in grade 1 primary classes in the 2002/3 academic year, and other primary grades will follow in succeeding years. The new curriculum and textbooks are currently being trailed in 12 provinces, and, in conjunction with changes to the school day, aim in part to address problems of access to and quality of education within the sector.

More time spent at school enables greater coverage of the curriculum and increased learning. Access to the curriculum is therefore important for quality and efficient provision of education, and non-access is a major barrier to the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils.

The school year of 33 weeks (in near future it will be 35 weeks) is short by international standards; the average is 40 weeks. In addition, though the EDS 2010 states that primary school pupils should have an average of five hours schooling per day, only 10% of children are able to access full-day schooling. Most children receive half-day schooling or even less, with an average time spent in school of 3.3 hours – this represents half the international norm for annual teaching/learning time. It therefore cannot be assumed that enrolment and completion necessarily ensure that children receive a primary education of good quality, nor that measurable outcomes are achieved by all, as specified in the EFA goals (*Better Education for All Report, 2001*).

Time available for coverage of the intended curriculum is inadequate, therefore teachers concentrate on Mathematics and language, which are the set subjects for the certifying examination at the end of the primary cycle (*PEDP Needs Assessment*). The problems are exacerbated for those children following the reduced curricula programs who sometimes receive as little as 1 to 1½ hours of schooling. An Oxfam report (1998) comments that the 120-week curriculum assumes that ethnic minority children cannot or will not attend school for the standard school day. The present system therefore precludes minority children from mainstreaming into the secondary system, thus the negative impacts may outweigh the positive benefits of short-term increased enrolment. The report also questions the strategy for increasing enrolment in ethnic minority areas by pushing children through three grades in two years. Evidence suggests that few students following this program will reach a sufficient standard to allow them to progress to secondary education.

Problems of access to the curriculum is also compounded by the official language of instruction being Vietnamese (Education Law, Article 5), though bilingual education is allowed at primary level, (not at secondary). This poses a problem for children from minority groups, and teachers in minority areas point to language being one of the major limitations to student attainment (*DFID Stakeholder Study 1998; SCF France, 2001*). The highest dropout and lowest enrolment rates are recorded where such conditions exist. Furthermore, ethnic teachers attending teacher training institutions are required to study in Vietnamese but their mastery of the language to teach all subjects in Vietnamese is sometimes questionable (*Vietnam Belgium Teacher Training Project*).

Pupils are required to buy textbooks, with the exception of designated disadvantaged areas. Availability of textbooks and poor textbook distribution, especially in the more remote areas of the country, as well as the inability of parents to buy books are major constraints to pupil achievement.

Teaching guides are available in all subject areas, but availability is a problem because of poor distribution. However, the use of the guides is patchy and many teachers find them inadequate. Teachers want specific lesson plans rather than the more general approach on methodology taken in the guides. Similarly, teachers perceive lack of teaching aids as a major constraint to good quality teaching and learning, though there is a government scheme to supply teaching aids to support curricular activities. However, the problem is often one of use rather than of availability (*DFID Stakeholder Study: 1998*).

Pupil assessment is non-developmental and carried out largely for ranking purposes (anecdotal evidence). Pupils are examined in Vietnamese language and Mathematics and receive a Certificate in Primary Education in their final year. Progression to secondary education is on the basis of these results. However, the final examination is not standardized across the country and is of limited use as comparative data.

A study on the achievement of primary pupils in Vietnamese and Mathematics in Grade 5 (*World Bank: 1998*) examined the linkages between the provision of educational services and pupil achievement. The report concluded that disparity of resources leads to an *inequity of opportunity even though the centrally controlled curriculum establishes common indicators for success for every pupil*.

The EDS 2010 made recommendations for a new curriculum which would "improve the curriculum, training, educational methodology and assessment methods". The recommendations seek to make "general education curriculum relevant to each educational level". This has resulted in the 'Year 2000 Curriculum' and a move to full day schooling.

Difficulties and problems of providing children with common experiences in the classroom when there are such widespread differences in the country with regards to resource availability have been identified (*Education Forum: March 2001*). A World Bank report (1999) comments that the new curriculum has *achieved its initial objectives of setting comprehensive, national norms and standards whilst maintaining stability of content, but that the curriculum still tends to foster reception of knowledge and conformity of response*. There is still a need for more adaptation to stimulate effective use of new teaching methods and to increase relevance by providing links to pupils' real life experiences.

#### 1.4.3.2 Quality of teaching

A conceptual framework for teacher quality includes: 1) policies aimed at improving and sustaining the quality of teachers or teaching (e.g. upgraded and more effective PRESET; upgraded and more effective INSET; teacher appraisal/evaluation through some form of quality assurance; and economic and social incentives to enter and remain within the teaching profession & career progression); 2) the context of schooling in which policies are to have effect (e.g. educational policies such as curriculum and decision-making strategies; BOET level policies and implementation; school organization and culture; and links between classroom and school management); and 3) dimensions of teacher quality (e.g. subject area knowledge; pedagogic/methodological skill; managerial competence; and teacher reflection). Evident from this is a multi-dimensional, multi-level perspective whereby initiatives to improve teacher development focuses on (1) teachers; (2) schools; and (3) external policies (*OECD: Quality in Teaching, 1994*).

A number of Government initiatives and donor programs seek to address many of the issues associated with teacher quality and the problems are well-known to MOET. However, quality cannot be legislated for and it is very difficult for policies alone to change teacher practice as there is no one-to-one relationship

between policy and practice. Worryingly, the DFID Stakeholder Analysis, (1998) reveals that teachers, head teachers, and DOET perceived change as the concern of central government and failed to relate the relationship of school internal efficiency to quality of the learning environment. It would seem that there is not only a lack of engagement with the curriculum by the persons most involved with its implementation (i.e. at school level), but there is also a lack of empowerment with regard to curriculum design and teaching approaches.

EFA 2000 (Indicator 9) reveals that some 92.8% of teachers are considered to have reached the "minimum teaching standard," (9+3 and 5+3 in disadvantaged areas). In addition, approximately 76.1% (73.3% weighted average: 1998) of primary teachers reached the national standard (12+2), (*Monitoring Education for All Report, 2000*). This is an improvement from the previous number of primary school teachers (58.2% in 1990/91) who were certified at national standard. The lowest distribution 'national standard' teachers is the North West (68.1%), the Central Highlands (70.8%) and the Mekong River Delta (73.8%), (Table 4, Appendix 1). This is therefore indicative that investments should be primarily focused within the disadvantaged provinces in those regions in order to build up a contingent quality of primary school teachers.

A 1999 survey (ACER) indicates that the majority of teachers (58%) average about 25-29 hours of teaching per week and some 25.8% average between 20-24 hours per week. Only 7.2% of teachers stated they do less than 20 hours per week whereas 9.4% stated they had a workload of more than 30 hours per week. The highest incidence of workloads averaging more than 30+ hours per week tended to be in urban areas (Central northern urban, Hanoi and HCM). Conversely, Hanoi urban was also revealed as having the second highest number of teachers engaging in less than 20 hours per week. The new curriculum demands a 21-24 hour teaching week for one-shift schools and a 27-30 hour teaching week for the two-shift (full-day) schools. A further breakdown in terms of teacher activities and time allocation per activities reveal that respondents identified 20.7% of their time was given to preparation and marking; 5.1% to pastoral care and liaison; 4.4% to meetings; and 3.8% to other duties). The remaining two-thirds of their time was allocated to teaching in terms of in-class presentation and activities.

EDS 2010 indicates that teaching-learning conditions and outcomes are inadequate, and cites low application of knowledge and skills, rote memorization, the exam driven nature of learning, under-qualified teachers and teacher shortages in certain provinces and subject areas - all of which contributes to poor internal efficiency. This situation is borne out by several independent reports (*Aikman & Pridmore: A study of classroom practice & teacher education in northern Vietnam; Brook et al.: Education Financing Study; Phuong & Thang: Vietnam – Curriculum planning, development and reform*). This general lack of flexibility within the teaching cadre impacts on the ability of teachers' to select appropriate teaching approaches (content area, leveling and pace). Consequently, opportunities within the curriculum for local adaptation are not taken up. This kind of predisposition towards a prescriptive teaching approach adversely affects the implementation of the new curriculum.

The ACER survey provides an indication of teacher self-confidence in the nine core subjects. The distribution of scores reveal that some 48.3% of teachers considered that they can teach well in at least seven of the nine core subjects and some 37% were fairly confident of their teaching skills whereas only 14.8% admitted low confidence. The results from the PEDP Needs Analysis indicate that many teachers teach only those parts of the curriculum with which they are comfortable. This infers a discrepancy between the intended curriculum content and what is actually taught. Teachers are expected to teach all subjects, but few feel comfortable in doing so, especially with regard to teaching non-core subjects, (Art, Music and Physical education). The PEDP Needs Analysis indicated a need for more specialist teachers at the primary level.

All teachers are expected to teach special subjects (Music, Art & PE) at primary level, but the optional subjects (informatics and foreign languages) are taught by contracted teachers. However, not all primary

teachers feel able to teach the special subjects, therefore some schools employ contracted teachers to teach those subjects whilst other schools, who have insufficient funds, do not cover the special subject areas, or not to the standards demanded by the curriculum. Various programs have been put in place at pre-service and in-service levels to 'standardize' training in specialist subject areas as well as for optional subjects, and there have been government initiatives to promote special subject teaching. The TTC training programs cover all 9 subject areas of the primary school curriculum, but most have insufficient capacity to cover the special subject areas adequately either through lack of facilities, or because of insufficient trainers with those specialties, or because the focus of training is usually on the core subject areas. At present there are limited numbers of provincial training colleges that can undertake specialist training -10 TTC courses for Music; 8 TTC courses for Art; and 16 for Physical education (MOET source). The need for increased provision for special subjects teachers at all levels is recognized within the administration at all levels. Moreover, training is deemed to be inadequate to need. MOET recognizes that the curriculum content of for specialist subject areas are out of date, that many training institutions have poor facilities and equipment, and that there is a shortage of ancillary staff (e.g. librarians, laboratory technicians). MOET documents also point to 'constraints in terms of the quality and quantity of teaching staff members' in training institutions generally (MOET: *Pre-service & In-service training for different types of teachers in the 2001-2002 academic years*). As a result of these shortages, a number of training colleges offer multi-subject classes, for example sciences are grouped together and taught as a combined course rather than as *separate disciplines*. In terms of optional subject areas, the same document notes that Foreign Language teaching is considered poor with some teachers unable to 'communicate with native speakers', and that there are too few teachers for Informatics with only 2 training institutions to meet demand (Hanoi University of Technology and HCM University of Technology).

There is little evidence of any direct links between the primary curriculum developers and the teacher training colleges. A consequence is that curriculum development of pre-service teacher training programs is not synchronized with the process of primary curriculum development. The teacher training colleges have not adjusted their teaching programs to the new curriculum. As a result, teacher training institutions are turning out new graduates who are inadequately prepared for their entry into the teaching profession. In addition, in-service programs are then obliged to follow a pattern of trying to repair the short-comings of pre-service training rather than being able to be innovative and enhancing to the teaching/learning environment.

It is also noted that their needs to be some form of rationalization of teacher training colleges to meet requirements of cost-effectiveness. Fewer numbers of training colleges which are better equipped, have a full training and ancillary staff complement, which can provide a full range of core and special subject training, and which can act as centers of excellence and a resource to schools through well-qualified and appropriately experienced trainers is a long-term goal which requires serious consideration.

Low salaries for teachers are a problem cause with consequent adverse effects on teaching quality and access to learning. School hours are kept short and teachers seek supplementary employment. 'Lower staffing levels, with teachers covering larger classes or longer hours but for attractive salaries is an option worth considering in some areas (Brooke *et al*). However, MOET sources point to the compensatory allowances paid where teacher shortages are most acute, and that teachers working in remote areas are considered to have good salaries when compared to the national average.

A second factor is the lack of career structure whereby promotion is not seen as linked to performance. However, there are government proposals to revise the teacher salary system in 2003, and which may revert to a system based on qualification and experience similar to that for lecturers in tertiary education institutions. The World Bank Primary Teacher Development Program recommends career profiling and links professional development to accreditation and reward. This will demand new contractual terms in return for longer hours in school, increased contact teaching time and bigger classes.



New economic demands require a future workforce with generic skills and the capacity for self-learning and problem solving. The implementation of the new curriculum requires a change of teaching and learning methods so as to foster 'self-directed discovery learning, based on each students' individual abilities. This is an attempt to transform traditional teacher-centered approaches, in which students play a largely passive role, and which stifles both the pupils' and teachers' creativity.' (*Phuong & Thang: Vietnam – Curriculum planning, development and reform: p134*). This must consequently impact on teacher development: 'There is a need both for more effective organization of pre-service and in-service teacher education' (*Phuong & Thang*).

Pre-service and institutionally-based in-service does not seem adequately geared to teacher change. The static teaching-learning conditions in schools are a product of a teacher training system which focuses primarily on academic upgrading rather than pedagogy, and which fails to provide teachers with a repertoire of appropriate teaching skills. A major problem is that there are few within the corps of teacher trainers who have experience of and are familiar with an 'active teaching' approach and how this is translated into methodology and practical classroom-based activities. It is reported that many of the college trainers have never taught in primary schools, but are frequently graduates straight from the pedagogical faculties at universities with little practical teaching experience. They are thus seemingly ill-equipped to provide a vision of intended classroom practice. Participative training methods should predominate at all levels of teacher training. A major requirement for teacher trainers in many countries is that they must have had long-term classroom experience before becoming a trainer. Secondly, more time is needed for teaching practice in schools in terms of actual contact hours – i.e. not just 12 weeks in a school engaged in observation, but actually teaching, experimenting with new materials and activities, and not simply in trying to give a 'model lesson'.

Renovating teachers is one issue, but there must also be a focus on renovating trainers. An intensive trainer-of-trainer program, which reaches all training institutions including the pedagogical faculties of universities, needs to be in place. Additionally, greater organizational and financial support needs to be provided to teachers at a school level by DOET/MOET, to the Inspection system and to head teachers to promote an environment for teacher self-development and to create a climate for change.

The cycle 3 in-service program (methodology refreshment), presently being elaborated will hopefully seek to engage teachers at a whole-school support level. A directive from MOET outlines the principles of the Cycle 3 program, "To meet the requirements for renovating the teaching method, .... for implementing the new curriculum textbooks, ... to increase the practicality and effectiveness for teachers, ... to be convenient for teachers' self assessment". The principles for curriculum development given are to "combine the development of (a) bottom up approach, .... through grassroots opinions for summarizing and proposing training contents to MOET, ...to have an appropriate proportion ... between theory and practice, ... and to pay attention to teachers' self assessment". However, both the PRESET and INSET Cycle 2 programs were also committed to the improvement of teachers' "professional capacity in the light of meeting requirements of improving primary education quality (such as teaching methodology renovation)", but the effectiveness of the programs appear questionable.

Finally, there a need to track the classroom implementation effectiveness of the various PRESET/ INSET programs to ascertain the relationship between current training packages and resultant outcomes.

#### 1.4.3.3 Quality of facilities

In general it is accepted that there should be at least one main school in each administrative ward/ village. The statutory limit requires individual schools to be no larger than 30 classes with 35 pupils per class (i.e. 1,050 pupils per school), and the National Standards requires not less than 6 sqm/pupil in urban areas and 10 sqm/pupil in rural areas, respectively. In addition, satellite schools may be attached to a main school to

enable access to schooling within a 3km distance for pupils in lower primary grades (g1-g3). Thus, main school and satellites are considered as one unit for statistical reporting.

Table 5, Appendix 1 (Main schools and satellite school in 1999/00) indicates that the national average Pupil: School ratio is 683 pupils per school. The highest ratio is found in the Central Coast region (803:1), and the lowest is in North West Highlands (527:1). Provision of school facilities is generally considered inadequate to the number of pupils enrolled due to insufficient number of classes (*PEDP Needs Analysis, 2001*). This is borne out by the national class/classroom ratio of approximately 1.5; i.e. 3 classes share two classrooms resulting in a double shift system, which is the norm throughout Vietnam. However, in some remote areas, a different situation exists with lower than average class/classroom ratios (Table 4, Appendix 1). Half-day schooling and single-shift classes is common in mountainous regions where children are often required to help with farm work and where access is a problem. There are still areas where combined schools exist – i.e. schools which cater to lower secondary pupils in the morning and to primary pupils in the afternoon. These schools are considered to operate a double shift system, though in real terms they offer a single shift per education level.

Classroom shortage and the need to renovate existing facilities is a key issue to the attainment of the targets set within EDS 2010. Most school facilities in current use were constructed around 1975 or earlier, and these facilities have since deteriorated due to poor maintenance and through lack of finance. Such facilities no longer meet present national standards. *Extensive repair work of buildings is evident in areas where flooding and typhoons occur (Coastal and Delta regions) with resultant high risks of structural collapse.* A second constraint is that a number of schools, especially in the North West and Central Highlands regions, have more than 4 satellite units per school (as oppose to the average of 2.16 per school). This consequently lowers the quality of education management and which impacts on maintenance.

The National Standards (Table1, Appendix 1) requires school Physical infrastructure to consist of the following: 1) 'School area, playground, ground for exercise'; 2) 'Classroom, other function rooms, library'; 3) 'Study equipment'; and 4) 'Hygienic condition'. Construction is regulated according to the national 'Building Code'. MOET estimates that only about 10% of schools meet all the criteria of the National Standard with regard to Physical infrastructures and the majority of schools are inadequate; for example there are no proper toilets in the majority of schools, which should be a fundamental provision.

Table 6, Appendix 1 (Schools with Library, Art room and other facilities), shows that most school Physical infrastructures (63%) have been built to the lowest level of standards of the Building Code (Level 4 – durability less than 20 years), and many do not conform to the requirements of the National Standards. The majority of schools are deemed to be old and many (100,000+) existing classrooms require renovation or reconstruction.

In addition, the move to full-day schooling in urban areas by 2005 and in the rest of the country by 2010 will require many more new classrooms. At present, only about 7% of classes operate on a full-day basis according to the PEDP Needs Analysis questionnaire which surveyed 5 regions (Mekong, Central Highlands, North Central Coast, Central Coast and Southeast).

Table 5, Appendix 1, also reveals regional disparities in terms of provision of school facilities. It is to be noted that in poorly resourced areas which have a higher than average number of satellite schools, the satellite buildings have been built below the minimum standard (Level 4): "It is reasonable to assume that in the disadvantaged districts, a large proportion of the remainder (schools below level 4) are probably very low quality, temporary classrooms, and that the poorest infrastructure is found at the satellite sites. It is estimated that 62% of satellite campuses are temporary (e.g. woven walls, thatch roof) classrooms." (*PEDC report: Dec 2001*).

Evidence indicates the need for improved school mapping, siting of schools and setting of National Standards for Physical infrastructures as the level of detail provided by authorities is often inadequate for planning purposes.

#### **1.4.3.4 Quality of management**

Management systems are in the process of change as a result of the move towards decentralization. MOET's role is mainly to formulate national policies and standards, to monitor the attainment of national objectives, and to ensure accountability from the regions. The functions and responsibilities of DOET and BOET as executing agencies within this decentralized system have still to be clarified. Support to administrative officers to meet their new tasks given their changing roles and responsibilities is required. . . "There is a gap among centrally formulated targets and norms, bottom up plans based on unrealistic resource assumptions and the reality of budget constraints. As a result of this, the planning process is increasingly failing to guide what happens on the ground and to resolve issues of priority"(GOV and Donor Working Group on Public Expenditure: 2000).

Educational planning requires accurate and timeous data collection and analysis. The present EMIS system has the following shortcomings.

- There is a need for accurate, disaggregated data suitable for planning purposes at all levels. The data received at central level from BOET and DOET is insufficiently disaggregated.
- The channels and resources for data collection, processing and analysis for all levels of education require to be harmonized.
- Data on a number of areas of importance is not being included in the data collection process. For example, data on satellite campuses, Physical infrastructure and materials supply.
- Qualitative data collected from different sources (e.g. school inspection reports) do not seem to be centralized within a definite system to provide a holistic picture and by linking quantitative and qualitative data.
- There are multiple sources of education-related data (e.g. Finance & Planning, Government Survey etc), which makes a definitive analysis of the education system difficult.
- The Educational Management Information System (EMIS) needs to be standardized with agreed data collection and processing operations. Capacity and institutional building requires to be put in place.

### **1.5 Projections for provision of primary education**

#### **1.5.1 Demographic, pupil numbers and teacher requirements**

Total population of Vietnam for 2000 was 77,685,500 (Table 4, Appendix 1). The population growth rate has declined from 1.92% in 1990 to 1.42% in 2000 (Table 4, Appendix 1. GSO: Statistical Yearbook 2000).

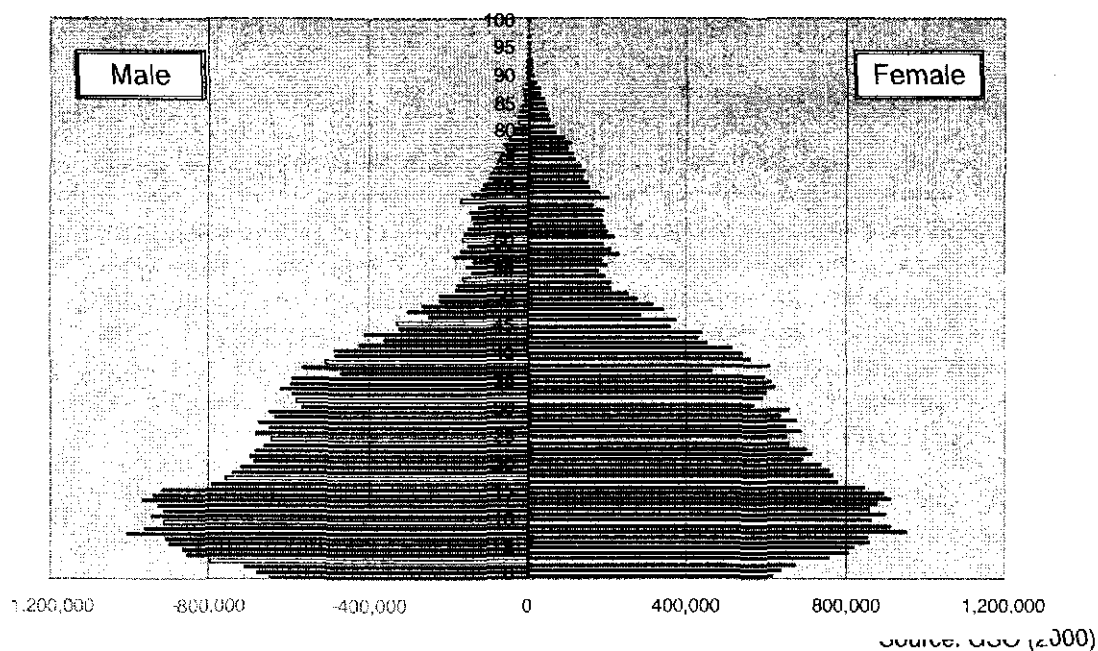


Figure 1.3: Population pyramid, 1999 Vietnam

Figure 1.3 shows a population by-age cohort graph which indicates that the number of children age 0-1 in 1999 (1,263,599) is lower than those of 8-year olds (1,874,768). A declining school-age population will therefore be a prominent demographic feature for planning of the education system (Table 4, Appendix 1. source GSO: Population & Housing Census).

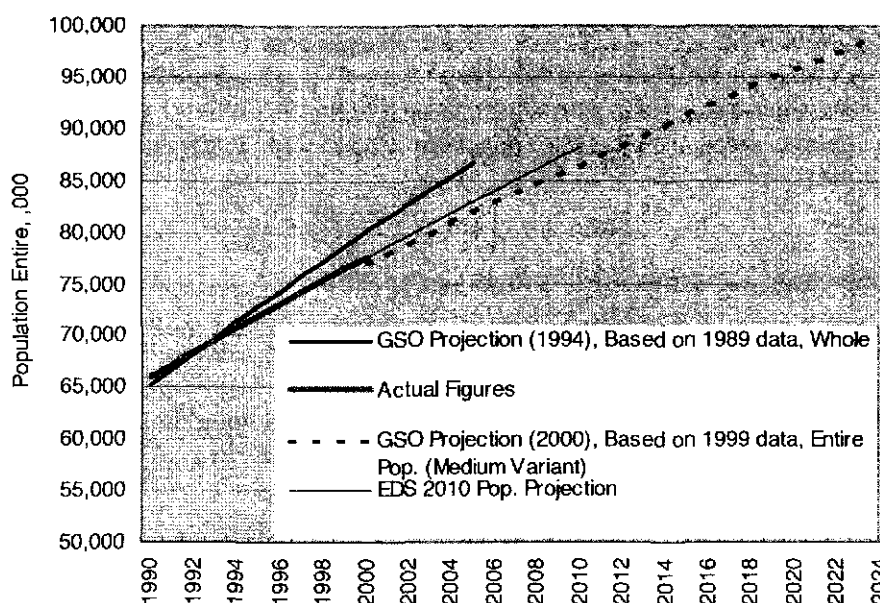


Figure 1.4: Comparison of actual and projected population

Such a decline was not anticipated a decade ago. Figure 1.4 provides a comparative estimation of the changing projected population between 1994 (based on 1989 data) and 2000. Important to note is that EDS 2010 employs a population projection curve based on data collected between 1989 and 1999. The General Statistical Office (GSO) projections (medium variant) derived from the 1999 data is lower than those of EDS 2010.

Three sets of data ('6-10 school-age population') were made available to the PEDP: (1) MOET Finance and Planning (F&P) Department for internal use; (2) General Statistical Office; and, (3) the EDS 2010.

There is agreement between all sources on a declining 'school age group 6-10' population between the years 2000 and 2010. This will be nation-wide, with the exception of the Central Highlands and North West region, and the decline will be continuous. The graph below (Figure 1.5) compares the projections from the various sources with the targeted primary enrolment as given in EDS 2010. School enrolment is decreasing (EDS 2010: 8.85M in 2005, 8.35M in 2010. 10% and 14% respectively lower than the 2000 actual enrolment – 9,751,014. Source EMIC 2000).

The graph further reveals that the EDS 2010 projection overestimates the number of pupils for the next decade to 2010 and that there is an approximate 20% per annum difference between the projected figures given by GSO and those of EDS 2010. EDS 2010 has therefore overestimated the required educational input, though this is a reasonable plan for long-term planning.

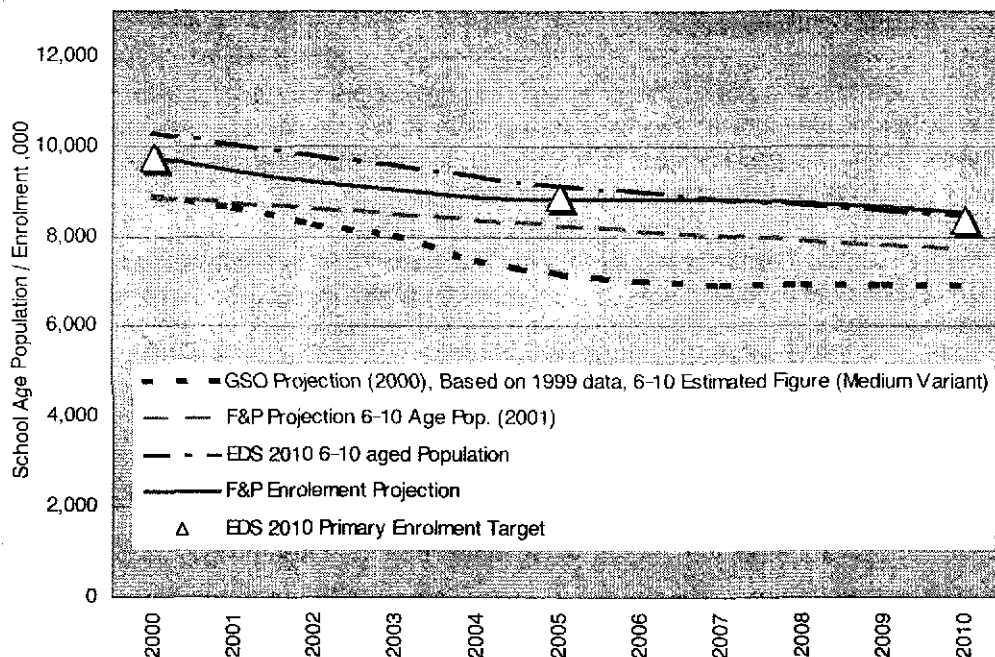


Figure 1.5: Comparison of two projections and EDS 2010 enrolment target

On the basis of present numbers of required teachers (347,822) (Table 7a, Appendix 1 Comparison of Projection Scenario. Source EMIC 2000/EDS2010), the anticipated numbers of teachers required nationally is estimated to be 339,090 for 2005 and 320,505 for 2010. This uses a projected a Student /Class ratio of 30.0 and Teacher/Class ratio of 1.15 (Table 7b, Appendix 1) as given in EDS2010. This represents a cumulative teacher over-supply of 27,317 by 2010.

The Teacher/Class ratio of 1.15 given in EDS2010 is considered to be low by some sections of MOET given teacher needs for the full implementation of the new curriculum, the move towards full-day schooling and equitable provision of specialist teachers. The required Teacher/Class ratio to meet these new demands is estimated to be 1.50, and a proposal to that effect is to be submitted to the Government with the new curriculum for schools. On the basis of this ratio and using the same '6-10 school age population' data from EDS2010, the required numbers of teachers for 2005 is estimated to be 377,030 and 417,686 for 2010 (Table 7c, Appendix 1). This represents an increase of 10.6 % for 2005 and 23.2% for 2010 above those given in EDS 2010, and a cumulative teacher deficit of 69,864 by the year 2010.

There is a likely oversupply of teachers by the year 2010 using a 1.15 Teacher/Class ratio (Table 7b, Appendix 1) as specified within EDS 2010, but this must be qualified with the following observations:

- Firstly, there are still likely to be teacher shortages in terms of representation from ethnic groups.
- Secondly, there are subject area shortages (e.g. Physical Education, Music, Art), which need to be met. These shortages are confirmed at all levels as sources indicate that the main subjects generally taught are Vietnamese, Maths and Morality whilst the remaining subjects are ignored in some schools. The number of training colleges which provide adequate specialist training is limited (Section 1.4.3.2). Training for specialist courses is a focus of renovation at the pre-service level.
- Finally, the World Bank and PEDP surveys point to problems of effective teacher utilization and teacher distribution between regions.

The above scenario using EDS2010 projections will require pre-service institutions to re-orientate their teacher development programs towards in-service support, i.e. upgrading of qualifications and supporting curricular change. This would promote the concept of lifelong professional development and serve to break down the barriers between pre-service and in-service.

However, a scenario based on a 1.50 Teacher/Class projection requires teacher training colleges to maintain and increase the throughput of students on pre-service courses. This could hamper the necessary support needed for in-service.

A recommended trainer-of-trainer program is required for both scenarios as the ability of institutions to implement the requirements of EDS 2010 in terms of quality provision of education is limited.

### 1.5.2 Financial Implication

EDS 2010 foresees increased government expenditure on education. The increase of the E&T budget will remain proportionate to the anticipated rise in GDP. MOET (F&P Dept) estimates that VND 5, 478Billion (2005) and VND 7, 527Billion (2010) will need to be budgeted for primary education to meet EDS2010 indicators, and that these figures are achievable if assumed GDP growth and government revenues are realized.

MOET anticipates meeting its targeted financial expenditure through increased revenues from "off-budget" sources such as community/parents contributions, Official Development Assistance (ODA), and other sources. It also anticipates meeting its targets of increased revenues derived from these sources. If these assumptions hold, off-budget income will rise from a current estimated 28.7% of the total expenditure for primary education in 2000 to 39.4% in 2010. The implication is that there will be a fivefold increased cost per child for primary education to a household by 2010.

## 1.6 Problem Areas derived from PEDP Needs Analysis and Survey

The EDS 2010 seeks to build on past achievements and to further strengthen the equitable provision of primary education to all, regardless of socio-economic background (i.e. income level, ethnicity, gender, homelessness). Identified below are some of the selected key findings from the Needs Analysis workshops conducted countrywide and the review of the primary education sector by the PEDP team. These key findings 'feed in' to the BAPIs.

### 1.6.1 Planning and Management

Identified problem areas are as follows:

- 1 Decentralization – a) There is poor conceptualization of the decentralization process and of skills which are required to implement the process. There is need to sensitize officials to the problems of decentralization and to foster an understanding of processes of change and innovation in education. This is especially true with regard to the conceptual aspects and methodological features of decentralization. b) There is further need for a review of the planning and budgeting processes within a decentralized system; c) in addition, there is need for training of educational administrators with regard to PPBS (Planning-Programming-Budgeting System).
- 2 EMIS - a) The collection of EMIS data is insufficiently harmonized between multiple data collection sources. There is thus need for the rationalization and harmonization of the existing EMIS system. b) There is also a need for capacity skills-building (data collection, verification and analysis) at provincial and district levels.

### 1.6.2 Curriculum and the Teaching and Learning Environment

Identified problem areas are as follows:

1. Schools support systems are underdeveloped and under resourced. "There is no school development without teacher development and no teacher development without school development (*Hopkins, 1995*)." To facilitate school and teacher development and the introduction of the new school curriculum and extended school day there is a need for: 1) the development of inspection and advisory services so that they can better support the change processes arising from decentralization and the introduction of the new curriculum and new school day. In this regard, there is perhaps a need to de-link inspection from advisory services to make both more developmental and timely, 2) systems whereby schools support schools need to be operationalized. The satellite (school cluster system) as it now operates is weak developmentally. Inspection and advisory services are a key to this process, 3) school-based development is weak and needs to be a more deliberate and conscious process. A cadre for change needs to be established at each school. There is a need for headship and senior staff training particularly in school development planning and participatory approaches so that change can be led by the schools, 4) community participation in the school development process needs to take place and a program of empowering communities to hold schools accountable for quality and equity needs to be developed.
2. Curriculum process. The needs analysis and anecdotal evidence indicates that there is very little contact between the curriculum developers and their clients. There is a need for: 1) better management and co-ordination of the development and implementation process between NIES, Departments for education levels in MOET, TTCs, DOET, BOET, and schools, 2) strengthened co-

ordination with pre-school and lower secondary curricula, 3) particular support for development in the new subject areas ICT, foreign languages, specialist subject areas (Art, Music, Physical education), multi-grade teaching, bi-lingual education and the localization element within the curriculum. Indicators are that though the curriculum has gone some ways to meet the goals of EDS 2010 further adaptation is necessary in order to stimulate more effective use of new teaching methods and to increase relevance by providing links to pupils' real life experiences.

3. Supply and distribution of textbooks, teachers' guides and instructional materials. Textbooks are central to schooling at all levels, and research consistently reports on the positive effects of the availability of textbooks and instructional materials on student achievement. Multiple sources report uneven supply and distribution. There is a need for: 1) a national audit to ascertain gaps in supply, 2) re-organization of distribution management systems to ensure all children have access to essential learning materials.
4. Language acquisition programs for non-Kinh speakers. Lack of Vietnamese is seen as perhaps the major limitation to student attainment in minority areas. Developing such programs would greatly enhance the realization of the development goals espoused in EDS 2010. There is a need to 1) institutionalize second language programs in both teacher training colleges and schools in targeted areas, 2) expand and strengthen pre-school and school readiness programs for non-Kinh children.
5. Reform of the examination process to suit new curricular demands and the further development of initiatives to introduce a standardized national assessment. Data gathered would provide government with indicators as to whether changing provision of education services are impacting on learning outcomes. There is a need for: 1) further develop systems initiated for Vietnamese language and Mathematics to establish new national standardized pupil assessment procedures, 2) improve assessment by teachers in the classroom through in-service teacher training and pre-service curriculum revision.

### 1.6.3 Teacher Development and Deployment

Identified problem areas are as follows:

1. Teaching Deployment and Service - a) The utilization of the teaching force across and within regions is not maximized because of uneven distribution. Teacher deployment needs to be on a national/regional basis to ensure an even and effective spread of teachers. b) There are poorly developed career structures and greater incentives for progression through the system are required. c) Salary is not based on merit nor performance, but on length of service. Some kind of compromise between the two systems needs to be considered.
2. Quality issues in schools and training institutions – a) The Needs Analysis and discussions at various levels of MOET indicate a poorly conceptualized understanding of the multi-faceted aspects which have to be addressed to achieve quality education. b) The National Standards provide insufficient guidance on teaching standards and linkage to 'quality' issues. There is need for: 1) some form of national quality audit to provide a framework on issues of quality and to identify and disseminate good practice as the national standards provides inadequate guidance on issues of 'teacher quality', and 2) consideration given to devising some form of national competency-based standards for teachers (as opposed to length of training). Both such initiatives will be instrumental in guiding the assessment and self-development processes.
3. School-based teacher support – a) Teachers in schools require increased management, pedagogical, psychological and materials support for teacher self-development if the implementation



of the new curriculum is to be achieved at a practical level. Consideration should be given to some kind of whole-school based (or similar) approach to self-development to provide the necessary in-school structure to facilitate curriculum renewal during this process of change. b) School-based development requires the psychological support and pedagogical guidance from external advisory institutions – e.g. the inspection services and teacher training colleges.

4. Disadvantaged areas – a) Access to schooling and the curriculum is limited and hampered by medium of instruction language difficulties. There is need for more teachers in remote areas. Secondly, there is need for teachers with high levels of competency and professionalism who are capable of coping with the adverse educational conditions and resource-poor environment. This requires teachers to upgrade their teaching skills with regard to: 1) dealing with multi-grade classes, 2) teaching of L<sup>1</sup> literacy and innumeracy, 3) teaching Vietnamese as a Second Language. b) In addition, the level of education of non-Kinh students entering teacher training institutions is sometimes lower than the general level of acceptance. This requires training colleges to provide and to institutionalize extra courses to upgrade the general education level of entrants (this is already done in some areas), as well as to provide them with the specific skills of teaching in disadvantaged, resource poor areas.
5. Teacher Education system - a) Planning for teacher education is considered weak with no clear targets for teacher supply. b) There is no apparent development plan to manage the future roles of teacher training institutions given the likely concentration on in-service provision. c) There is a shortage of specialist subject teachers, one of the reasons being the limited number of teacher training colleges which are able to offer specialist subjects. There is need for MOET/DOET to rationalize the number of colleges and their roles and functions in the provision of pre-service and support services to in-service, and to review the policy on training for specialist subject teachers.
6. Staffing of teacher education institutions – Teacher trainers in colleges have not usually been serving teachers for any length of time and many have little experience of real classroom situations. Trainers in general are thus poorly geared to lead methodological reform. There is a consequent need for a program to develop a cadre of teacher trainers with emphasis on practical pedagogical issues to realize the new curriculum in terms of its approach to teaching and methodologies.
7. Teacher Education curriculum - There is inadequate classroom contact time during teaching practice in terms of student teachers having adequate 'real time' pupil contact in the classroom. This appears to be partly due to weaknesses in the organization and implementation of teaching practice. There is need for a review of the organizational aspects of teaching practice to enable student teachers to have sufficient time to experiment with new ideas, new materials and new methodologies and to develop teaching confidence in 'peer training' situations and, very importantly, in classroom practice in schools. The emphasis must be on theory-into-practice.
8. Linkages in teacher education – There is need for greater linkage between training institutions, schools and inspection services to ensure consonance of approach to school-based practice and to provide psychological and pedagogical support to teachers which is especially important during any process of change.
9. Resources for teacher education - Consumables and materials in training institutions/schools were deemed to be insufficient by participants in the Needs Analysis workshops, though there are reports of some of these facilities not being fully utilized. Libraries and laboratories and insufficient ancillary staff have been highlighted as areas needing upgrading.

#### **1.6.4 Facility Improvement**

Identified problem areas are as follows:

1. **School Siting / School Mapping & Micro Planning** – The siting of schools in some cases does not match the needs of the communities they serve, (e.g. scattered populations, increased migration, and urban growth). This is reflected in weak school mapping and planning, and is a consequence of a general lack of skilled staff in micro planning at DOET level. There is therefore a need for capacity building with regard to 1) school mapping; 2) enrolment projection techniques and analysis, 3) planning the demand for additional facilities/infrastructures given the shift toward full-day schooling and implementation.
2. **Classroom Shortage / Toward Full-day schooling** – The current average class/classroom ratio is approximately 1.5, which restricts the shift to full-day schooling. In addition, there is a need to rehabilitate existing facilities, which are generally in a poor state of repair. There is need for: 1) new classrooms to be constructed with regard to accurate new enrolment projections, 2) given the large number of classrooms to be built, local contractors will need to be involved. It is important that any new construction program ensures that project design includes a component for capacity building to ensure facilities conform to national standards.
3. **Facility Design Criteria (Building & Equipment) / Facility Maintenance** – a) schools often lack facilities for both students and teachers (e.g. library, resource rooms, staff room, office) and are not suited to the demands of the new curriculum. There is need to: 1) provide different sets of design criteria which take into account regional cultural/environmental contexts; 2) provide guidelines (plot type, designs, and coatings) for school construction.
4. **Durable Infrastructures / Construction in typhoon and flood-prone area** – a) damaged school buildings are often evident in areas experiencing annual typhoons (coastal areas) and flooding (e.g. Mekong Delta). Many schools become unusable or unsafe. Where such situations occur, primary schools either double up with lower secondary schools or use make-shift shelters. The problem is aggravated by lack of funds for repair and improvement. In such areas there is a need for 1) the design of buildings to conform to standards appropriate to the prevailing climatic conditions 2) a pilot project designed to provide capacity building to transfer technical know-how to local contractors.
5. **Lack of building maintenance** - a) The majority of existing facilities (63%) are old, of a temporary nature and built to poor standards (level 4). b) These problems are compounded by a general lack of school asset maintenance which is exacerbated by insufficient funds for repairs. There is a need to: 1) develop a register of locally available resources (human/materials resources) for each area and to strengthen support linkages between schools and communes; 2) develop a culture of maintenance and to provide maintenance manuals and toolboxes; and 3) to reduce the financial burden on local people.
6. **Issues of hygiene (toilets, water supply)** – The majority of schools in rural areas have inadequate hygiene facilities with consequent effect on pupils in general and which reduces girl access to schooling. Appropriate hygiene facilities require to be integrated into all construction designs. This is a possible area of mobilization where NGO support could be requested.
7. **Many schools in rural areas lack adequate furniture, library books and teaching aid, with the satellite schools in minority ethnic areas worst off.**
8. **Disadvantaged communities** – Schools in minority ethnic and remote areas are frequently characterized as inadequate and poorly constructed. Some of the buildings are temporary (woven

walls, thatch roofs). There is need: to 1) develop a long-term strategy with sufficient funding targeted at overcoming disadvantaged areas and to ensure that satellite school, teacher accommodation in remote areas, boarding schools etc. become a focus of upgrading; 2) mobilize community resources (labor/ materials) to build and renovate schools. This is a possible area of mobilization where NGO support could be requested.

### **1.6.5 Finance and "Socialization"**

Identified problem areas are as follows:

1. Access – Approximately 5% of the 6-10 school-age population remains 'out-of-school'. Access remains difficult for remote population groups, low income households and in some rural areas. These difficulties may be compounded by a 'Socialization of Education' policy could adversely affect poorer families. To address the problems of accessing school, there needs to be an awareness campaign targeted at parents of out-of-school children to convince them of the benefits of primary education. Access can also be widened through: 1) Subsidization (scholarships, free provision of textbooks, uniform, etc) for disadvantaged group; 2) Subsidized transportation in areas where feasible for poorer families; 3) Increasing the number of language preparatory courses at kindergarten level for ethnic minority groups to secure their enrolment and continuation through the primary cycle.
2. Financial – The existing system of education budgeting is limited with regard to the achievement of efficient, optimal, and accountable allocation of education financial resources. Current levels of non-salary expenditure for the primary education sector do not meet the finance required to consolidate the necessary improvements in primary education. Two areas of needs are identified: 1) An improved budgeting system at all levels (budget request, norms, allocation, monitoring, auditing, accountability, & training); 2) Increased funding to meet non-salary education expenditure in order to achieve equitable and quality provision of education.
3. Decentralization – Government of Vietnam policy is to increasingly decentralize educational responsibilities and functions to lower levels of the administration and to communities. This will require capacity building for administrators at all levels given their changing roles, as well as some kind of decision-making capacity to communities if these are to be empowered. Prioritization needs to be given financial administration for local education administrators and to school-based finance (Book-keeping etc.) for senior school staff so as to ensure proper accountability.
4. Institutionalization of socialization – Socialization may adversely affect disadvantaged groups and limit their access to schooling, thus financial/material subsidization and other types of incentives are required for these disadvantaged groups. In addition, there is need to encourage and collaborate with grass-roots self-help initiatives.

### **1.7 Criteria for Prioritization**

Prioritization of areas of intervention is multi-sectoral and dependent upon Government of Vietnam policies. In addition, global decision-making on prioritization is difficult to carry out given wide regional and economic differences as well as differing requirements from ethnic and disadvantaged groups. This will inevitably be a lengthy process demanding consultation at all levels of the education system and with communities, as well as with donor groups in terms of their possible inputs. Therefore, the task of prioritization is for MOET to undertaken.

Prioritization should be pragmatic, that is according to MOET's ability and capacity to implement. This therefore requires some form of functional analysis, a management audit, which will provide information on the conditions and logistics required to implement the areas of intervention. This will also serve to provide a systemic context for implementation.

The most basic criteria for prioritization is that intervention should proceed on the basis of:

- Consonance with the EDS 2010 objectives (mainly in terms of the implementation of the new curriculum and consequent requirements for teacher training/development reforms)
- Meeting goals identified in the Education For All strategy
- Meeting goals identified in the CPRGS strategy paper for Vietnam

In addition, there should be a review of recent development programs of each province, and note the match between those developments and the prioritized areas as given in the BAPs.

Possible criteria for prioritization thereafter are suggested below as a referring framework against which informed decision-making can be made. These are not comprehensive, merely indicative. Criteria for targeting projects/projects (single or multi-criteria referenced) could be on the basis of:

- education indicators
- poverty indicators
- Population indicators
- geographical location
- provincial (DOET, BOET) capacity to manage and implement programs
- community capacity to participate in programs
- school capacity to implement programs
- ethnic groupings
- non-donor areas of intervention
- complementarity to existing donor/government areas of intervention through:
  1. different programs but shared vision
  2. replication in other areas
  3. value-adding by implementing tasks not taken up or new task areas within an existing program
- matching identified areas of intervention donor/NGOs predisposition for a particular area of intervention

A major problem to be avoided is that of proposing possible intervention areas which substantially impinge upon the domain of another program with a different intervention approach, and thereby weakening both programs and leading to confusion at the level of implementation. This would create a series of 'patchwork' intervention programs leading to loss of a coherent underlying strategy.

Flexibility is required in the use of criteria for prioritization given that one criterion may be suitable for a specific area of intervention, but another criterion may be deemed more useful in another situation. For example, 'Building Project' (P3/S2) may be prioritized according geographical location (e.g. flooding and typhoons) whereas prioritization on 'Accessing the Curriculum' (P4/S4) may be according to a combination of education and poverty indicators.

However, it is to be noted that there is a logical sequencing in many of the areas of identified need, and synergy exists between those areas. For example, trainers with practical classroom experience are required (trainer-training course) before embarking on in-service programs (teacher training course), and that both are dependent on some kind of Quality Assurance Audit (supposing that this a selected target); and that a pilot program may be required in certain domains of education intervention before scaling up.

Reform measures to improve primary education are multi-dimensional and any prioritization must be aware of this if intervention is to be successful. An alternative way of looking at prioritization could be in terms of a conceptual model - for example, 'School Improvement'. School improvement is about developing strategies that strengthen the school's organization. The ultimate aim is to change learning conditions and other related internal school conditions, in order to realize educational goals more effectively.

The 'School Improvement' model puts the school at the center of change and suggests that pupil outcomes depend on both internal factors (e.g. classroom practice, school management and leadership, textbooks) and external factors (e.g. teacher training, inspection, advisory support) to the school). These factors must be examined before prioritization choices are made. This will require an audit to assess which factors are in place and which factors are not. Such an audit can then provide guidance as to what kinds of interventions are necessary and how such interventions can be integrated. Integration implies strong linkages between top-down and bottom-up approaches to development. The 'top' provides policy aims, an overall strategy, and operational plans, which are complemented by a bottom-up diagnosis, goal setting and implementation. This is an approach consonant with the PEDP process. This method of prioritization leads to a holistic way of looking at prioritization and avoids the sort of 'patchwork development' which occurs when projects are set up without an overall coherent strategy.

