

**A STUDY ON ENROLMENT
AND
RETENTION STRATEGIES IN BHUTAN**



**Ministry of Education
Policy & Planning Division
www.education.gov.bt**

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ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS AND GLOSSARY

Acronyms

ADEO	Assistant District Education Officer
AIR	Apparent Intake Ratio
CEDAW	Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CFA	Continuous Formative Assessment
CPS	Community Primary School
CRC	Convention on Rights of Children
CSA	Continuous Summative Assessment
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DEO	District Education Officer
ECR	Extended Classroom
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FYP	Five Year Plan
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GNH	Gross National Happiness
GYT	Geog Yargye Tshogdey
HSS	Higher Secondary School
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ID	Identity Card
LSS	Lower Secondary School
MGDs	Millennium Development Goals
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoLHR	Ministry of Labour and Human Resource
MSS	Middle Secondary School
NAPE	New Approach to Primary Education
NCWC	National Commission for Women and Children
NER	Net Enrolment Ratio
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NID	National Institute for the Disabled
NPER	Net Primary Enrolment Ratio
NSB	National Statistical Bureau (Bhutan)
PHCB	Population and Housing Census of Bhutan
PP	Pre-Primary
PPD	Policy and Planning Division
PTM	Parent-Teacher Meeting
RGoB	Royal Government of Bhutan
SCF	Save the Children Fund

SMB	School Management Board
TV	Television
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
WFP	World Food Programme
YDF	Youth Development Fund

Abbreviations

Nu.	Ngultrum (Bhutanese currency)
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Glossary

<i>Dzongkhag</i>	District
<i>Gup</i>	Elected Administrative Head of a Block
<i>Tshogpa</i>	Elected representative heading a village
<i>Dratshang</i>	Monk body
<i>Lhakhang</i>	Temple

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Consultants would like to express sincere gratitude to the Ministry of Education (MoE) for presenting this opportunity to undertake the “Study on Enrolment and Retention Strategies in Bhutan”.

Our sincere thanks to the Directors, Heads, District Education Officers, Principals and other Officials of various organizations within the MoE for sparing their valuable time to discuss their experiences and perceptions on enrolment and retention for Basic Education in Bhutan.

Our sincere thanks are due to Heads and Officials from various donor and autonomous organizations for their critical inputs for a comprehensive understanding of enrolment and retention strategies in Bhutan.

Above all, the Consultants would like to thank parents of school going children, parents of special needs children, students from various schools, school drop-outs and children that never attended schools. With such respondents the team had an opportunity to discuss issues impacting enrolment and retention. Their free and fair opinions contributed immensely to the analysis and outcomes of the study.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

In Bhutan, education is recognized as a condition for achieving social, cultural and economic goals as articulated in the concept of Gross National Happiness. The Constitution of Bhutan states that “*The state shall provide free education to all children of school going age to tenth standard and ensure that technical and professional education is made generally available and that higher education is equally accessible to all on basis of merit.*”¹ . Further, the Convention on Rights of Children (CRC) was signed in June 1990 and ratified in August 1990.

Today, the educational structure in Bhutan has three main institutions – formal general education, monastic education and non-formal education. While monastic education remains the oldest form of education, the formal and modern education is the largest. The non-formal education sector, providing basic literacy courses for all those that could not attend or complete formal or monastic education was introduced in late 1992.²

The existing policy of providing free education and supporting mass education for Bhutanese children is being realized through establishment of Community Primary and Primary Schools and provision of boarding facilities and feeding programme where needed. The recent establishment of extended classrooms (ECRs) are efforts towards further improving access for every school going aged child especially from remote rural areas. These initiatives have enabled RGoB to improve the Net Primary Enrolment Ratio (NPER) within a very short period - from 53 % in 1998 to 88 % in 2008.

Nonetheless, considerable challenges remain. In particular, achieving 100 % net enrolment by 2015 will not simply be a linear progression. The last 10 to 15 % of school-age population to be enrolled often includes children of nomadic and migrant populations, children with special learning needs and those for whom indirect costs are prohibitive. All have different needs from the majority of students and will require innovative strategies to ensure the provision of adequate education.

To this effect, the RGoB felt the need to review the impact of existing policies and strategies on enrolment and retention and draw up strategic interventions to improve these for providing basic education (up to Class X) in the country.

The study was carried out in two phases. The first phase involved extensive consultations with a wide range of stakeholders and desk assessment of policy and relevant documents. The second

1 Education for All, Mid-Decade Assessment Report, 2000-2006, PPD, MoE, RGoB

2 General Statistics, 2004, PPD, MoE, RGoB

phase was an assessment based on the field survey with various stakeholders. Through the field survey, qualitative as well as quantitative data was collected from 572 respondents, comprising of 7 District Education Officers, 30 Principals, 81 parents of regular school going children, 5 parents of special needs children, 94 school drop-outs, 55 children that never attended school and 300 students from different levels of school (primary, lower and middle secondary).

Enrolment

Statistical analysis reveals that net primary enrolment was 88% in 2008, which is an increase in enrolment in PP since 1996. A separate analysis of statistics regarding net enrolment rates at primary level by poverty status reveals that 69.2% of the poor children are enrolled in primary level and only 2.7% are at the secondary level in 2007.³

Analysis from the field survey reveals that the several government policies and programmes have all contributed to good progress towards the target of 100% NER by 2013. These are locating schools closer to communities through establishment of CPS, up-gradation of schools, launching of advocacy programmes on benefits of education, provision of boarding facility and school feeding where needed and recent establishment of ECRs. Both attitudes and practices of villagers towards education are changing as a result of increased sensitization by school heads and relatives, media and agencies. Availability of equal opportunities to boys and girls in the government and private sector motivates parents to give equal preference to boys and girls.

However, creating facilities alone does not guarantee admission of children in schools. There were diverse factors mentioned but the most compelling factors were long walking distances to school often through forests and streams and poverty of parents (inability to meet the costs of uniforms). Other factors mentioned were: de-motivation of parents to invest in education with growing un-employment of youth, teacher shortage in remote rural schools, lack of classrooms and poor facilities like water and sanitation, lack of food facility in schools and preference of few parents to retain children for domestic tasks or to enrol them in monastic schools. Children from broken families and orphans were also reported of not being able to attend school. Following deteriorating security situation in southern Bhutan and subsequent closure of schools, many students availed admission in other districts. Many nomads and scattered remote families do not enrol children in schools as they do not have any caregivers within their communities to look after their children when they migrate or are far off from their homes. Many such communities may not have access to boarding facilities for students.

In the recent past, the national admission policy was guided by criterion such as enrolment of children at the age of 6 and upon verification of health cards and production of ID cards of both the parents. However, admission procedures have now been simplified, and this is expected to further boost enrolment.

The inability to reach children with special needs has long been recognised as a challenge in meeting basic education (Vision 2020). Integration of such children in regular schools is also being tested. However, the experience is that there are a lot of challenges mainly because of unique skills

3 Poverty Analysis Report, 2007, NSB, RGoB

required to facilitate special education and the level of attention that can be realistically given to children with special needs. Other constraints are a lack of teachers professionally qualified to deliver education to children with special needs, a lack of appropriate curricula and teaching resources and limited options for specific skills programmes for such children.

Retention

Statistical analysis reveals that repetition rate for Class PP to X has decreased considerably since 1998. The dropout rate since 1998 to 2008 for pre-primary to Class X has also decreased since 1998. The Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) also decreased with increasing educational level with 22% at lower secondary and 16% at middle secondary.⁴ This indicates that children drop out of school with increasing level of education mainly at lower secondary and middle secondary levels. The annual average dropout rate was highest in grade VII in the past six years. While in 2008, it was highest with 8% of total dropouts in grade IX. Assessing the survival rate for the last 4 years, it was found that 65% to 70% of all children starting PP will eventually complete basic education.⁵

The field assessment revealed that retention in schools has improved over the years owing to various reasons. Some school-based efforts were introduction of policy on child friendly schools, ban on corporal punishment, policy to allow children to repeat, remedial classes for weaker students, making teachers responsible for delivering quality teaching and children performing well by means of maintaining minimum 80% pass percentage from each class. Making available facilities also helped like providing boarding facility with food and day meals in schools without boarding facilities and allowing students to attend schools without the school uniforms. Other initiatives that helped were providing financial support to poor and needy children through student support schemes contributed by teachers and convincing parents to retain children when they try to take them out for some other reasons.

However, retention is still a challenge in rural schools. Students from economically disadvantaged families face difficulty in meeting rising costs at higher levels especially in LSS and MSS levels associated with changes in schools. Illiterate parents lack the capability to guide children in studies and competencies of such children may not be to the level of children who receive guidance and coaching from literate parents. In addition, other factors impacting retention are: scattered settlements and difficult walking conditions to schools in many remote areas and limited employment opportunity for educated youth after completion of basic education. Further, the late arrival of teaching-learning materials in remote rural schools, inadequate facilities and shortage of teachers, inadequate games and sports facilities, shortage of class rooms, non-progressive mode of assessment and examination seem to be affecting the quality of education. This could have negative impact on retention of children at LSS and MSS levels.

4 Socio-economic and demographic indicators, 2005.

5 General Statistics, 2008, PPD, MoE, RGoB

Recommendations

The main strategic recommendations derived from the analysis to improve enrolment are the following:

- Institute minimum standard facilities for each level of school to ensure balanced access to facilities by all students in the country.
- Improve access through consolidation of schools rather than spreading resources thinly and encourage participation of private entrepreneurs.
- Use monastic education as an opportunity to enhance enrolment. However, address the need to standardize accreditation of monastic school classes so that those children enrolled in monastic education can be included in the NER.
- Step up current advocacy efforts by Head Office especially for migratory, remote, scattered and impoverished populations to intensify the level of awareness on value of education.
- Coordination in implementation of programmes of respective ministries and agencies to address the structural issue of poverty reduction;
- Training of teachers coupled with a review of the current mode of assessment at primary level. Review the effectiveness of including children with special needs in mainstream schools.
- Gather supplementary data on out-of-school children along with the reasons for being out of school in order to assess the constraints and identify appropriate interventions to bring them to formal school.

The strategic recommendations to improve retention based on the analysis are the following:

- Improve collaboration between the MoE and the MoLHR to enhance job opportunities and employability of school graduates.
- Strengthen and create more boarding facilities and provide sponsorships through government or Civil Society Organisations to minimize costs on poor parents.
- Step up the current advocacy efforts by Head Office to intensify the level of awareness on value of education especially for remote and scattered populations.
- Coordination of inter-ministerial efforts to address rural poverty.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Globally, access to schooling has improved over the years. However, at current rates, many countries will not be able to reach the MDG on Universal Primary Completion (UPE) by 2015. Country indicators show a continued upward trend in primary school enrolment, where 47 out of 163 countries have achieved UPE, and an additional 20 countries are estimated to be “on track” to achieve the education MDG by 2015. Poor learning outcomes and low quality of education remain an over-riding concern. In many developing countries, less than 60 % of primary school pupils who enrol in first grade reach the last grade of schooling. Additionally, pupil/teacher ratios in many countries are in excess of 40:1 and many primary teachers lack adequate qualifications⁶. Regionally, poverty is identified as a key factor impacting enrolment and completion of primary and secondary education. The challenge to achieve quality education is even greater as most international focus has been to get children into schools. With huge numbers of children in schools, the quality of education is poor, leaving them without the necessary skills and knowledge to enable them to lift themselves out of poverty.⁷

Bhutan, a small country wedged between India and China, completely landlocked with rugged mountain terrain has populations widely scattered across steep mountain slopes and few valleys. In such physical settings, Bhutan nurtured a monastic form of education even before the advent of modern education in 1961 in Bhutan (since the start of first Five Year Plan).

Since the introduction of modern education, the education system has grown dramatically from just 11 primary schools with 500 students to some 523 primary and secondary schools with 152,194 students and 5,372 teachers today⁸. Basic education is free in that provisions include infrastructure, teachers and required teaching materials such as text books and stationery for school administration. With the universal primary education goal of achieving 100 % NER by 2015, Bhutan has made good progress through accelerated school construction which started since the 1980s. Many community primary schools (CPS) were constructed in the 9th Five Year Plan (FYP) and free food and boarding wherever required is to be continued for the 10th FYP (2008-2013). Today, the Net Primary Enrolment (NPER) has jumped sharply within a very short period from 53 % in 1998 to 83.7 % in 2007 (boys, 83.9 %; girls, 83.5 %) and to 88% in the year 2008. The share of the Government budget allocated for education since 1960 has consistently been kept at around 10 % of the total indicating a high priority given to education in the country

The overall situation of literacy in the country indicates that almost half the country’s population (47%) never attended any educational system in the past suggesting that education is a recent

6 Education for All, World Bank Website

7 A Human Rights-Based Approach to Education for All, UNICEF, 2007

8 General Statistics, 2008, PPD, MoE, RGoB

phenomenon in the country⁹. The Population and Housing Census of Bhutan (PHCB) 2005 estimated overall literacy in Bhutan at 59.5 %, an increase from 32% in 1990. Three quarters of the literate population is from urban and half from rural areas (table 7, annexure 3).

1.2 Legal and Policy Framework for Basic Education in Bhutan

The Constitution of Bhutan conferring the mandate for provision of education to the RGoB as enshrined in the Principles of State Policy in Article 9, states that *“The state shall endeavor to provide education for the purpose of improving and increasing knowledge, values and skills of the entire population with education being directed towards the full development of the human personality.”* Article 16 further clarifies that *“The state shall provide free education to all children of school going age to tenth standard and ensure that technical and professional education is made generally available and that higher education is equally accessible to all on basis of merit.”*¹⁰

The Convention on the Rights of the Child is the first international legal instrument to incorporate the full range of human rights - civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. The Convention spells out the basic human rights that children everywhere have namely: the right to survival; to develop to the fullest; to protection from harmful influences; from abuse and exploitation and to participate fully in family, cultural and social life. The four core principles of the Convention are non-discrimination; devotion to the best interests of the child; the right to life, survival and development and respect for the views of the child.

The RGoB signed the Convention on Rights of Children (CRC) in June 1990 and ratified it in August 1990. The Convention is to ensure survival, protection, development and participation of all children. Amongst these, ensuring development and participation of children implies providing access to education. The Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was signed in July 1980 and acceded without any reservations in August 1981.

Bhutan’s Strategy Paper entitled Bhutan 2020, A Vision for Peace, Prosperity and Happiness states *“Basic education is an inalienable right of every Bhutanese”*. To realize “Vision 2020”, the RGoB has identified a number of strategic options for development of education in Bhutan such as: early child care development; primary education; secondary education; tertiary education; adult literacy and continuing education, technical and vocational education; special education; decentralization and system management process.¹¹

In the Tenth Five Year Plan (2008-2013) the Government is cognizant that with widely dispersed settlements, providing educational services by means of expanding community and primary school infrastructure and facilities is becoming increasingly difficult. Strategies to overcome inadequate

9 Socio-economic and Demographic Indicators, 2005, NSB, RGoB

10 Education for All, Mid-Decade Assessment Report, 2000-2006, PPD, MoE, RGoB

11 Education Sector Strategy Realizing Vision 2020 Policy and Strategy

access to primary education in isolated communities requires enhancing incentives for teachers, strengthening special education with opportunities for children with special needs, providing boarding facilities in remote and highly dispersed settlements and enhancing the role of the private sector in providing educational facilities. Amongst others, the main thematic objectives focusing on primary and basic education in the Tenth FYP for the education sector are:

- Support mechanisms to promote early child care and development for children (1-6 years of age);
- Enhance Primary Net Enrolment (6-12 years of age in classes PP-VI) to near 100% by 2013;
- Enhance Basic Net Enrolment (6-16 years of age in classes PP-X) to near 90% by 2013;
- Establish a programme of special education for special needs children;
- Develop a more sustainable education system through private participation and cost sharing;
- Enhance quality of education to achieve competency in languages, Mathematics and Science to international standards

1.3 Basic Education in Bhutan

The formal educational structure in Bhutan consists of primary, lower secondary, middle secondary, higher secondary, degree besides vocational training institutions. Basic education comprises of 11 years of free schooling starting from classes PP to X. This cycle is divided into 7 years of primary education, 2 years of lower secondary and 2 years of middle secondary education. There is a National Board Examination at class X.¹² The primary level curriculum is aimed at teaching basic literacy and numeracy skills and providing knowledge of country's history, geography, culture and traditions including fundamental skills on health, hygiene, agriculture and population education. Moral and value education are given special attention. At higher levels of school education, subjects like History, Geography, Economics, Computer Applications, Biology, Physics, Chemistry, etc are taught. Students appear for board examinations at grades 10 and 12.

Free basic education till grade X includes school infrastructure and facilities such as teachers, stationery, text books, sporting items, and food and board where needed. In addition to uniforms, a minimum tuition fee of Nu. 5 per annum as well as school development fund of Nu. 30 per student for primary and Nu.100 per student for secondary education is mandatory for all parents. Parents in urban schools also pay for stationery.

However, considerable challenges are faced by the sector. In particular, achieving 100 % net enrolment by 2015 will not simply be a linear progression. The last 10 to 15 % of school-age population to be enrolled often include children of nomadic and migrant populations', children with special learning needs and those for whom indirect costs are prohibitive. The facilities in remote community schools could be inadequate and children of poor families are usually out of

12 General Statistics, 2008, PPD, MoE, RGoB

school. The difficult terrain and scattered population is also quoted as a problem to meet recurrent costs and to provide access

to education for all. The expansion of primary schools reportedly has placed pressure on secondary education with increasing numbers of students moving up the ladder.

Despite these challenges, the Royal Government is committed to achieve universal primary education by 2015 which entails the following:¹³ universal access; universal enrolment; universal retention and universal quality of education. Various Government organizations and donors are collectively involved in improving enrolment to contribute to achieve MGD. The status of progress towards achieving MDGs indicates that Bhutan is making progress towards achieving its goals (table 8, annexure 3). The Department of School Education under the Ministry of Education is mandated with the following: school planning and building; education monitoring and support services; teachers development and IT programme development. The Department of Youth, Culture and Sports is mandated to provide services for the wholesome development of youth such as games and sports, career counseling, scouts and cultural programmes and comprehensive health programmes. In addition, autonomous organizations such as Youth Development Fund (YDF) also provide support in some of these spheres and also support needy students with stipends. The Departments of the MoE mentioned above and organizations along with various donor organizations such as the World Bank, UNICEF, UNFPA, Save the Children Fund (SCF), Governments of India, Denmark and Japan, and World Food Programme (WFP) are collectively contribute to impart wholesome education to improve enrolment and retention in schools.

1.4 Rationale for the Study

While enrolment has increased over the years, a review of existing policies and strategies in order to come up with strategic interventions beyond measures presently undertaken was felt to be necessary to meet the MDG goal of 100 % primary enrolment as well as the overall 10th plan goal of achieving 90% enrolment in Basic Education by 2013. This study aims at drawing up strategic recommendations for improving enrolment and retention of all school going aged children (6-16 years) in basic education (up to grade X) in the country. The study entails recommendations to be derived from the following areas of research:

- Constitutional rights and obligations
- Access and quality of education
- Education for Special Needs Children
- Private sector participation
- Rights and obligations of all stakeholders including Government, parents, teachers, school and students

13 Education without Compromise, Education Sector Review Commission, January 2008

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The study involves two phases of research namely documentation review and consultations taken up in the first phase and field survey work in the second. The first part provided the outcomes of the desk review of policy and other relevant documents and synthesis from stakeholders' consultation including consultations with various donor organizations in Thimphu. The second part was an analysis and an outcome produced through a field survey conducted in March 2009.

The study has the following overall and immediate objectives.

- Overall Objective:** At the end of the study, recommendations made for strategies/policies to enhance enrolment and retention to achieve national and universal goals.
- Immediate Objective 1:** A comprehensive Policy Review (legislation, policy, strategies, executive orders, guidelines) undertaken to provide recommendations for policies and strategies.
- Immediate Objective 2:** Objective information collected from the field survey to understand whether current policies have led to full enrolment and retention and if not identify where the un-reached, out-of-school children are and why they are out of school.

1.6 Approach and Methodology

1.6.1 Approach

There were two areas of work that the Consultants were to fulfil namely:

- a) A desk assessment of relevant policies, rules and regulations, strategies, and directives with regard to education in general and enrolment and retention documents in particular.
- b) Collection of data and information. This was done through:-
 - (i) Consultations with a range of stakeholders both from the Ministry of Education, other Ministries, NGOs and development partners;
 - (ii) Data collection through interviews and focus group discussions with DEOs, Head Teachers, students, parents, parents of children with special needs and out-of-school children (children that dropped schools and children that never attended school).

The first part on desk assessment of relevant documents and stakeholders' consultation was conducted between mid November and mid-December 2008. Similarly, for the second part of the study, analysis of data and information derived from field survey was conducted in March 2009

and assembled into the report. Analyses from both the outputs have contributed to a comprehensive report with recommendations for strategies/policies to enhance enrolment and retention to achieve national and universal goals.

1.6.2 Methodology

The activities and methods employed are described below:-

Policy Review/Documentation Review entailed review of documents keeping in mind that all pertinent references to enrolment and retention will be noted following which content analyses methods was used to summarize text into readable form. The summaries were also used as basis to design questionnaires for collecting data from various respondents.

Synthesis of information from the Consultations were produced from summaries and analysis using qualitative data analyses methods. The source of such data is derived from the notes from in-depth interviews conducted with Resource Persons.

Syntheses of information from the field survey were produced from summaries and analysis using qualitative and quantitative data analyses methods. The source of such data is derived from the notes from in-depth interviews conducted with DEOs, Principals, parents of special needs children, drop-outs and children that never attended school. In addition quantitative interview was conducted with parents and students. In-depth focus group discussion was conducted with parents of regular school going children using qualified enumerators.

The outputs to be achieved through the above activities are findings consolidated from both the phases into a single report but containing the following outputs:-

Output 1:

A comprehensive Policy Review produced that lists the provisions of documents reviewed bearing on enrolment and retention in schools in Bhutan. The review also identified provisions for special education.

Output 2:

Survey findings from interviews carried out with various respondents. The data and information analysed and with the data and information from the consultations and documentation review provided recommendations and strategies to reach the un-reached, enhance access to basic education and to ensure improved retention.

1.6.3 Field survey

A purposive sampling of 8 districts (considering regional distribution) was undertaken for the field survey in consultation with the Task Force instituted for the study. The districts with higher

and lower enrolment ratio from each region were selected. A fair distribution of middle secondary schools (MSS), lower secondary schools (LSS) and community primary / primary schools (CPS/PS) was selected. A total of 30 schools were selected distributed by semi-urban, urban, road head and remote schools. In total 4 MSS, 8 LSS, 7 remote CPS/PS and 11 road head PS were visited for the field survey (table 5, annexure3).

From the 8 Dzongkhags and 30 schools visited, a total of 572 respondents were interviewed using qualitative as well as quantitative methods of data collection. A total of 7 DEOs, 30 Principals, 81 parents of regular school going children, 5 parents of special needs children, 300 students, 94 drop-outs below grade 10, and 55 children that never attended schools were interviewed from different Dzongkhags (table 6, annexure3).

In terms of gender of respondents, all DEOs/ADEOs and Principals interviewed were males. There were more females in focus group discussions with parents of regular school going children. There were equal numbers of male and female students for individual quantitative interview conducted with the students. There were almost double the number of females available for qualitative interview with school drop-outs and slightly more females for qualitative interview with children that never attended schools (tables 1 and 2, annexure 3).

Individual interviews by the Consultant with 7 selected DEOs were conducted in Thimphu, Trongsa, Mongar, Samdrup Jongkhar, Wangdue, Chukha and Samtse Dzongkhags. The objective of the interview was to gather information regarding the enrolment and retention policy and to identify the un-reached pockets where children between 6 and 16 years are not in school. The interviews also aimed to identify challenges and discuss appropriate measures to reach such populations, gather perspectives and opinions on existing enrolment policy and quality of education. Finally, the interviews aimed at collecting information on impacts on enrolment and retention and come up with measures to improve quality as well as access to educational infrastructure. A checklist was used to gather information related to enrolment and retention. Qualified enumerators were used to write the outcomes of the interview. The recorded texts were later discussed with the Consultant and transcribed to computer.

From the 8 districts, 30 Principals from each of 30 schools visited were interviewed using a pre-designed checklist. A qualified enumerator was used to record the interview. The recorded text were discussed further with the Consultant and transcribed as qualitative data into computer file. Using content analysis the information gathered was analyzed. The objective of the interview with Principals was to gather diverse views and opinions regarding enrolment and retention policy and practices and also to gather perceptions on the quality of education vis-à-vis accessibility. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted with groups of parents of children studying in schools visited. A pre-determined focus group discussion checklist of discussion points was used by the facilitator. All responses from the groups were recorded verbatim by an experienced enumerator dedicated for recording. The outputs were later transcribed to computer file. On an average 10 parents per district participated in the discussions. The objective of the FGDs is to

gather as detailed and diverse information as possible on issues perceived by parents and children impacting school enrolment and retention. It was not the intention of FGDs to reach a consensus. Rather, it was to assimilate a plethora of views and experiences from parents who could be good judges of the effectiveness of delivery of educational services in Bhutan.

Owing to time constraints and non-availability of parents with children of special needs, individual interviews with only a total of 5 parents of children with special needs were conducted. The objective of the interview was to gather information and assess the needs for their children and to know the extent of the disability. Further, the information was gathered to know if such children are enrolled in formal schools, and if not, whether they should be enrolled and for that matter what the government should do to provide basic education.

The drop outs below class 10 and children that never attended school, wherever available were interviewed during the field survey from the 8 districts. A checklist for qualitative data collection was used by enumerators to gather information. Based on the checklist, 94 drop-outs between the ages of 10 and 20 years and 55 children that never attended schools between the ages 10 to 16 years were interviewed. The objective of the interview with drop outs was to gather detailed information pertaining to reasons for not attending school or if once enrolled, reasons for leaving the school. This was done to explore if such children sustain an interest to continue formal education or the NFE classes and to explore the needs for support measures by the government to ensure that such children are brought back to school to complete formal basic education.

1.7 Limitations of the study

The study entailed data collection from a wide range of stakeholders. The sampling of schools was purposive and distribution done according to regions, and schools with higher and lower NER were selected for the field survey. Only parents of school-going children from areas near the schools visited could be met for FGDs. Further, only 5 parents of special needs children were available for the interview. The parents of children not enrolled in schools could not be met during the field visit owing to time constraints and long walking distances to reach such parents. **As only 30 schools could be visited and only 300 students were interviewed, findings on all variables from the study could not be generalized.** As such, weaker variables were omitted and stronger variables were assessed for analysis.

CHAPTER 2: ENROLMENT

The desk review of various documents, reports and the enrolment statistics for several years were reviewed and analyzed to arrive at a situational analysis that subsequently guided the field survey by deliberating on a set of research questions. Further, through the field survey diverse views on the enrolment pattern, policy and various strategies to improve enrolment were gathered and analysed. The integrated analyses from the desk review and the field survey are compiled in the following sub-sections.

2.1 Situational Analysis

The Net Primary Enrolment Ratio (NPER) and Gross Primary Enrolment Ratio (GPER) which are indicators for access to education has increased from 97 % to 112 % (GPER) and from 73 % to 88% (NPER) for the period 2005 to 2008 (table 9, annexure 3). Though NPER and GPER are increasing, many children are not in formal schools. It is assumed that some of the primary school aged children are even enrolled in lower secondary level.

On the basis of observed progress towards achieving MDG goal of universal primary education, the increasing enrolment rates and primary school completion rates indicate that Bhutan is on track to achieve the goal (table 8, annexure3).

A separate analysis from data derived from “Socio-economic and Demographic Indicators, 2005” showed that the Gross Primary Enrolment was only 90 % taking into consideration only children of 6 years and above (98 % in urban, while 87 % in rural). The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) decreased with increase in educational levels with 67 % at lower secondary level and 50 % at middle secondary level. Similarly, considering only children of 6 years and above, the Net Primary Enrolment Ratio was assessed to be 72 % (83 % in urban, while 67 % in rural). The Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) also decreased with increasing educational level with 22% at lower secondary and 16% at middle secondary¹⁴. This indicates that children drop out of school with increasing level of education mainly at lower secondary and middle secondary levels.

The Apparent Intake Ratio (AIR) for the last few years is more than 100 %. For 2008, it is 114 %. This indicates that many children enrolled in schools for the first time are older than 6 years of age (the age for qualifying for admission to PP). For 2008, the estimate is that 50 % of new admissions are older than 6 years.¹⁵

14 Socio-economic and Demographic Indicators, 2005, RGoB

15 General Statistics, 2008, PPD, MoE, RGoB

2.2 Enrolment in Primary and Basic Education

The enrolment statistics shows that there has been an increase in overall enrolment in PP from 11,795 in 1996 to 15,242 in 2008, with a slight decrease in the last two years and average annual growth rate of 3.6 % (table 10, annexure 3). Though annual enrolment in primary education for the last 10 years has been increasing, for the last 3 years the enrolment growth rate has been decreasing with average annual growth rate of 3.9 % (table11, annexure3). Similarly, the annual growth for enrolment in lower secondary and middle secondary level also decreased over the years from 21 % in 1996 to 5 % in 2008 (table 12, annexure3). The analysis of these statistics on enrolment suggest that despite an increase in enrolment at PP and primary level, there has been decreased enrolment at lower and secondary levels. Therefore, the decrease in annual growth in secondary enrolment is an issue in terms of students leaving school before completing basic education.

A comparison of enrolment at various levels of basic education (PP, Primary and Secondary) between 1996 and 2008 (figure 1) showed a steady increase in enrolment at primary and secondary levels. However, despite large number of students at primary level, the number at secondary level are far less indicating that many children leave school either without completing or after completing primary level.

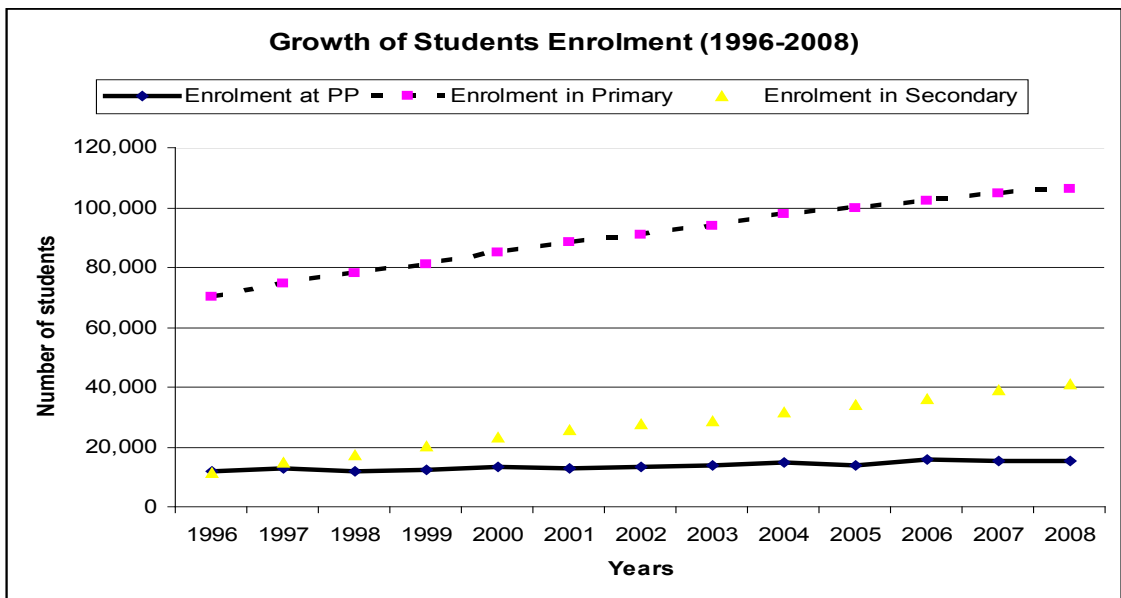


Figure 1: Growth in enrolment at PP, Primary and Secondary Level (1996 – 2008)
Source: General Statistics, 2008, PPD, MoE, RGoB

Statistics regarding net enrolment rates at primary level by poverty status reveals that 69.2 % of the poor children are enrolled in primary level and only 2.7 % are at the secondary level in 2007. The highest number of enrolment for poor children in primary level were found in Zhemgang (89.6% of the poor), followed by Trashiyangtse (87.1%), Pemagatshel (85.7%), Trongsa (84.1%), Trashigang (73.9%), Samdrupjongkhar (73.3%) and Mongar (71.4%)¹⁶.

Monastic schools are administered and coordinated by the Central Monastic Body. The enrolment data on state monastic education classified according to age group is not available. In 2008, there were about 7,000 students in several state monastic schools and 4 nunneries in Bhutan. It is reported that between 2,500 and 3,000 students are of primary school level (aged 1-8 years) and another 2,500 to 3,000 students are at lower secondary school level (aged 9-12 years) in the state monastic education system. The Dechenphodrang Dratshang is reported to have the largest numbers of learners (about 500). In addition, there are several private monasteries enrolling children are for monastic education. However, data was not available on the exact number of monks in such institutions. Children enter monastic education because of parents' preference or mostly because of poverty as children avail free accommodation and food in monasteries. Many monastic students are children from broken families and also orphans.¹⁷ About 1% primary aged children (out of total population) are reported to be in monastic education¹⁸.

As a measure to reach the un-reached and increase the adult literacy rate, Non-Formal Education (NFE) was introduced in 1992 targeted at adults above 15 years. Although NFE is targeted for adults, some NFE centres have also enrolled children below 15 years of age. The NFE curriculum offers functional literacy including basics on health, hygiene, life skill education and values and agriculture. NFE deliver classes in the national language (Dzongkha) and the impact study of the NFE Programme has recommended introduction of English in the post basic literacy course. It is also planned to deliver NFE to "Special Needs Children" for which the development of course books in collaboration with Youth Development Fund (YDF) and UNICEF has just started. Though a large portion of the community (40-50%) reported to have enrolled; only about 50 % of the enrolled complete the course. About 60% of these learners are from urban areas and 40 % from rural areas. Data gathered by District Education Officers show that slightly more than a thousand children of school going age (6-16 years) are enrolled in NFE (table 13, annexure 3).

Many children also study abroad at their own expense, especially in India (Kalimpong, Darjeeling, Delhi, Bangalore, and Chennai) and Thailand among others. About 2 % of the total primary aged children population are reported to be studying abroad¹⁹.

Data from the field survey revealed that the enrolment scenario is changing. In the past, parents were reluctant to enrol children but today parents being aware of the benefits of education are also keen to enrol even under-aged children in many schools including rural areas. The government

16 Poverty Analysis Report, 2007, NSB, RGoB

17 Consultation with Officials from Dratshang Lhentshog, TashichhoDzong

18 Population and Housing Census of Bhutan, 2005, NSB, RGoB

19 Population and Housing Census of Bhutan, 2005, NSB, RGoB

policy to move schools closer to the community through establishment of CPS, up-gradation of schools, provision of boarding and WFP feeding and day food program have improved enrolment at all levels of education.

On the other hand, some Principals indicated that few community primary schools are faced with shortage of students for enrolment (10 per class) especially for PP. Principals mentioned that establishment of more CPS in the locality, improved awareness on family planning and population controls, migration of the children to better-equipped semi-urban and urban schools are the main causes for decreased enrolment in these schools. Additionally, long walking distances to school still impacted enrolment of children from remote and scattered villages. With decreased enrolment in few CPS, children below the age of 6 were also considered for admission at PP.

In urban primary schools, enrolment pressure is high and is increasing year after year with influx of people to urban areas. With increasing pressure for enrolment and concurrent growth of private sector and influx of private employees and growth of civil servants, some urban schools have resorted to a “shift system” to accommodate and ensure enrolment for all. Statistically, high enrolment populations were found in urban areas. Regionally, it was found that the highest enrolment for 2008 (PP – X) were in the western region followed by the east and south. The lowest enrolment was in the central region (table 14, annexure 3).

It was found that enrolment numbers were higher for girls in most of the primary schools as about 11 primary schools had more girls than boys and another 7 primary schools had almost equal number of boys and girls in the school. At LSS level, slightly more girls than boys were found and in MSS levels, an equal number of boys and girls were enrolled in past few years.

2.3 Enrolment Policy

The RGoB policy on school admission is to provide admission to all Bhutanese children that have attained the age of 6 - the minimum age for admission to PP. A School Admission Committee consisting of Head Teacher, staff member, School Management Board (SMB) members and representatives from Dzongkhag Administration is formed to help the admission process and to ensure fairness in admission. The SMB is responsible for studying student enrolment trends, planning student intake, planning school resource needs (both human and physical facilities) and providing such information to their Dzongkhag Education Officer. Preferences are given to children whose parents are transferred to a new location. Students from poor families and remote locations are given priority for boarding facilities if available. Students repeating classes, transferred on disciplinary or medical grounds and other reasons are admitted depending on the availability of seats and on severity of the case.

While age has been strictly followed in urban and highly populated areas where school have high admission pressure, flexibility to enrol under-aged children has also been exercised in rural areas where enrolment has been lower. In all schools, the admission policy, procedure and the dates

are informed to parents at parent-teacher meetings usually conducted twice a year. The urban schools even used media such as local TV channels to inform the community on admission dates for PP enrolment. The admission forms were distributed during parent-teacher meeting to all who approach the school on scheduled dates through the local authority such as *Gups'* office and school *Tshogpas*. Forms are also distributed at key places where populations congregate such as in national work force camp areas and in towns.

In CPS with seven sections (PP – grade VI) and challenged with less number of students per class and number of teachers, multi-grade teaching has been adopted to handle two classes in one classroom, where the teacher deployment has been 1:22/25. In other classes, teacher deployment has been based on teacher pupil ratio of 1:32.

The field assessment revealed that in the recent past, the national admission policy was guided by criterion such as enrolment of children at the age of 6, upon verification of health cards and production of ID cards of both the parents. However, admission procedures have now been simplified and this could further enhance enrolment.

The enrolment at higher levels of education such as LSS and MSS has been eased as the schools already have identified feeder schools from where children automatically transfer. In addition, based on the availability of classrooms, teachers and infrastructure, many students from other localities and also those who approached the school authority were enrolled on verification of authenticity of cases. The pressure remained high for those schools equipped with boarding and food facility as many students from rural primary schools may not have the resources to study as day-scholars in rented houses.

2.4 Influence of Community / Parents' Background on Enrolment

Local customs reveal a scenario wherein earlier practice of retaining girls for domestic chores and boys for monastic education is changing. This is a result of increased sensitization by school heads, relatives, media, agencies and parents through awareness and advocacy programmes in school parenting and parent-teacher meetings. Now parents increasingly prefer education and independent income-earning children. Equal opportunities for boys and girls in many spheres of life in Bhutan like the government, corporate and business world motivate parents to give equal preference to boys and girls. The lack of financial capabilities of some rural population to meet the increasing costs of children at LSS and MSS levels owing to the changes in school has also impacted enrolment as few children leave these levels. Likewise, customary beliefs held by few respondents that females should depend on husbands and take care of the household prompts parents to retain a few girl students at home for domestic tasks usually after completion of lower secondary level. Similarly, a few boys are retained to be enrolled in monastic education that provides security in the face of growing unemployment of educated youth.

Parents mention that domestic chores often took the vital study time of students. However, even if this is assured then the quality of guidance that parents can give is dictated by the literacy level of parents themselves. Parents are aware of their obligations to mobilize financial resources for children's education till Class X and know that their capacity to sustain educational financing would depend on the socio-economic status of parents.

2.5 Enrolment for children from migrant, remote and scattered populations

Despite government policy to establish CPS and ECRs, there are still pockets and remote places with scattered settlements that are still inaccessible to education. Settling migratory populations has been a challenge. To curb migratory patterns implies changes in nomads' livelihoods which require appropriate policy interventions such as restricting migration of cattle, providing alternative livelihood resources, relocation of migrant populations to attractive and lucrative farm enterprises and support measures beyond the mandate of MoE.

To ensure access to education even in the remotest settlements, which are too small to warrant a CPS, the MoE has started the establishment of extended classrooms (ECRs). Such ECRs will be housed in *Lhakhangs*, out-reach clinics, NFE centres, community centres and rented structures. As an extended unit of the nearest CPS/PS, the ECR will be administratively and technically supported by schools affiliated with. All ECRs will be day schools without school feeding programme and the highest class an ECR can offer is class 3 but where possible the parent schools can suggest ECR till class 2. The principal need is to place a competent and responsible teacher at ECR trained in multi-grade teaching. With affiliation to the nearest CPS/PS, the government has planned to establish about 100 ECRs throughout the country. The latest figures shows 34 ECRs are already established in different Dzongkhags (table 38, annexure)²⁰.

During the field survey, recording opinions and strategies suggested, 23 Principals out of the 30 interviewed suggested full fledged boarding facility with food for children from remoter villages without incurring changes in school and subsequent costs for such children. Principals mentioned that consolidation of schools with full fledged boarding would mean adequate facilities and better quality of education. Alternatively, two schools on the migratory track with mobile set of teachers would be the second best option if the number of children is less. However, experiences of Principals revealed that more than providing school infrastructure, awareness on importance of education to the families of migratory nature is crucial to improve enrolment of children in schools.

2.6 Factors Impacting Enrolment

In a study conducted by the Centre for Bhutan Studies surveying non-enrolment of unemployed youth in Bhutan, it identified that poverty of parents (being incapable of affording school expenses) remained the major factor for childrens' non-enrolment in schools followed by other factors as

20 PPD, Ministry of Education, June 2009

tabulated in table 1 below.

Table 1: Number and percentage of youths citing reasons for non-enrolment in schools in Bhutan

Reasons for not attending school	Male	Female	Total	%
Parents could not afford schooling expenses	19	25	44	33
I was needed at home	17	25	42	31
Parents did not think education worthwhile	7	19	26	19
I refused to go	2	6	8	6
Personal health problems	3	3	6	4
Problems getting school	2	2	4	3
School far away	1	3	4	3
Grand Total	51	83	134	100

Source: Youth in Bhutan; Education, Employment, Development; the Centre for Bhutan Studies, 2005

The factors impacting enrolment were assessed through FGD with parents of regular school going children as parents of out-of-school children could not be met during the survey. Parents mentioned that most children of school-going age are enrolled. However, there are still children that cannot enrol. The factors impacting enrolment gathered and triangulated from different sources (Principals, parents, children that never attended school) are elaborated below:

- Poverty:** Amongst diverse factors mentioned, the most compelling factors that prevented parents enrolling children were the poverty of parents mentioned by 7 out of 8 groups of parents. Though education is considered to be free, there are costs borne by parents. Parents have to bear the nominal fees of Nu.5 per year in addition to contribution of Nu.30 per year at primary level and Nu.100 per year for secondary level as school development fund. In addition, parents have to meet the cost of uniforms and other incidental costs. Out of 82.1% NER at Primary Level in 2007, 69.2% of the poor and 86.6% of the non-poor children were enrolled (table 15, annexure 3). Likewise, out of 17.7% NER at Secondary Level in 2007, 2.7% of the poor and 21.8% of non-poor children were reported to be enrolled²¹. A UNICEF survey indicates that despite primary education and food being provided free, a family has to bear Nu.1,729 per pupil for 6 months of education for uniform, travel and other contributions²². To ease burden on the family expenses, the Royal Government has a School Feeding Programme supported through the World Food Programme (table 16, annexure 3). Latest figure shows that WFP assists the Royal Government of Bhutan in its school feeding activities by providing two meals per day to 41,000 children studying in rural, remote boarding and selected day schools²³.

21 Poverty Analysis Report, 2007, NSB, RGoB

22 Education without Compromise, 2008

23 Ending Child Hunger: School Feeding in Bhutan, December 2008.

For all boarders in public schools up to grade X, WFP provides two free meals. Wherever there are two meals supported by WFP, the third meal is supported by the Royal Government. In places where informal boarders in community and primary schools are supported through WFP, the third meal is supplemented with contribution from parents.

- ***Distance to schools:*** Scattered settlements and difficult walking conditions to schools in many remote areas hinder children's access to education. The long walking distances to school instigate parents to decide against enrolment in the schools in anxiety of the safety of small children especially if the routes to schools are through forests and streams. Conditions have improved over the years with school building programmes that made more schools accessible at comfortable distances.
- ***Unemployment:*** The youth unemployment rate for both literate as well as illiterate population for 2008 was 6.2%, double the overall national unemployment rate of 3.1 % for 2008. The unemployment rate for educated youth (class X or XII graduates) alone would be much higher and that has been de-motivating parents from rural and poor families to enrol children to the school.
- ***Shortage of teachers:*** Shortage of teachers in remote rural schools has been identified by parents as another crucial factor that has impacted enrolment of children in the school.
- ***Lack of adequate facilities in school:*** There were several facilities mentioned as inadequate namely class rooms, sanitation and drinking water facilities and teaching-learning materials which have also impacted enrolment in rural areas. Assessment of available school facilities, its quality and students' satisfaction on available facilities were analyzed using quantitative data collection from 300 students from 30 schools. The survey reveals that while most basic facilities are available in the schools, the quality of such facilities is inadequate mainly in rural primary schools. Majority of the students find class-rooms, water and latrine just average in quality (tables 21, 22 and 23 in annexure 3).
- ***Admission requirements:*** The national admission policy was guided by criterion such as enrolment of children at the age of 6, upon verification of health card and production of ID cards of both the parents. Additionally, some single mothers also could not prove the identity of the child's father as they were unable to produce an identity card. Such parents had difficulty in getting admission for their children. However, this is no longer an issue as admission procedures have now been simplified.
- ***Domestic tasks:*** Rural people in Bhutan are dependent on subsistence integrated farming for their livelihoods. Farm tasks are labour-intensive and available labour at the disposal of the family very scarce. Due to harsh living conditions in rural areas, educated youth and school drop-outs migrate to urban areas leaving behind parents and the old people to work on the farm. With the increasing trend in migration of educated youth, there is pressure for retaining children at home and those out of school for work at farm households.

- ***Preference for monastic education:*** In the face of growing un-employment of educated youth and poverty of the households, some parents prefer monastic education over formal education for their children. Unlike formal education, monastic education is provided totally free including provision of food, accommodation and clothing. Also, monastic students earn cash. Monks are also treated with respect and considered to have social status with secured self-employment.
- ***Nomadic and migrant population:*** Many Bhutanese farmers are nomadic herders migrating with herds to higher altitudes in summer and to lower altitudes in winter. Owing to such practices and the nature of seasonal migratory patterns, children also migrate along with their parents. Consequently, children of such families are not enrolled in schools.

2.7 Demand side interventions to improve Enrolment

Most parents demand primary schools closer to their villages so that children do not have to walk long distances to reach school. Most common is the demand to enrol under-aged children. Parents also demand up-gradation of the school in their locality so that their children need not face difficulties with changes in schools. Demand also arises for appropriate facilities and adequate number of teachers in schools. Parents from remote villages demand boarding facilities with food in primary schools and deployment of care givers for small children.

Many teachers demand adequate number of teachers and enough class rooms so as to enrol maximum number of children to handle classes comfortably. In cases where board and food facilities are provided there is students' pressure on enrolment.

Private schools are viewed as parallel institutions that can greatly improve enrolment in urban areas as people prefer private schools in terms of better facilities and lower teacher-pupil ratio. With persistent poverty in rural areas private schools are not sustainable measures to improve enrolment in rural areas as mentioned by Principals.

The field assessment revealed that several measures to improve enrolment in accordance with the suggestions and demands of stakeholders are already in place and implemented by the school authority such as: considering slightly under-aged admission at PP; giving preference to children from the locality and children from poor families or orphans; giving preference to children from remoter villages for boarding facility wherever available; providing financial support to needy children through school welfare schemes and contribution from teachers; establishment of CPS and also the ECR wherever feasible to reach school infrastructure closer to the community.

CHAPTER 3: RETENTION

Retention in schools is an indicator of efficiency of the education system. It can be measured through various efficiency indicators such as dropout rate, promotion rate and survival rate at various levels of education. Collectively, efficiency indicators with access to education provide qualitative indication on quality of education. This chapter presents a situational analysis of retention based on the review of the documents and statistics and assessment derived from the field survey.

3.1 Retention in Primary and Basic Education

This section provides a situational assessment of retention in primary and basic education based on a review of available statistics on enrolment, promotees, repetition rate, drop-out rate, completion rate and survival rate.

3.1.1 Repetition Rate

High repetition rates is an indication of dysfunction of the school system with possible reasons like low quality of teaching, low quality of reading materials, shortage of text books, and shortage of teachers amongst others. The repetition rate in PP is 10.3% per year as some children are enrolled before the age of 6. The average repetition rate per class / year (VII to X) was 6.7% and the highest average repetition rate /year were found in class VII (10.9%). Considering all grades, repetition rate on an average is 8.5% annually, indicating the proportion of children that do not master the curriculum. In summary, the repetition rate from 1998 to 2008 for Class PP to X has decreased considerably since 1998 from 13.7% to 6% in 2008 indicating an improvement in educational system over the years (table 17, annexure 3).

3.1.2 Dropout Rate

The dropout rate since 1998 to 2008 from classes PP to X indicates that the dropout rate has decreased from 5.5% in 1996 to 2.8% in 2008 (table 18, annexure 3). There has been considerable decrease in the dropout rate since 2006. This is because from 2006, the class X school leavers who do not continue further in class XI were no longer considered as school drop outs. The annual average dropouts were highest in class VII in the past six years. In 2008, it was highest in class IX which with 8% of the total dropouts.

At middle secondary school level, average drop out rates per class per year for VII to X was 5.55% and the highest average drop out rate was found in class VII (7.15%). This implies dropouts start as early as PP, and continue throughout primary education level increasing more up the ladder at lower secondary, middle secondary and higher secondary levels.

3.1.3 Completion Rate

The completion rate indicates how many children actually complete education. With few students and relatively better inputs in terms of infrastructure and qualified teachers at higher secondary level, it is expected that retention and repetition are lesser than that of primary level. On the contrary, these rates are much higher for secondary than at primary levels from 2001 to 2007.²⁴ This indicates that the overall completion rate is much lower at basic level (completion of grade X) as compared to primary levels (completion of grade VI). The completion rates for 2006 to 2008 significantly increased from 77% to 87% at primary level and from 43% to 54% at basic level which is an improvement in completion rate over the years (table 19, annexure 3). The above rates were based on actual school going ages (6 – 16 years). While the actual completion rates are much higher, children older than actual enrolment age of 6 years and completion age of 16 years were not included in the statistical analysis.

3.1.4 Internal Efficiency for Basic Education

The coefficient of internal efficiency for basic education shows the internal efficiency of the Bhutanese education system. The indicators such as promotion rate, repetition rate, dropout rate and survival rates which indicate the retention rate are reflected in table 20, annexure 3 for all grades starting from PP until class XI. The coefficient has increased from about 4% to 74.9% in 2007. Examining the survival rate for the last 4 years, it was found that 65% to 70% of all children starting PP will eventually complete basic education.²⁵ While the repetition and drop-out rates are decreasing, the primary and secondary completion rates are increasing as shown in figure 2.

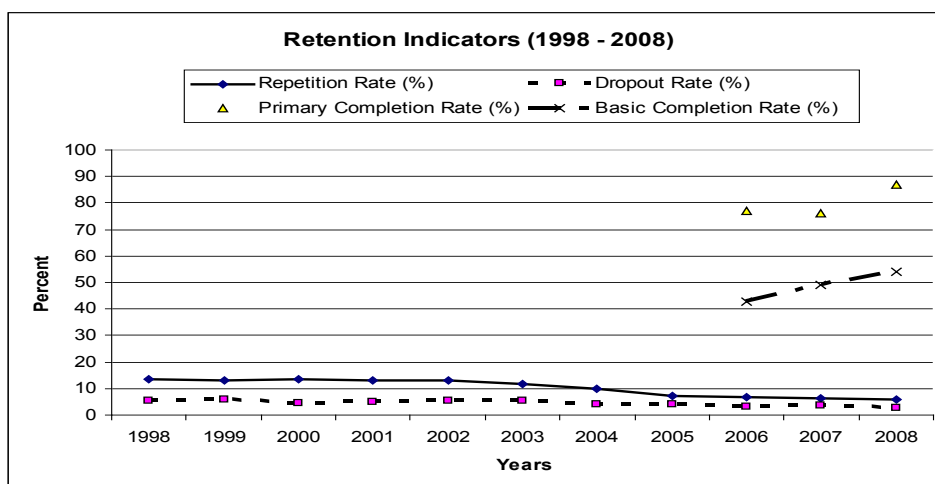


Figure 2: Retention Indicators (1998 – 2008); Source: General Statistics, 2008, MoE, RGoB

24 Education Without Compromise, Education Sector Review Commission, 2008

25 General Statistics, 2008, PPD, MoE, RGoB

3.2 Retention Policy

The field assessment revealed that several strategies were in place which contributed to retention in schools over the years. Such strategies adopted by the schools are: introduction of policy on child friendly schools; ban on corporal punishment; policy to allow children to repeat; providing remedial classes for weaker students; providing financial support to poor and needy children through student support scheme contributed by teachers; interacting and convincing parents to retain children when they try to take them out for some other reason; making teachers responsible for delivering quality teaching and children performing well by means of maintaining minimum 80% pass percentage from each class; providing boarding facility with food and day meals in some schools; making school attractive for students through improvement of facilities and allowing students in a few schools (especially remote schools) to wear any other dress. In addition, counselling of students and awareness through parent-teacher meetings and parenting program for parents have immensely contributed to retention of children in school.

3.3 Influence of Community / Parents' Attributes on Retention

Literate parents understand the need for education for their children and provide better guidance and counselling to motivate and encourage children to continue school. Illiterate parents lack the capability to guide children in their lessons and competencies of such children may not be to the level of children advantaged with guidance and coaching from literate parents. Students from economically disadvantaged families face difficulty in meeting rising costs at higher levels (LSS and MSS) associated with changes in schools and also with increasing demands from children. Some economically poor parents do not risk funding student's basic education with rising unemployment of youth.

The traditional or customary beliefs that boys should be preferred over girls does not exist as boys as well as girls are equally enrolled and supported by parents. However, few parents in rural areas still prefer to retain girls at home for domestic tasks and some parents prefer to enrol boys in monastic education after a completing a certain level of formal education.

3.4 Factors Impacting Retention

The field assessment revealed that parents' priority for education of their children is high as evidenced in efforts to save money. Some sources of income relied on are from sale of farm produce (crop and cattle) and cash crops supplemented by off-farm labour with contractors. Most groups of parents indicated that children generally were happy to go to school. A few concerns shared by parents that made children sometimes reluctant to attend schools were: deviant behaviour of some teachers (e.g. some teachers getting violent with students during class hours); swollen streams in summer that posed risks to students and frustrated students over parents' inability to mobilize funds to effect their transfer to a middle secondary school.

An analysis of data gathered from 300 students in the survey finds 94% of the students felt safe at school. Despite the ban on corporal punishment, students feel that students who break rules should always be given second chance. Also, students that break the rules should be beaten by teachers and parents informed accordingly. As high as 94% students indicated that parents cannot afford to pay fees and buy uniforms which could have significant implications for retention of children in schools (table 24, annexure 3).

Some difficulties faced by students in school were elaborated by parents. Improper water and toilet facilities, inadequate classrooms, inadequate exercise books and inadequate hostels were listed as wanting in terms of facilities. The assessment on teaching and learning environment in schools from students' perspective revealed that majority of the students are not able to understand always what is taught in the class. Likewise, majority of the students from all levels of schools (PS/LSS/MSS) are not always ready for examinations, find examinations difficult and are not always able to learn in the class without fear (table 25, annexure 3).

The Principals mentioned that retention is still a challenge in rural schools with inadequate facilities and shortage of teachers. This is further compounded when the school has no right to retain a student on the parent or student's choice to leave the school for various reasons. Triangulating information from several sources during field survey, similar to the factors impacting enrolment the factors impacting retention are the following:

- **Rural Poverty:** Apart from remoteness and inaccessibility, the major cause for students' dropping out is poverty. Upgrading to the next level of school for e.g. from LSS to MSS may entail relocating to another place which will mean costs that parents have to bear. While substantial portion of poor children (69.2%) were enrolled at Primary level, only a few (2.7%) could continue in secondary level.²⁶ This indicates that poverty remains a major cause for children to be out of school (table 15, annexure 3 provides net enrolment rates for 2007 by educational level and by poverty status).
- **Inadequate boarding facilities:** If primary schools are nearby, parents do not have to bear boarding costs. However, inadequate boarding facilities in LSS and MSS levels are an additional rental and living cost for poor rural students if such facilities are not available.
- **Shortage of teachers:** Shortage of teachers in remote rural schools has been identified by parents as another crucial factor that has impacted retention. Shortage of teachers is more prevalent in CPS so the quality of learning may be compromised at higher levels once students compete with others in LSS and MSS. This could potentially lead to those weaker in studies leaving school.
- The other factors mentioned were: unemployment of youth; distance to schools (associated with changes in schools); inadequate facilities in schools and parents' preference for monastic education. Boys were usually taken out by parents to be enrolled in monastic education and

26 Poverty Analysis Report, 2007, NSB, RGoB

girls were disengaged from school to be retained at home to help old parents with domestic tasks. Likewise, in urban schools, few students leave owing to influences of bad companions and engagement in repeated deviant behaviour.

3.5 Demand side interventions to improve Retention

Parents demand schools closer to their villages and up-gradation of schools to minimize changes of schools for their children. In cases of detention as a result of failing the examinations some parents suggest promotion.

Several Principals suggested that continuous assessment at primary level has to be followed strictly so that children are allowed to repeat at primary level. However, a formative assessment in place could decrease failure rates and ensure appropriate standard for every child. Acquiring adequate competency at primary level will reduce the risk of underperformance and failure in the board examinations at higher levels. If students at LSS and MSS levels are detained, there are chances that they leave school owing to their progression in age as compared to incoming companions in the same class which would embarrass them making them feel inferior to their colleagues. Teachers demand that adequate facilities and timely supply of text books, readers, teacher's guides and other teaching aids be provided to ensure better teaching and better retention.

Students too have certain demands. Few demanded promotion when detained. Some students approach the school when they are forcefully taken away by the parents. In places with boarding facilities, students demand enrolment for their relatives or for themselves.

District Education Officers and Principals mentioned that private schools in urban areas have helped retention as many parents who can afford prefer private school for their children. The government should invite more private schools in urban areas to improve enrolment as well as retention.

CHAPTER 4: OUT-OF-SCHOOL CHILDREN

4.1 Out-of-School Children

Based on available statistics on primary aged out-of-school children, it was found that the highest number of primary aged out-of-school children (20%) were in Samtse Dzongkhag, while higher percentages were also found in populous Dzongkhags such as Chhukha, Trashigang and Samdrupjongkhar (table 27, annexure 3). However, the statistic was not based on the actual residential population.

A comparative assessment of statistics of children enrolled in formal schools including private schools vis-à-vis the population projected for the year 2008 Dzongkhag wise (based on the Population and Housing Census of Bhutan, 2005) shows that 89.05 % of school going aged students (6-16 years) are enrolled in formal schools (PP–Grade X), while 10.95 % of the children of the same age group are out of formal schools (table 28, annexure 3). While 10.95 % of school going aged children (16,748 numbers) is assessed to be out-of-school, primary data was gathered on actual number of out-of-school children in the country through questionnaires distributed to the Dzongkhags. The data shows that about 4,245 individuals (2.78 % out of total population) are out-of-school. Such data gathered by Dzongkhags was compiled and is presented in table 29, annexure 3. However, data received was inconsistent and data from several Geogs was missing so the database for out-of-school children is still incomplete. This requires further appropriate data collection to create an updated database of out-of-school children, which has been the limitation of this study. Such data gathering from Dzongkhags can be classified into breakdown of reasons to build upon the strategies suggested by this study.

4.2 Children that never attended schools

During the survey, children that never attended school were asked the reasons for not attending or not being able to attend school. The majority of the children responded that they were not in school owing to the preference of the parents to retain them for domestic tasks or parents did not bother to enrol them (table 30, annexure 3). Poverty and institutional factors were also mentioned but as only 55 children that never attended schools were interviewed, the findings have been limited. There is still a need to gather comprehensive and larger sample data from such children throughout the country to explicate comprehensive findings.

Out of 55 youth interviewed, the majority were still interested to go to school reasoning that education benefits them in all spheres of life and with education they will have better options for employment and earning. Another 29% of the respondents were not interested to go to school as many felt they had already exceeded the school-going age. Some felt they are required at home to help their parents with domestic tasks (table 31, annexure 3).

In total, 27 out of 55 respondents (49%) have either attended NFE in the past or are attending at present. There was a general consensus that NFE with English instruction would greatly augment

value of education. Rest of the 28 respondents did not attend NFE for various reasons such as: not interested in school; few who have interest had no time as they were engaged in domestic tasks and some expressed lack of interest as NFE curriculum does not have English and Mathematics.

4.3 Drop-outs Before Completion of Basic Education

In a study conducted by the Centre for Bhutan Studies in 2005 on non-enrolment and unemployed youth in Bhutan, it identified that the main reasons for drop-outs (both girls and boys) were: children required at home (30% of respondents) followed by inability to bear school expenses (23%), failure in examinations (19%), health problems (8%), lack of interest in study (7%), fear of unemployment after study (5%) and other minor reasons such as divorced parents, discouraged by parents, lack of boarding facilities, early pregnancy, distance to school and death of both parents²⁷.

In the field survey, the drop-outs reasons for leaving school and the frequency of opinions have been tabulated (table 32, annexure 3). The main reason for both boys and girls dropping school is the inability of parents to bear costs. Many boys leave school because of bad peer influence. A good number of both boys and girls leave school to help parents at home with domestic tasks but more girls than boys are retained for such purposes. Many girls among school leavers leave school owing to early marriages or teenage pregnancy. Lack of support from parents (lack of proper care and guidance), inadequate facilities especially in primary schools, children being disturbed owing to failed marriages of parents, children themselves losing interest in education, children being discouraged to continue education owing to growing un-employment of youth, boys being preferred for monastic education in place of formal education and changes in school (demanding increased cost and challenges to face the new environment in new school) are other reasons for the children dropping school.

Out of the 94 drop outs interviewed, 54 % of the respondents were interested to go back to school and another 46 % were not interested to go back to school. Most of those that chose to stay away from school felt they need to help their parents with domestic tasks. Others felt underperformance would be an embarrassment and a substantial number mentioned that they are not interested anymore as they are either married or have exceeded their age for their class or have a good income / business at hand. In total, 10 out of 94 respondents have either attended NFE in the past or are attending at present (table 34, annexure 3)

On analyzing the anticipated measures to be taken to ensure that children that never attended school and drop-outs go back to formal school, poverty of the households has been the major factor for non-enrolment or discontinuity of school for these children. This indicates that majority of these respondents anticipate financial support from the government for costs including payment for fees and purchase of school uniform to enable them to go back to school. Demand for schools located closer to their villages is also mentioned often by these children (tables 35 and 36, annexure 3).

27 Youth in Bhutan; Education, Employment, Development by Lham Dorji with Sonam Kinga, the Centre for Bhutan Studies, 2005

CHAPTER 5: SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN

5.1 Situational Analysis of Special Needs Children

The “Population & Housing Census of Bhutan, 2005” defines disability as: “*persons with conditions that limit them from performing normal functions.*” In this Census, the type of disabilities asked was difficulty in seeing, speaking, hearing, moving and mental disability. PHCB 2005 identified that 21,894 (3.4 %) of the total population have disability and about 2,682 (12 % of total disabled persons) were of the approximate school going age (between 5 and 17 years) that could potentially have enrolled for basic education. A population projection for 2008 shows 1,927 as disabled persons. The highest numbers of differently able children were reported in populous Dzongkhags such as Samtse followed by Chukha, Trashigang and Thimphu (table 37, annexure 3).

The “Education Sector Strategy Realizing Vision 2020 Policy and Strategy” is categorical in as far as ensuring access of education by children with special needs are concerned. Among others, the inability to reach children with special needs has long been recognised as a challenge in meeting basic education (Vision 2020). Integration of such children in regular schools is also being piloted. It was only recently that a Special Education Unit in the Department of School Education has been created to address special needs education.

In view of integrating children with special needs into mainstream schools, the Youth Development Fund (YDF) has supported selected schools like Changangkha LSS, Drugyel LSS and NID Khaling. The MoE has further identified schools in 2 regions namely Mongar and Zhemgang (based on NHPC-2005 figures) for mainstreaming of special needs education. However, there are numerous challenges mainly because of the unique skills required to facilitate special education and the level of attention that can be realistically given to children with special needs. YDF has also been collaborating with NFE Division to infuse in their curriculum needs of children with learning difficulties as it is felt that many early school leavers are pupils with learning difficulties and thereby enable them to continue in NFE. Challenged children with learning disabilities are not being recognized and consequently their learning not being addressed appropriately. The Special Education Unit is therefore instituting a system of training teachers primarily to build capacity in identifying children with such disabilities for early intervention in referring them to centres where the expertise and facilities will be provided.

In some schools, challenged children are allowed to attend classes and parents are made to attend their wards for the few initial weeks till the child is accustomed to the system. Other strategies like providing board with full-time care givers is being planned for the future but as an interim measure senior students providing mentorship to such students is being tried. Constraints faced by the unit to date are: a lack of a clear cut policy and strategy which is compounded by resources to carry out their activities most important of which is the baseline survey. They also face other

constraints such as limited special education expertise among teachers as well as teaching aids and equipment. In addition to inclusion of such trainings in teachers training programmes and developing specific curriculum to address the needs of such children, there is a strong need to coordinate and develop partnership with parents of such children to identify their needs. There is also a need to coordinate with agencies such as the Community-based Rehabilitation Programme of the Health Ministry to identify populations of school going aged children for intervention by the MoE. Schools preferred that children with disability be first enrolled in the village or school nearby as parents always desire to have such children within their reach at younger age. Schools are also of the opinion that children with severe physical disability cannot be handled in formal schools as it requires specialized teachers, special facilities to suit their living and learning in the school, and special teaching-learning materials as per their needs.

5.2 Future Strategies for Special Needs Children

In order for the MoE to meet the educational requirements of all children with functional limitations through an Inclusive Education Approach, the National School Education Policy (2008) identifies the following strategies:-

- Provide programmes to give all disabled and special-needs students the special skills required for them to become gainfully employed;
- As resources and interventions addressing the learning needs of the disabled lie beyond the education sector alone, the effective collaboration and co-ordination between Education, Health, Employment and other relevant sectors to be institutionalized;
- Provide quality education alongside their non-disabled peers to special needs children wherever possible;
- Provide inclusive education and safety for those disabled children residing in educational boarding facilities;
- Improve access to education for disabled through modification of school's physical infrastructure with provisions for suitable classroom equipment and transportation from and to home;
- A specific section of the curriculum and teaching / learning resources to reflect the needs of disabled children with adaptation of special strands of the school curriculum in primary and secondary education to their needs.

The Special Education Unit in efforts to enhance enrolment has planned the following activities:

- A baseline survey to map the number of children by disability and age group across the

country;

- Support a few institutions established for challenged children. The National Institute for the Disabled (for the Blind) was established a few decades ago. Opening up a Unit for the Hearing Impaired in the Drugyel Lower Secondary School and integrating physically challenged children in the Changangkha LSS are more recent developments. The NID and Drugyel LSS are well-endowed with facilities;
- In the 10th Five Year Plan (FYP), 5 more centres on the model of Changangkha LSS will be established. Of this, 2 centres are planned in Mongar and Zhemgang. These Dzongkhags have been selected to institute regional balance and also since these areas have high incidence of poverty which directly correlates to incidence of challenged children as a result of poor nutrition and lower access to health;
- The Unit has also advocacy and sensitization activities in place to send such children to school.

CHAPTER 6: QUALITY AND ACCESS TO EDUCATION

6.1 Situational Analysis of Quality of Education

Most schools visited defined quality of education as encompassing not only academic performance but also a mixture of learning contributing to wholesome education such as ability to read, write, listen and speak and relevancy of curricula and effectiveness of the person trying to take across the content of the curriculum to the children. With several activities and programmes in place in schools to impart wholesome education, Principals perceived that quality of education has improved over the years as children today have far more better skills than those in the past.

Late delivery of teaching-learning materials in remote rural schools, inadequate facilities and shortage of teachers, inadequate games and sports facilities, shortage of class rooms, non-progressive mode of assessment and examination seemed to be affecting the quality of education. This could potentially impact retention of children at LSS and MSS levels. Shortage of teachers (34 schools in 2008 had a teacher ratio of 1:50 instead of actual desired 1:32) lead to large class sizes to be managed by a single teacher teaching many subjects. Also, teachers teach subjects apart from their field of specialization owing to shortage of teachers implying that a teacher may not be able to translate the curriculum meaningfully to students.

The study on “The Quality of School Education in Bhutan” conducted by iDiscoveri Education and the Royal Education Council, Bhutan, in January 2009 identifies the following main gaps between the current and desired state in quality outcomes:

- Many students perform below the expected grade level in both basic and advanced academic skills and lack basic communication and analytical skills;
- The teaching is teacher-led with chalk-and-talk system with lack of proper instructional resources and lack of real measurement of learning;
- In areas of teachers’ preparation, curriculum standards, resources and incentives for quality, the support systems for schools requires a great degree of strengthening;
- Schools lack quality processes for developing teachers’ capacity, the autonomy and resources to initiate academic improvement and the essential physical infrastructure to support learning

6.2 Demand side interventions to improve Quality and Access to Education

With regard to the views of parents on the quality of educational facilities, parents feel that facilities provided were inadequate mainly in terms of reliable water and sanitation, classrooms, hostels, teachers and textbooks. Parents feel that amongst others, teachers have a critical role to play in improving quality of education. To this effect, having a minimum pass percentage per subject, self

assessment of teachers, evaluation and monitoring of performance of teachers are already in place that help teachers to constantly improve on their own and deliver quality teaching. Therefore, quality is associated with many factors and stakeholders namely parents, school, department, ministry and Dzongkhags. Teachers are concerned that lack of adequate teaching materials, shortage of teachers, frequent changes in curriculum, lack of training on changed curriculum, overcrowded class rooms, lack of adequate facilities in schools and lack of incentives for teachers in rural and remote areas have impacted negatively on the quality of education.

Towards addressing the issues and concerns expressed by parents, they suggested that schools be upgraded to the next level wherever possible because it will reduce the costs associated with changes in schools. Otherwise, water and toilets have to be provided, classrooms are to be expanded and additional teachers provided where inadequate. It was noted by some groups of parents that informal hostels was not a sustainable solution but contributed to deteriorating health, behaviour and overall development of children that lived in such structures and called for provision of hostel facilities for such students. Provision of food in the school was considered important. The need to meet the costs of poor students by the government was advocated. Parents also mentioned that teachers institute better monitoring of students and in addition conduct remedial classes at the school for academically weak students because at home parents are helpless owing to their illiteracy.



CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS

The desk assessment and the consultations revealed that 10.95 % of school-age children still are not in school implying that they do not have access to education. Construction of CPS since the 1980s has ensured improved access to education for children living in remote villages. The planned ECR programme could further improve access to schools. Boarding facilities are being provided where needed. However, students and parents are noted to face immense hardships where such facilities are lacking and where children have to live in temporary makeshift huts built by parents. Though the retention in schools has improved over the years, the repetition rate at basic level of education on an average is still high (8.5 percent annually). The drop outs start as early as PP, and throughout primary education increasing more up the ladder at lower secondary, middle secondary and higher secondary levels.

Despite the existing guidelines and the strategies, and rapid progress towards improvement of NER (88% in 2008), the consultations and field assessment revealed several challenges and inadequacies in achieving universal enrolment as described below:

Inaccessibility

The physical dimension of inaccessibility relates to long walking distances to school, harsh physical conditions along the route to school and remoteness of the scattered population. Such conditions could still be a cause for inaccessibility for populations living in remote locations. Likewise, migratory populations such as nomads migrate with their families. Many nomads may not enrol children in schools as they do not have any caregivers within their communities to look after their children when they migrate. Such communities may not have access to boarding facilities for students. Distance to schools is associated with inability of the parents from rural areas to meet the increasing cost with changes in schools. Children have to change schools from primary to LSS and then to MSS, and the distance has been an extra cost for parents. Parents face difficulties to bear such schooling cost.

Poverty

Poverty is reported as a major cause for low enrolment and for children to be out of school. Meeting educational costs such as payment for uniform, contributions for school development fund, cost sharing for the third meal for boarding children and incidental costs such as travel and costs associated with changes in schools could have restricted poor families' sending children to schools. There are increasing costs at LSS and MSS levels. Children of broken families and orphans were also reported of not being able to attend school. Despite having educational facilities, availing education for children for such impoverished populations could still be an impediment for achieving the universal goal of universal enrolment and therefore the NER will be impacted.

Admission rules

In the recent past, the national admission policy was guided by criterion such as enrolment of children at the age of 6, upon verification of health cards and production of ID cards of both the parents. However, admission procedures have now been reviewed and simplified. This is expected to further improve enrolment. Some children were at a disadvantage as owing to closure of schools in southern Bhutan due to deteriorating security situation. However, with the country now enjoying peace and stability and with many schools now established in the earlier disturbed areas, it is foreseen that in the next few years there could be a marked improvement in the NER.

Unemployment

Growing un-employment trends of educated youth (school leavers after grade X and XII) could have a bearing on students as well as parents perceptions on the value of education. Increasing unemployment of school drop-outs and those that pass out could instil a feeling of disillusionment in some parents on the outcome of education. As a result, unemployment may work as a deterrent to invest in education of children. Some parents prefer monastic education for their children or retain children for domestic chores.

Inadequate facilities and shortage of teachers

Inadequate facilities such as the number of class rooms, proper sanitation and drinking water facilities, food facility in schools, hostels, proper teaching-learning materials, shortage of teachers have also impacted enrolment in rural areas. While most basic facilities are available in schools, the quality of such facilities is inadequate mainly in rural primary schools. With shortage more prevalent in CPS, the quality of learning for the children from such schools may be compromised at higher levels when they compete with others in LSS and MSS. This could potentially lead to drop outs among those that are weaker in studies.

Inadequate boarding facilities

Primary schools are generally within the vicinity of communities and therefore parents do not spend boarding costs. Inadequate boarding facilities at LSS and MSS levels could mean additional rental and living cost for poor rural students if such facilities are not available. Children in informal boarding face inadequate learning environment that could significantly impact their performance and retention in schools.

Awareness of illiterate rural parents

Children from literate parents were considered to be performing well with guidance from parents at home as compared to children of illiterate parents who were unable to guide the children with lessons. Additionally, the tendency for some rural parents to retain children for domestic tasks or to enrol them in monastic education is still noted. Likewise, many migratory populations may not enrol children despite the availability of school infrastructure. Without proper awareness of such populations targeted through advocacy programmes with improved interaction between the school, Dzongkhag and community, the enrolment of children from such families will remain low.

Quality of education with ECR

Rural schools are constrained by teacher shortage and inadequate facilities. Consequently, the quality of education has been a concern and the competency of children from such schools at LSS and MSS has been challenged. ECR could certainly improve access to education but with existing shortage of teachers and a single unspecialized teacher to handle too many subjects at a ECR, the quality of instruction could be at stake. Compromising accessibility with quality of education could have significant implications for retention of children to complete basic education.

Inadequate conditions for children with special needs

No mapping exercise has been carried out in a scientific manner to assess the spread of populations with special needs by age group and type of challenge in Bhutan. Despite the Government policy on promoting inclusive education of special needs children, there is limited expertise amongst teachers to conduct special education. Other challenges relate to a lack of teaching aids, facilities and infrastructure and appropriate curriculum. Given the constraints, children with special needs may fall out of the NER count if their participation is not institutionalised.

Quality of Education

Quality of education has several facets namely good and adequate infrastructure like class rooms, water and sanitation facilities, libraries, games and sports facilities, relevancy of curriculum, progressive mode of assessment and examination and the quality of teachers and curriculum. Despite strategies in improving the quality of education, still, many primary school-age children leave schools even without properly mastering the curriculum.

Data from monastic and schools abroad to calculate NER

The NER estimated at 88 percent for 2008 has not taken into account the school going-age children registered in monastic institutions and those studying in schools abroad. Although the monastic

system of education as with formal education starts at primary level and proceeds to master levels, presently there is a lack of data for monks between the age of 6 and 16 years that are enrolled in monastic institutions which would mean a lower NER. Further, at the moment, it is not possible to ascertain the level of education in terms of classes and standards in the monastic system with that of modern education.

Information Management

There is no tracking and monitoring system for school leavers and drop-outs. No specific measure has been taken to trace school leavers before completing Class X to identify their actual constraints and provide necessary support to bring them back to formal education. Though a school welfare scheme and some organizations like Tarayana Foundation, YDF, RENEW in collaboration with the Department of Youth and Sports, and His Majesty's support through Gyalpoi Zimpon's Office are supporting children from poor and broken families, orphans and other disadvantaged students, strengthening such organizations within MoE and forging partnerships with agencies that can work in similar areas would ensure retention of unprivileged students.



CHAPTER 8: RECOMMENDATIONS

The strategies to enhance enrolment and retention were derived from an assessment of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) where strengths were used to remove the weaknesses and opportunities were grabbed to avoid the threats. An elaboration of the SWOT can be reviewed in the matrix presented under annexure 4.

8.1 Strategies for Enhancing Enrolment

1. Use the current conducive practical policies in conforming to Constitutional provisions. Continue application of those rules and regulations that facilitate admissions.
2. Institute minimum standard facilities for each level of school to ensure balanced access to facilities by all students in the country.
3. Improve access through consolidation of schools rather than spreading resources thinly and encourage participation of private entrepreneurs.
4. Government policies, strategies and programmes to reduce poverty in Bhutan are also seen as an opportunity to be pursued to improve socio-economic well-being to enhance affordability of parents for education. Coordination with implementation of programmes of respective ministries and agencies to address the structural issue of poverty reduction.
5. Step up the current advocacy efforts by Head Office especially for migratory, remote, scattered and impoverished populations to intensify the level of awareness on value of education.
6. Use monastic education as an opportunity to enhance enrolment. However, address the need to standardize accreditation of monastic school classes so that those children enrolled in monastic education can be included in the NER.
7. Quality may mean relevant facilities, curriculum, mode of assessment and qualified teachers to translate curriculum. However, teachers are not adequately upgraded to translate the curriculum meaningfully. Training of teachers coupled with a review of the current mode of assessment at primary level would enhance enrolment.
8. The policy of special education meaning providing education to children with special needs compatible with Constitutional provisions presents an opportunity for children with special needs to attend school in principle. However, in practical terms the difficulties faced are many. Review the effectiveness of including children with special needs in mainstream schools.
9. Gather supplementary data on out-of-school children along with the reasons for being out of school in order to assess the constraints and identify appropriate interventions to bring them to formal school.

8.2 Strategies for Enhancing Retention

1. The provision of facilities, qualified and adequate teachers, relevant curricula, ban on corporal punishment, introduction of child friendly concepts, permitting repetition and remedial classes all contribute to enhancing retention. However, the prospect of unemployment after class X and XII deter parents in rural areas from retaining children in school. Improve the collaboration between the MoE and the MoLHR to enhance job opportunities and employability of school graduates
2. The system of up-gradation of schools and transfer of students passing out from the lower to higher level schools has improved retention. Still, many rural and poor students face problems of meeting costs which are further compounded if boarding facilities are not adequate. Strengthen and create more boarding facilities and provide sponsorships through government or Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to minimize costs on poor parents.
3. Step up the current advocacy efforts by Head Office to intensify the level of awareness on value of education especially for remote and scattered populations.
4. Coordinate inter-ministerial efforts to address rural poverty.

Implementation of the strategies entails costs. On the financial side, infrastructure development for consolidation, up-gradation and enhancement of facilities will require substantial funds. Improving the quality and number of teachers, instituting early child care and special education facilities will also call for substantial financial resources. Advocacy through information, education and communication campaigns will involve financial commitments as well. Scholarships to needy students will require funds for stipends to students. There will be a need for the government to mobilise the required funds. CSOs partnering with the MoE can play a substantive role in resource mobilisation and implementation in many areas where the MoE is constrained with inadequate time and human resources to implement the programmes.

There are also other costs mainly of an administrative nature namely policy dialogue, meetings and discussions which will entail substantial staff time and resources that will have to be committed to put in place better rules, regulations and procedures within the MoE and in concert with other Ministries and sectors of the Government.

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ANNEXURE

Annex 1: List of Officials Met

Table 1: List of Officials consulted in Thimphu

Ministry of Education		
1	Dr. Phub Rinchen	Secretary, Bhutan Board of Examination
2	Mr. Tshewang Tandin	Director, Department of School Education, MoE
3	Ms. Yandey Penjore	Director, Youth Development Fund
4	Mr. Tenzin Choeda	Director, DIT
5	Mr. Karma Yeshey	Director, DAHE
6	Mr. Chencho Dorji	Director, Department of Youth and Sports, MoE
7	Mrs. Dechen Zam	Deputy Chief Planning Officer, PPD, Ministry of Education
8	Mr. Chencho Dorji	Chief Program Officer, Program Division
9	Mr. Ngawang Dorji	Senior Programme Officer, NFE Programme
10	Mr. Thinley Rinzin	Planning Officer, PPD, Ministry of Education
11	Mr. Rinchen Samdrup	Planning Officer, PPD, Ministry of Education
12	Mr. Singye Namgyal Dorji	Planning Officer, PPD, Ministry of Education
13	Ms. Sangay Choden	Statistician, PPD, Ministry of Education
14	Mr. Wangda Dorji	EMO, Education Monitoring and Support Services Division
15	Mr. Mindu Gyeltshen	EMO, Education Monitoring and Support Services Division
16	Dr. Rudi Vandael	LTTA, PPD, Ministry of Education
Other Ministries		
16	Mr. Karma Penjor	Director, Dratshang Lhentshog, TashichoDzong
17	Mr. Gembo	Head, Planning and Research Division, Monastic Bodies
NGOs/CSOs and Donor Agencies		
18	Dr. Rinchen Chophel	Executive Director, National Commission for Women and Children
19	Dr. Gepke Hingst	Representative, UNICEF
20	Ms. Vathinee Jitjaturant	Deputy Representative, UNICEF
21	Mr. Leo van der Velden	Representative, WFP
22	Ms. Parvati G. Sharma	Head, PM&E, Save the Children
23	Mr. Henrik A. Nielsen	Country Representative, Danida
24	Mr. Tek. B. Chhetri	Programme Officer, Danida

Table 2: List of District Education Officers interviewed through field survey

1	Mr. Sonam	TEO, Thimphu
2	Mr. Karma Sonam Chophyel	DEO, Trongsa
3	Mr. Kinley Dorji	DEO, Mongar
4	Mr. Norbu Wangchuck	DEO, S/jongkhar
5	Mr. Pema Wangchuck	ADEO, Wangdue
6	Mr. Sangla	ADEO, Chukha
7	Mr. Karma Phuntsho	ADEO, Samtse

Table 3: List of Principals interviewed

1	Mr. Pema Tshering	Babesa MSS
2	Mr. Lamdra Wangdi	Gomtu MSS
3	Mr. Aitaraj	Chamgang LSS
4	Mr. Dorji Wangchuck	Tshangkha LSS
5	Mr. Tshering Samdrup	Chaskhar LSS
6	Mr. D.P. Dhakal	Orong LSS
7	Mr. Phurba Lhendup	Gesarling LSS
8	Mr. Karma Dorji	Namchella LSS
9	Mr. Amar Bdr. Lama	Nobding LSS
10	Mr. Jigme Thinley	Pling LSS
11	Mr. Tshering Tobgay	Samtse LSS
12	Mr. Ganesh Chhetri	Sisina PS
13	Mr. Tashi Wangdi	Bemji PS
14	Mr. Ngawang Tshering	S/jongkhag PS
15	Mr. Jaipo	Konbar PS
16	Mr. Ugyen Dorji	Samey PS
17	Mr. Mohanlal Thing	Tshimakha PS
18	Mr. Karma Dorji VP	Chengmari PS
19	Mr. Sonam Dorji	Chendebji CPS
20	Mr. Ugyen Dorji	Samcholing CPS
21	Mr. Chimi Tshewang	Ngatsang CPS
22	Mr. Kinga Rinchen	Yadi CPS
23	Mr. Sonam Gyeltshen	Rekhey CPS
24	Mr. Wangchuck Namgyal	Wooling CPS
25	Mr. Temba	Drujegang CPS
26	Mr. Dinakar Dhungana	Uma CPS
27	Mr. Chundu Tshering	Phobjikha CPS
28	Mr. Sonam Gyamtsho	Meritshimo CPS
29	Mr. Aita Gurung	Chongeykha PS
30	Mr. Tshering	Bara CPS

Annex 2: Terms of Reference

Background

1. Since the development of the formal Education System in Bhutan 1961, the enrolment of Bhutanese schools has expanded rapidly from 11 schools with 400 students in the early 60's, to over 150,000 students in just classes pp – XII today. Whereas in the beginning only a few fortunate children could join the system, owing to the fewer number of schools and lack of willingness on the part of parents to send children to schools. Today the trend has reversed with increased awareness of the importance of education and its link to poverty alleviation.
2. With its policy of mass education, the RGoB has expanded the school system across the length and breadth of the country, making efforts to enroll each and every child of school going age into school. Some of the strategies have been through the establishment of community primary and primary school wherever feasible, and the provision of boarding to cater to those children which do not have access to schools within walking distance, especially in rural and remote areas and at higher levels.
3. These policies have had positive outcomes bringing the net enrolment ratio at the primary level to 88% today.
4. While the existing policies for increasing enrolment have worked and will continue to work to some extent, its felt that a review of the existing policies and strategies needs to be undertaken.
5. Its necessary to reflect whether the current policy of building community schools within an hours walking distance may have been saturated to the point where its no longer feasible since some communities may not have sufficient numbers of children to warrant the establishment of a full-fledged school, or since out of school children who live within one hours walk of a school do not enroll (anymore) for other reasons.
6. Therefore its now time to identify where the un-reached populations are and what kind of needs they may have. This may entail the proposal for innovative and enhanced supply side and demand side interventions for enhancing access to education.
7. It's also time to review the impact of current policies on children already enrolled in schools and how the retention and drop out rates can be improved further.

Key Responsibilities and Outputs

In the view of the above, and in view of the RGoB's commitment towards achieving universal primary education and 90% NER for basic education by 2013, the Ministry of Education has decided to recruit a short term consultant to review the current enrollment and retention strategies and come up with recommendations as to how these can be enhanced in order to achieve the goals of Education Ministry and the MDGs and EFA.

While the primary focus of study will be on primary education, it shall not exclude basic education or PP – 10 for which too, enrolment and retention strategies need to be looked at. The consultant will be expected to:

- a) Prepare a draft methodology for assessing the current policies and strategies with regard to access, enrolment and retention of children.
- b) Carry out the study using the agreed methodology.
- c) Prepare a report on the findings along with recommendations for improving the enrolment and retention at the basic education level, with the particular focus on primary education.

With regard to the study, the main responsibility of the TA will be to:

1. Carry out the comprehensive review of the existing education policies, through desk review and meetings with stakeholders.
2. Conduct research to review the impact of the current policies on school enrolment and retention, including for disadvantaged and special needs groups (includes disabled and gender) in the country.
3. Work with the task force to draw up a report on the same with specific recommendations and strategies for improving the enrolment and retention of all children into school.
4. In so doing the TA should consider:
 - a) Constitutional rights and obligations
 - b) Access and quality concerns
 - c) Private sector participation
 - d) Special education needs
 - e) Disadvantaged groups
 - f) Demand side interventions
 - g) Rights and obligations of all stakeholders including government, parents, teachers, schools and students.

Scope of research

The consultant should not limit their research to the influence of policies of the Ministry of Education on enrolment and retention. They could also look at the followings:

2. What actually happens in the schools and in the classrooms has a major influence on the enrolment and retention or in other words, how education policies are actually implemented at the school and classroom level (e.g. corporal punishment, informal boarding, school fees and uniform, admission policies, addition cost associated with boarding, impact of suspension or repeated repetition on enrolment, penalties when children miss classes to help parents at home, etc)
3. Socio-economic and cultural factors outside the domain of our policies also influence the enrolment and retention. (e.g. poverty both rural and urban, monastic education, need to keep children to help at home, policies of other ministries and Dzongkhags, etc)

Schedule for work:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Second half of August 2008: | Invite proposal for the TA |
| 2. Sept 2008: | Evaluate proposals and award work |
| 3. Oct 2008: | Consultancy starts |
| 4. January 2009: | First draft report ready |
| 5. End February 2009: | Finalize report. Consultancy ends. |

Data, services and facilities to be provided by the client

The policy and planning division, Ministry of Education will be executing agencies of the consultancy work. To facilitate the effective working of the consultant/s, PPD will:

1. Form a taskforce to assist the consultant/s and provide a counter part for the consultant to work with.
2. Organize meetings and workshops as and when required.
3. Help in organizing any visits or meetings to schools through letter, appointments etc.

Some reference documents available for the consultant/s are:

1. Education policy guidelines
2. Purpose of school education
3. Vision 2020
4. Education sector strategy
5. Guidelines for the establishment of private schools
6. General statistics 2005 – 2008 (Education)
7. Education without compromise (education review commission)
8. EFA : Mid Decade assessment
9. Five year plans
10. Population and housing census 2005
11. Other relevant documents from NCWC and UN agencies (including UNICEF and UNESCO).

Candidate/s Qualifications:

1. The candidate/s must have experience in developing such papers and / or research studies. Familiarity with Bhutanese education system will be a plus point for the applicant.
2. Excellent verbal and written skills in English.
3. A post graduate degree from a recognized university is an advantage
4. Proven organizational and analytical skills.

General terms and Conditions:

- a) The consultant or firm should submit technical and financial bid proposals separately. The

proposals must be addressed to the Chief Planning Officer, Ministry c
reach latest by 10 AM, 24th September 2008

- b) The proposal should be addressed to the chief planning officer, policy and planning division, Ministry of Education, Thimphu, Bhutan. E-mail – jambaywangchuk@education.gov.bt copy to dechenzam@education.gov.bt Electronic submission will suffice
- c) The total budget (of the awarded amount) is subject to 3% tax deduction by the Royal Government of Bhutan.
- d) The consultant will carry out all the work collaborative with MoE counterparts.
- e) All information gathered should be treated as confidential, and handed over to the Ministry
- f) All intellectual copyright will be with the Ministry
- g) The consultant should leave behind all soft copies of the work
- h) There will be an agreement drawn between the Ministry of Education and the consultant, before the commencement of the consultancy.

Annex 3: Tables of Analysis

Table 1: Distribution of field survey respondents by gender

Category of respondents		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
DEOs	No.	7	-	7
	% of Total	1	-	1
Principals	No.	30	-	30
	% of Total	5	-	5
Parents of regular students	No.	28	53	81
	% of Total	5	9	14
Parents of special needs children	No.	3	2	5
	% of Total	1	-	1
Students	No.	150	150	300
	% of Total	26	26	52
Drop-outs below class 10	No.	33	61	94
	% of Total	6	11	16
Children that never attended school	No.	23	32	55
	% of Total	4	6	10
Total	No.	274	298	572
	% of Total	48	52	100

Source: Field Survey, Study on Enrolment and Retention Strategies, March, 2009

Table 2: Cross-tabulation of school levels with gender of students interviewed

School level		Gender of student		Total
		Male	Female	
MSS	Count	18	22	40
	% within School level	45	55	100
	% of Total	6	7	13
LSS	Count	47	43	90
	% within School level	52	48	100
	% of Total	16	14	30
CPS/PS	Count	85	85	170
	% within School level	50	50	100
	% of Total	28	28	57
Total	Count	150	150	300
	% within School level	50	50	100
	% of Total	50	50	100

Table 3: Cross-tabulation of school levels with residential status of students

School level		School residential status of student		Total
		Boarder	Day-scholar	
MSS	Count	17	23	40
	% within School level	43	58	100
	% of Total	6	8	13
LSS	Count	31	59	90
	% within School level	34	66	100
	% of Total	10	20	30
CPS/PS	Count	5	165	170
	% within School level	3	97	100
	% of Total	2	55	57
Total	Count	53	247	300
	% within School level	18	82	100
	% of Total	18	82	100

Table 4: Cross-tabulation of school levels with age category of the students

School level		Age category of the student				Total
		6-12	13-14	15-16	>17	
MSS	Count	0	1	14	25	40
	% within School level	0	3	35	63	100
	% of Total	0	0	5	8	13
LSS	Count	5	21	45	19	90
	% within School level	6	23	50	21	100
	% of Total	2	7	15	6	30
CPS/PS	Count	62	56	46	6	170
	% within School level	36	33	27	4	100
	% of Total	21	19	15	2	57
Total	Count	67	78	105	50	300
	% within School level	22	26	35	17	100
	% of Total	22	26	35	17	100

Table 5: Distribution of schools visited by types, names and Dzongkhags

Dzongkhags	MSS	LSS	CPS/PS	
			On road	Off-road
Thromdoe	Babesa			
Thimphu		Chamgang	Sisina	
Trongsa		Tshangkha	Chendebji	Bemji
			Samchoeling	
Mongar	Yadi	Chaskhar	Ngatshang	Konbar
Samdrup Jongkhar		Orong	Rikhey	Wooling
			S/jongkhar	
Dagana	Drujeygang	Gesarling	Samey	Namchalla
Wangdue		Nobding	Phobjikha	Uma
Chukha		Phuentsholing	Meretsemo	Chongaykha
			Tsimakha	
Samtse	Gomtu	Samtse	Chengmari	Bara
Total	4	8	11	7
30				

Table 6: Distribution of field survey respondents by Dzongkhags

Dzongkhag		Category of respondents							Total
		DEOs	Principals	Parents of regular students	Parents of special needs children	Students	Drop-outs below class 10	Children that never attended school	
Thimphu	No.	1	3	12	-		7	9	62
	% of Total	-	1	2	-	5	1	2	11
Trongsa	No.	1	4	10	1			10	76
	% of Total	-	1	2	-	7	2	2	13
Mongar	No.	1	4	10	-			7	82
	% of Total	-	1	2	-	7	3	1	14
S/jongkhar	No.	1	4	10	1		9	1	66
	% of Total	-	1	2	-	7	2	-	12
Dagana	No.	0	4	9	-		9	22	84
	% of Total	-	1	2	-	7	2	4	15
Wangdue	No.	1	3	10	-		6	-	50
	% of Total	-	1	2	-	5	1	-	9
Chukha	No.	1	4	10	2			2	81
	% of Total	-	1	2	-	7	4	-	14
Samtse	No.	1	4	10	1			4	71
	% of Total	-	1	2	-	7	2	1	12
Total	No.	7		81	5			55	572
	% of Total	1	5	14	1			10	100

Source: Field Survey, Study on Enrolment and Retention Strategies, March, 2009

Table 7: Overall literacy rate by Dzongkhags and by sex, 2005

Dzongkhag	Urban			Rural			Bhutan		
	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both Sex	Male	Female	Both
Bumthang	80.0	63.2	72.8	73.1	53.1	63.9	75.0	55.6	66.2
Chhukha	85.9	70.3	78.7	59.9	36.4	50.7	70.6	52.8	63.1
Dagana	84.0	72.5	79.0	57.6	35.7	46.6	61.3	39.8	50.7
Gasa	86.2	69.6	78.7	58.4	23.6	42.0	62.1	29.4	46.8
Haa	86.7	74.2	80.9	67.5	44.8	57.2	71.7	51.3	62.4
Lhuentse	82.4	68.2	76.4	63.4	42.1	52.6	65.6	44.3	55.0
Mongar	84.1	71.9	78.9	53.5	33.2	43.1	60.3	39.9	50.2
Paro	82.9	67.2	76.3	72.6	53.8	63.7	73.5	54.7	64.7
Pemagatshel	81.2	66.6	75.2	65.3	40.9	52.6	68.1	44.0	56.0
Punakha	89.9	81.6	86.0	68.4	49.7	59.3	70.6	52.9	62.0
S/jongkhar	78.4	58.6	69.5	60.9	35.9	48.5	66.2	42.0	54.5
Samtse	85.2	66.4	75.9	56.3	32.5	45.0	61.0	38.4	50.2
Sarpang	80.0	63.1	72.1	64.0	40.4	52.7	69.2	47.5	58.9
Thimphu	82.3	67.0	75.2	72.9	54.0	65.2	80.7	65.3	73.7
Trashigang	84.6	72.6	79.3	62.6	41.9	52.3	66.0	45.9	56.2
Trashiyangtse	84.7	68.8	77.3	59.7	41.2	50.3	64.2	45.7	55.0
Trongsa	85.7	67.7	77.5	64.1	46.3	55.3	68.7	50.3	59.7
Tsirang	86.0	63.5	74.5	65.8	39.6	52.9	67.5	41.7	54.8
Wangdue	80.1	62.3	72.4	60.1	37.6	48.9	65.4	42.9	54.6
Zhemgang	85.8	72.1	79.4	60.8	40.8	50.9	65.7	46.4	56.3
Bhutan	83.1	67.5	75.9	62.6	40.6	52.1	69.1	48.7	59.5

Source: Socio-economic and Demographic Indicators, 2005, NSB, RGoB

Table 8: Status of progress towards achieving MDGs on education

MDG 2		2006	2007	2008	Target (2015)
<i>Achieve Universal Primary Education</i>	Target 2: <i>Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.</i>				
	Net Primary Enrolment	79.4%	83.7%	88%	100%
	Gross Primary Enrolment	102%	106%	112%	100%
	Net Enrolment at Basic Level	75%	78.2%	85%	90%
	Gross Enrolment at Basic Level	84.8%	87.8%	96%	100%

Table 9: Net Primary Enrolment Ratio and Gross Primary Enrolment Ratio 2005 - 2008

Year	Gross Primary Enrolment	Net Primary Enrolment
2005	97%	73%
2006	102%	79%
2007	106%	84%
2008	112%	88%

Source: General Statistics, 2008, PPD, MoE, RGoB

Table 10: New Admission in PP (1996 - 2008)

Year	PP Enrolment		Total	Growth	
	Boys	Girls		No.	%
1996	6,394	5,401	11,795	1,862	18.7%
1997	6,800	5,946	12,746	951	8.1%
1998	6,325	5,481	11,806	-940	-7.4%
1999	6,626	5,823	12,449	643	5.4%
2000	7,000	6,178	13,178	729	5.9%
2001	6,613	6,264	12,877	-301	-2.3%
2002	6,967	6,524	13,491	614	4.8%
2003	7,052	6,932	13,984	493	3.7%
2004	7,565	7,310	14,875	891	6.4%
2005	7,187	6,824	14,011	-864	-5.8%
2006	7,967	7,618	15,585	1,574	11.2%
2007	7,751	7,514	15,265	-320	-2.1%
2008	7,612	7,630	15,242	-23	-0.2%
Average Annual Growth Rate					3.6%

Source: General Statistics, 2008, PPD, MoE, RGoB

Table 11: Enrolment in Primary Education 1996 – 2008

Year	Students			Annual Growth	
	Boys	Girls	Total	No.	%
1996	31,198	30,770	69,968	5,053	7.8%
1997	41,345	33,321	74,666	4,698	6.7%
1998	42,787	35,220	78,007	3,341	4.5%
1999	44,100	37,056	81,156	3,149	4.0%
2000	45,846	39,251	85,097	3,941	4.9%
2001	46,942	41,250	88,192	3,095	3.6%
2002	48,006	42,938	90,944	2,752	3.1%
2003	48,921	45,053	93,974	3,030	3.3%
2004	50,443	47,406	97,849	3,875	4.1%
2005	51,218	48,656	99,874	2,025	2.1%
2006	52,187	50,005	102,192	2,318	2.3%
2007	53,260	51,207	104,467	2,275	2.2%
2008	53,571	52,529	106,100	1,633	1.6%
Average Annual Growth Rate - 3.9 %					

Source: General Statistics, 2008, PPD, MoE, RGoB

Table 12: Enrolment in Class VII - X 1996 – 2008

Year	Enrolment in Class VII - X			Annual Growth	
	Boys	Girls	Total	No.	%
1996	6,688	4,867	11,555	2,004	21.0%
1997	8,392	6,348	14,740	3,185	27.6%
1998	9,804	7,570	17,374	2,634	17.9%
1999	11,238	8,885	20,123	2,749	15.8%
2000	12,878	10,423	23,301	3,178	15.8%
2001	14,070	11,797	25,867	2,566	11.0%
2002	14,647	12,764	27,411	1,544	6.0%
2003	15,131	13,752	28,883	1,472	5.4%
2004	16,256	15,192	31,448	2,565	8.9%
2005	17,258	16,572	33,830	2,382	7.6%
2006	18,315	17,882	36,197	2,367	7.0%
2007	19,664	19,247	38,911	2,714	6.5%
2008	20,353	20,502	40,855	1,944	5.0%
Average Annual Growth Rate - 21.0 %					

Source: General Statistics, 2008, PPD, MoE, RGoB

Table 13: Distribution of NFE learners aged 6 – 16 years by Dzongkhags

Region	Dzongkhag	Number of NFE Learners between		Total
		Boys	Girls	
West	Gasa	5	7	12
West	Haa	16	8	24
West	Paro	0	0	0
West	Punakha	7	19	26
West	Thimphu	0	4	4
West	Wangdue	19	81	100
<i>Total West</i>		47	119	166
East	Lhuentse	17	63	80
East	Mongar	10	11	21
East	P/Gatsel	22	55	77
East	S/Jongkhar	26	61	87
East	T/Yangtse	19	54	73
East	T/Gang	0	0	0
<i>Total East</i>		94	244	338
Central	Bumthang	3	0	3
Central	Dagana	73	121	194
Central	Trongsa	38	27	65
Central	Zhemgang	18	35	53
<i>Total Central</i>		132	183	315

South	Chukha	53	80	133
South	Samtse	43	68	111
South	Sarpang	17	32	49
South	Tsirang	0	0	0
<i>Total South</i>		<i>113</i>	<i>180</i>	<i>293</i>
Total Bhutan		386	726	1112

Source: Data gathered by DEOs, Dzongkha Administrations, April, 2009

Table 14: Enrolment (PP-Class X) per Dzongkhag by types of schools, 2008

Region	Dzongkhag	CPS	PS	Pvt. PS	LSS	Pvt. LSS	MSS	Total	% of Total
West	Gasa	153	111	0	0	0	328	592	0.43
	Haa	144	620	0	1439	0	0	2203	1.62
	Paro	263	1286	271	4542	0	1244	7606	5.58
	Punakha	917	1053	0	1844	0	1840	5654	4.15
	Thimphu	876	4830	1294	6879	668	3790	18337	13.46
	Wangdue	1630	2188	0	2169	0	809	6796	4.99
<i>Total West</i>		<i>3983</i>	<i>10088</i>	<i>1565</i>	<i>16873</i>	<i>668</i>	<i>8011</i>	<i>41188</i>	<i>30.24</i>
East	Lhuentse	957	1471	0	566	0	458	3452	2.53
	Mongar	2735	923	0	2939	0	1220	7817	5.74
	P/Gatsel	1747	414	0	2454	0	1161	5776	4.24
	S/Jongkhar	1414	2026	58	2105	0	2387	7990	5.87
	T/Yangtse	1671	369	0	1996	0	653	4689	3.44
	T/Gang	3270	2156	0	4052	0	1249	10727	7.88
<i>Total East</i>		<i>11794</i>	<i>7359</i>	<i>58</i>	<i>14112</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>7128</i>	<i>40451</i>	<i>29.70</i>
Central	Bumthang	1462	0	0	1064	0	1010	3536	2.60
	Dagana	2846	450	0	1680	0	903	5879	4.32
	Trongsa	1197	773	0	764	0	388	3122	2.29
	Zhemgang	1158	1184	0	1863	0	447	4652	3.42
<i>Total Central</i>		<i>6663</i>	<i>2407</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>5371</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>2748</i>	<i>17189</i>	<i>12.62</i>
South	Chukha	2377	946	0	5484	246	4898	13951	10.24
	Samtse	2368	1371	0	1202	0	6538	11479	8.43
	Sarpang	1819	0	137	3749	0	2148	7853	5.77
	Tsirang	698	642	0	1915	0	821	4076	2.99
<i>Total South</i>		<i>7262</i>	<i>2959</i>	<i>137</i>	<i>12350</i>	<i>246</i>	<i>14405</i>	<i>37359</i>	<i>27.43</i>
Total Bhutan		29702	22813	1760	48706	914	32292	136187	100.00

Source: General Statistics, 2008, PPD, MoE, RGoB

Table 15: Net Enrolment Rates by Education Level and by Poverty Status

Education level	Classification of Poor		Poor	Non-Poor	Total
	Subsistence Poor	Poor but Not			
Primary school	55.6%	73.8%	69.2%	86.6%	82.1%
Lower secondary school	0.9%	4.7%	3.9%	28.3%	23.0%
Middle secondary school	-	4.6%	3.5%	23.3%	19.1%
Higher secondary school	-	0.6%	0.4%	13.1%	10.5%
Total	33.1%	43.4%	40.9%	55.0%	51.7%

Source: Poverty Analysis report, 2007, NSB, RGoB

Table 16: School feeding in 2008, WFP-support and Government stipend

	Primary students		Primary students		Grade VII-X students		Grade VII-X students	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Day scholars	0	0	17,975	17	909	2	0	0
Boarders	5,898	6	351	0	14,242	35	3,161	32
Total	5,898	6	18,326	17	15,151	37	3,161	32

Source: General Statistics, 2008, PPD, MoE, RGoB

Table 17: Enrolment, Promotees, and Repetition Rate PP-X 1998 – 2008

Year	Enrolment	Promotees	Repeaters	Rep. Rate (%)
1998	95,381	71,811	12,249	13.7
1999	101,279	77,298	12,355	13.0
2000	108,398	82,624	13,814	13.6
2001	114,071	88,625	14,183	13.1
2002	118,355	92,883	14,767	12.9
2003	122,857	98,218	13,604	11.5
2004	128,771	105,384	12,206	9.9
2005	133,288	113,948	9,266	7.2
2006	138,422	118,262	8,743	6.6
2007	143,378	134,545	8,883	6.4
2008	146,955	127,606	8,833	6.0

Source: General Statistics, 2008, PPD, MoE, RGoB

Table 18: Enrolment, Promotees, and Dropout Rate PP-X 1998 – 2008

Year	Enrolment	Promotees	Repeaters	Dropouts	Dropout Rate (%)
1998	95,381	71,811	12,249	5,346	5.6
1999	101,279	77,298	12,355	5,737	5.7
2000	108,398	82,624	13,814	4,841	4.5
2001	114,071	88,625	14,183	5,590	4.9
2002	118,355	92,883	14,767	6,421	5.4
2003	122,857	98,218	13,604	6,533	5.3
2004	128,771	105,384	12,206	5,267	4.1
2005	133,288	113,948	9,266	5,557	4.2
2006	138,422	118,262	8,743	4,055	3.0
2007	143,378	134,545	8,883	4,989	3.6
2008	146,955	127,606	8,833	4,064	2.8

Source: General Statistics, 2008, PPD, MoE, RGoB

Table 19: Primary and Basic Education Completion Rates, 2006-2008

	Primary Level		Basic Level	
	New Entrants at VI	Completion Rate (%)	New Entrants at X	Completion Rate (%)
2006	11,331	77	6,828	43
2007	11,474	76	7,619	49
2008	12,246	87	7,870	54

Source: General Statistics, 2008, PPD, MoE, RGoB

Table 20: Measure of Internal Efficiency 2007

Grade	PP	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Graduates
Promotion rate	91.4%	91.6%	90.6%	92.2%	87.7%	91.0%	94.6%	85.8%	89.5%	86.3%	98.8%	
Repetition rate	7.3%	6.6%	7.1%	6.0%	8.6%	5.4%	3.7%	8.5%	7.0%	6.7%	1.2%	
Dropout rate	1.3%	1.8%	2.3%	1.8%	3.7%	3.5%	1.7%	5.7%	3.5%	7.0%	0.0%	
Adjusted promotion	91.4%	91.6%	90.6%	92.2%	87.7%	91.0%	94.6%	85.8%	89.5%	86.3%	98.8%	
Survivors to the Grade	1,000	986	967	942	924	887	854	786	786	757	701	670
Pupil-years invested per Graduate												14.7
Coefficient of Internal Efficiency												79.9%

Source: General Statistics, 2008, PPD, MoE, RGoB

Table 21: Student's assessment of availability of school facilities with school levels

Facilities	Availability	School level (subtable %)			Total %
		MSS	LSS	CPS/PS	
Classrooms	Have	100	99	100	100
	Don't have		1		0
Library	Have	100	98	95	96
	Don't have		2	5	4
Water	Have	98	99	100	99
	Don't have	3	1		1
Latrines	Have	100	99	100	100
	Don't have		1		0
Hostel	Have	50	46	6	24
	Don't have	50	54	94	76
Food	Have	48	57	24	37
	Don't have	53	43	76	63
Sport facilities	Have	100	100	100	100
Adequate number of teachers	Have	100	100	100	100
Enough text-books	Have	100	100	100	100
Laboratory	Have	90	83	62	72
	Don't have	10	17	38	28
ICT (telephone, computer, internet)	Have	83	96	92	92
	Don't have	18	4	8	8
Dinning hall	Have	50	55	23	36
	Don't have	50	45	77	64
Classroom furniture	Have	100	100	100	100
Others	Have	3	3		1
	Don't have	98	97	100	99

Table 22: Student’s assessment of ranking of school facilities by levels of schools

Facilities	Quality ranking	School level (subtable %)			Total %
		MSS	LSS	CPS/PS	
Classrooms	Poor	3	1	5	3
	Average	48	50	56	53
	Good	50	49	39	44
Library	Poor	3	1	3	2
	Average	33	41	34	36
	Good	65	58	58	59
	Don’t have			5	3
Water	Poor	48	33	17	26
	Average	33	44	45	43
	Good	18	22	38	30
	Don’t have	3			0
Latrines	Poor	28	22	29	27
	Average	30	49	38	40
	Good	40	29	32	32
	Don’t have	3		1	1
Hostel	Poor		17	1	5
	Average	10	13	1	6
	Good	40	14	5	12
	Don’t have	50	56	94	76
Food	Poor		8		2
	Average	5	23	7	12
	Good	43	24	16	22
	Don’t have	53	44	76	64
Sport facilities	Poor	10	17	3	8
	Average	25	41	49	44
	Good	65	41	48	48
	Don’t have		1		0
Adequate number of teachers	Poor		4	9	6
	Average	20	44	34	35
	Good	80	51	57	58
Enough text-books	Poor	3	2	5	4
	Average	23	48	26	32
	Good	75	50	68	64
Laboratory	Poor	18	12	4	8
	Average	30	44	41	40
	Good	53	26	18	25
	Don’t have		18	38	27
ICT (telephone, computer, internet)	Poor	8	17	4	8

	Average	48	59	46	50
	Good	28	17	40	31
	Don't have	18	8	9	10
Dinning hall	Poor		14	1	5
	Average	3	23	8	12
	Good	48	17	15	20
	Don't have	50	46	76	63
Classroom furniture	Poor		2	5	3
	Average	23	47	39	39
	Good	78	51	55	57
	Don't have			1	1
	Don't have	95	96	99	98

Table 23: Satisfaction of students with school facilities by school levels

Facilities	Satisfaction	School level (sub-table %)			Total %
		MSS	LSS	CPS/PS	
Classrooms	Yes	73	83	83	82
	No	28	17	17	18
Library	Yes	78	82	81	81
	No	23	18	14	16
	No facility			5	3
Water	Yes	20	36	55	44
	No	80	64	45	56
Latrines	Yes	55	38	41	42
	No	45	59	58	57
	No facility		3	1	2
Hostel	Yes	48	13	6	14
	No	3	32	2	11
	No facility	50	54	92	75
Food	Yes	43	29	18	25
	No	5	30	5	13
	No Response			1	0
	No facility	53	41	76	62
Sport facilities	Yes	83	58	66	66
	No	18	41	34	34
	No facility		1		0
Adequate number of teachers	Yes	85	59	62	64
	No	15	41	38	36
Enough text-books	Yes	80	62	73	71
	No	20	38	26	29
	No facility			1	1

Laboratory	Yes	63	42	35	41
	No	38	39	25	31
	No facility		19	39	28
ICT (telephone, computer,	Yes	50	32	52	46
	No	48	61	39	47
	No Response	3	2	1	2
	No facility		4	8	6
Dinning hall	Yes	50	16	19	22
	No		39	6	15
	No facility	50	46	75	63
Classroom furniture	Yes	95	69	75	76
	No	5	30	25	24
	No Response		1		0

Table 24: Student's perception on school rules and regulations by students

Rules and regulations	Ranking	School level (%)			Total (%)
		MSS	LSS	CPS/PS	
Students that do not follow rules should be given second chance	Agree	68	82	82	80
	Don't agree	33	18	18	20
Teachers should beat the students that do not follow rules	Agree	55	70	66	66
	Don't agree	35	28	34	32
	Don't know	10	2	1	2
Students that break rules should be sent to school counselor	Agree	90	89	91	90
	Don't agree	10	11	9	10
Parents to be informed when a child break the rules	Agree	95	81	82	83
	Don't agree	5	19	18	17
Get a lot of work outside classroom in the school	Agree	68	68	45	55
	Don't agree	23	32	55	44
	Don't know	10		0	1
Parents can't afford to pay school fees and buy uniform	Agree	90	93	94	93
	Don't agree	10	7	5	6
	Don't know	0	0	1	1
Students should be allowed to repeat as many times as possible	Agree	40	71	79	72
	Don't agree	53	29	19	27
	Don't know	8	0	1	2
Feel safe at school	Agree	93	91	96	94
	Don't agree	8	8	3	5
	Don't know	0	1	1	1

Source: Field Survey, Study on Enrolment and Retention Strategies, March, 2009

Table 25: Teaching and learning environment by students by levels of schools

Teaching and learning environment	Ranking	School level			Total (%)
		MSS	LSS	CPS/PS	
Understand what is taught in class	Always	28	12	17	17
	Sometimes	73	88	83	83
Ready for the examination	Always	48	27	34	34
	Sometimes	53	72	66	66
	Never	0	1	0	0
Find examination easy	Always	13	4	6	6
	Sometimes	88	94	94	93
	Never	0	1	0	0
Able to learn in class without fear	Always	23	18	18	18
	Sometimes	68	76	75	74
	Never	10	7	8	8
Interested in learning in class	Always	88	91	78	83
	Sometimes	10	9	22	17
	Never	3	0	0	0
Able to complete school homework	Always	35	49	46	46
	Sometimes	65	51	53	54
	Never	0	0	1	0

Source: Field Survey, Study on Enrolment and Retention Strategies, March, 2009

Table 26: Domestic environment at home for the students by students by level of schools

Domestic environment	Ranking	School level (%)			Total (%)
		MSS	LSS	CPS/PS	
Get time to study at home	Always	58	50	35	42
	Sometimes	43	50	65	57
	Never			1	0
Parents help the child whenever they have the problems	Always	65	50	48	51
	Sometimes	35	49	48	46
	Never	0	1	4	3
Help at home	Always	28	10	15	15
	Sometimes	70	90	83	83
	Never	3	0	2	1
Help with farm-works at home	Always	13	3	4	5
	Sometimes	63	74	84	78
	Never	25	22	12	17
Parents help to do school homework	Always	30	13	11	14
	Sometimes	43	43	34	38
	Never	28	43	56	48

Source: Field Survey, Study on Enrolment and Retention Strategies, March, 2009

Table 27: Number of 6-12 years children out-of-school by Dzongkhags, March 2008

Dzongkhag	Percent	Dzongkhag	Percent
Samtse	20	Lhuentse	3
Chukha	13	Pema Gatshel	2
Trashigang	9	Zhemgang	2
Samdrupjongkhar	9	Haa	2
Sarpang	8	Bumthang	2
Thimphu	6	Paro	1
Tsirang	5	Trongsa	1
Mongar	5	Gasa	1
Wangdue	5	Punakha	2
Dagana	5	Trashiyangtse	1

Source: General Statistics, 2008, PPD, MoE, RGoB

Table 28: Comparison of Total Enrolment (PP – Class X) and Projected Population (6-16 Years) for the year 2008

Region	Dzongkhag	Total Enrolled	% of total enrolled	Population 6 - 16 yrs (2008)	Total not Enrolled	% in Formal Schools	% out of Formal Schools	Out-of-School (% of the nation's total)
West	Gasa	592	0.43	750	158	78.93	21.07	0.94
West	Haa	2203	1.62	2794	591	78.85	21.15	3.53
West	Paro	7606	5.58	8767	1161	86.76	13.24	6.93
West	Punakha	5654	4.15	5655	1	99.98	0.02	0.01
West	Thimphu	18337	13.46	22457	4120	81.65	18.35	24.60
West	Wangdue	6796	4.99	7512	716	90.47	9.53	4.28
Total			30.24	47935	6747	85.92	14.08	40.29
East	Lhuentse	3452	2.53	3699	247	93.32	6.68	1.47
East	Mongar	7817	5.74	8943	1126	87.41	12.59	6.72
East	P/Gatsel	5776	4.24	5349	-427	107.98	0.00	2.55
East	S/Jongkhar	7990	5.87	8176	186	97.73	2.27	1.11
East	T/Yangtse	4689	3.44	4276	-413	109.66	9.66	2.47
East	T/Gang	10727	7.88	11721	994	91.52	8.48	5.94
Total East			29.70	42164	1713	95.94	4.06	10.23
Central	Bumthang	3536	2.60	3871	335	91.35	8.65	2.00
Central	Dagana	5879	4.32	5477	-402	107.34	7.34	2.40
Central	Trongsa	3122	2.29	3235	113	96.51	3.49	0.67
Central	Zhemgang	4652	3.42	4479	-173	103.86	3.86	1.03
Total			12.62	17062	-127	100.74	0.74	0.76
South	Chukha	13951	10.24	17855	3904	78.13	21.87	23.31
South	Samtse	11479	8.43	14459	2980	79.39	20.61	17.79
South	Sarpang	7853	5.77	8967	1114	87.58	12.42	6.65
South	Tsirang	4076	2.99	4493	417	90.72	9.28	2.49
Total		37359	27.43	45774	8415	81.62	18.38	50.24
Total Bhutan		136187	100	152935	16748	89.05	10.95	10.95

Source: General Statistics, 2008, PPD, MoE, RGoB and Population Projection for 2008, NSB

Table 29: Distribution of out-of-school children (aged 6 – 16 years) by Dzongkhags

Region	Dzongkhag	Number of children that dropped out		Total	Number of children that never joined school		Total	Grand Total
		Boys	Girls		Boys	Girls		
West	Gasa	5	6	11	18	18	36	47
West	Haa	16	5	21	0	0	0	21
West	Paro	0	0	0	1	1	2	2
West	Punakha	106	116	222	4	16	20	242
West	Thimphu	29	23	52	10	5	15	67
West	Wangdue	33	25	58	64	68	132	190
Total West		189	175	364	97	108	205	569
East	Lhuentse	69	72	141	59	104	163	304
East	Mongar	72	29	101	70	68	138	239
East	P/Gatsel	42	59	101	40	65	105	206
East	S/Jongkhar	25	14	39	67	97	164	203
East	T/Yangtse	47	40	87	41	75	116	203
East	T/Gang							775
Total East		255	214	469	277	409	686	1930
Central	Bumthang	29	0	29	1	1	2	31
Central	Dagana	36	8	44	27	20	47	91
Central	Trongsa	39	31	70	24	24	48	118
Central	Zhemgang	18	18	36	12	22	34	70
Total Central		122	57	179	64	67	131	310
South	Chukha	14	18	32	197	269	466	498
South	Samtse	47	26	73	210	209	419	492
South	Sarpang	10	12	22	16	34	50	72
South	Tsirang	45	43	88	137	149	286	374
Total South		116	99	215	560	661	1221	1436
Total Bhutan		682	545	1227	998	1245	2243	4245

Source: Data gathered by district education officers, April, 2009

Table 30: Numbers and percentage cited for reasons not being enrolled in formal school by children that never attended school.

Reasons for not being in schools	Total responses	Percentage
Parents did not enrol	7	13
Can't afford schooling costs	7	13
School closed in the village	11	20
Unable to produce security clearance	2	4
Denied admission	10	18
Long distance to school	2	4
Required for domestic tasks	13	24
Enrolled but left (no interest)	2	4
Unable to produce ID card of both parents	1	2
Total	55	100

Source: Field Survey, Study on Enrolment and Retention Strategies, March, 2009

Table 31: Reasons for interests of children that never attended schools to go back to school.

Reasons for those Interested to go to school	Total responses	%
1. Friends are studying and want to study too	8	15
2. Help family households economically	6	11
3. Get better job and earn better	12	22
4. Education benefits in all spheres	13	24
Total	39	71
Reasons for not interested in going to school		
1. Studied NFE and satisfied	1	2
2. Have to help parents with domestic tasks	4	7
3. No interest in learning	1	2
4. Exceeded my age	8	15
5. Will remain unemployed	2	4
Total	16	29
Grand Total	55	100

Source: Field Survey, Study on Enrolment and Retention Strategies, March, 2009

Table 32: Reasons for boys and girls dropping school based on frequency of opinion

No.	Reasons	For boys (Nos)	For girls (Nos)
1	Financial inability	16	15
2	Lack of support from parents	5	3
3	Lack of adequate facilities in school	3	3
4	Influence of bad companion	10	4
5	Substance abuse	1	0
6	Migration of parents	1	1
7	Broken family	3	3
8	Preference for monastic education	3	1
9	Discouraged by un-employment of youth	3	2
10	Retained for domestic tasks	6	8
11	Lack of interest	6	3
12	Early marriage	4	9
13	Changes in school	2	2
14	Lack competency at LSS and MSS level	9	9
15	Matured and feel shy	4	4
16	Lack of boarding and food facilities	1	1
17	Long distance to school	0	2
18	Teenage pregnancy	0	8
19	Belief that husband will take care	0	1
Total opinion responses		77	79

Source: Field Survey, Study on Enrolment and Retention Strategies, March, 2009

Table 33: Highest level of education attended by the drop-outs

Drop-out levels	Total responses	%
Primary (class 1 - 6)	57	60
Lower Secondary (Class 7-8)	28	30
Middle Secondary (Class 9-10)	9	10
Total opinion responses	94	100

Source: Field Survey, Study on Enrolment and Retention Strategies, March, 2009

Table 34: Reasons for drop-outs being interested or not interested in going back to school

Reasons for those Interested to go back to school	Total responses	%
1. Friends are studying and want to study too	12	13
2. Help family households economically	9	10
3. Get better job and earn better	12	13
4. Education benefits in all spheres	18	19
Total	51	54
Reasons for not interested in going back to school		
1. Have low performance memory and feel shy	7	7
2. Already married	5	5
3. Have to help parents with domestic tasks	12	13
4. Can't afford schooling cost	2	2
5. No interest in learning	4	4
6. Exceeded my age	5	5
7. Interested in monastic education	3	3
8. Have business / employed	5	5
Total	43	46
Grand Total	94	100

Source: Field Survey, Study on Enrolment and Retention Strategies, March, 2009

Table 35: Anticipated support measures to ensure children that never attended school go to school

Range of support measures required for enrolment of children that never	Total responses	%
Require separate school for aged children	4	7
Pay for schooling cost (fee, uniform and others)	18	33
Provide school with boarding facility	4	7
Provide free boarding, food, fees and uniform	4	7
Provide free NFE classes	5	9
Introduce English and Mathematics in NFE courses	3	5
Provide school near their villages	10	18
Provide agriculture tools	1	2
Allow admission for mothers	3	5
No suggestions	3	5
Total	55	100

Source: Field Survey, Study on Enrolment and Retention Strategies, March, 2009

Table 36: Anticipated support measures to ensure drop-outs continue and complete basic education

Range of support measures required for enrolment of children that never attended school	Total	%
Provide separate school for drop-outs	5	5
Pay for schooling cost (fee, uniform and others)	40	43
Provide boarding facility	13	14
Upgrade school to minimize changes in school	5	5
Introduce English and Mathematics in NFE courses	7	7
Provide school near their villages	10	11
Provide evening classes for the drop outs	4	4
No suggestions	10	11
Total	94	100

Source: Field Survey, Study on Enrolment and Retention Strategies, March, 2009

Table 37: Disability children by Dzongkhags (1-16 years) for the year 2008

Region	Dzongkhag	Boys disability (1-16 years)	Girls disability (1-16 years)	Total disability (1-16 years)
West	Gasa	6	2	8
	Haa	15	6	21
	Paro	52	47	99
	Punakha	12	15	27
	Thimphu	109	85	194
	Wangdue	41	28	69
<i>Total West</i>		235	183	418
East	Lhuentse	29	30	59
	Mongar	68	47	115
	P/Gatsel	32	20	52
	S/Jongkhar	59	58	117
	T/Yangtse	52	30	82
	T/Gang	130	82	212
<i>Total East</i>		370	267	637
Central	Bumthang	29	16	45
	Dagana	44	35	79
	Trongsa	33	27	60
	Zhemgang	48	21	69
<i>Total Central</i>		154	99	253
South	Chukha	117	99	216
	Samtse	150	98	248
	Sarpang	53	54	107
	Tsirang	24	24	48
<i>Total South</i>		344	275	619
Total Bhutan		1103	824	1927

Source: NSB, Royal Government of Bhutan, 2008

Table 38: Latest status of ECRs established

Dzongkha	ECRs
Chukha	Agaon
Dagana	Bichgoan, Devitar, Pangserpo
Gasa	Lungo
Haa	Sektena
Lhuentse	Chusa, Kharchung
Pemagatshel	Yoomzore, Kheri, Pangthang, Ngangshing (Mann), Ngangmalam, Gashari
Samdrupjongkhar	Philuma, Nainital
Samtse	Dzongsar, Dumshidara, Malbasey, Jumsa, Nangladang, Jaringsay, Baseni, Pungtha, Lamitar,
Sarpang	Kharpani
Thimphu	Soe (Lingzhi)
Trashigang	Durung, Muktangkhar, Kheri
Tsirang	Nimazor
Wangdue	Matalungchu, Gogona

Annex 4: SWOT Analysis

SWOT Enrolment

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducive policies towards enhancement of enrolment such as policy to promote early child care development; support private sector for schooling; special education for special needs children ; shift system; double track promotion and ECRs. • Policy for free education with free supply of text books, teachers, infrastructures and boarding and food in some schools. The free education policy of the government is in place to meet the constitutional right of the child where every child has rights for access to education • Existing policy to expand school infrastructure by means of establishment of CPS / ECRs to reach the school infrastructure closer to the communities. • Provision of NFE to provide education for children that could not attend formal school • Programmes through DYS in place to contribute to wholesome education (such as games & sports, career counseling, scouts and comprehensive health program) • Good advocacy programmes in place to educate the parents (such as parent-teachers meeting, sensitizing through GYT and parenting program in schools to create awareness of parents) • Policy in place to enrol Bhutanese children. Existence of SMB for school management and Admission Committee for enrolment as per the government guidelines and policy. The recent drive towards change in admission policy with consideration of slightly under-age admission at PP and with ID card verification of one parent in few schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of survey system and prior data base for children to be enrolled to enable accordingly plan the facilities and infrastructure and teachers in advance. • Facilities in remote schools are inadequate (improper sanitation, water, teachers shortage, lack of text books and proper infrastructure. lack of food facility in schools and lack of hostels impacted enrolment) • Admission policy guided by teacher-pupil ratio and class room sizes has limited enrolment in some crowded places with lack of adequate number of teachers and classrooms. . • Lack of teachers professionally qualified teachers to deliver education to children with special needs, a lack of appropriate curricula and teaching resources and limited options for specific skills programmes for these types of children have limited enrolment of such children in formal schools. • Lack of English and Mathematics curriculum in NFE courses. • Lack of financial support organizations for children from poor families challenged with difficulty in meeting schooling costs. The support from teachers' contribution not considered sustainable approach.

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of monastic educations that enroll children at any age and provide free education including accommodation and food. • Rural people well aware of benefits of education (awareness created through advocacy programmes through schools – PTM and parenting programmes) • Consolidation of schools with full-fledged boarding facility with food viewed as better resources allocation and better quality of education on the face of existing shortage of teachers and remoteness of many villages • Emerging financial support system to needy students through Tarayana Foundation, YDF, RENEW in collaboration with the Department of Youth and Sports, and His Majesty’s support through Gyapoi Zimpon’s Office. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rugged terrain and scattered settlement in the country making CPS still inaccessible to population from remote villages as walking distance to school is still a factor that have impacted enrolment of children from remote such villages. Parents do not risk sending their children if the walking distance is unsafe (through forest). • Persistence poverty of rural households with their inability to pay tuition fees, school development fees, purchase uniform for their children, and meet the cost associated with changes in schools (informal boarding costs, increasing costs in higher levels of education). • Increasing enrolment pressure in some boarding schools from students of rural background with lack of capability to meet the cost as day-scholar. • Lack of interest of many out-of-school children in NFE owing to lack of English and Mathematics curriculum in courses. • Lack of English and mathematics curriculum in monastic education. • Poor households unable to bear the schooling costs prefer their children in monastic education or are retained at home for domestic tasks. • Growing un-employment of educated youths and trend in rural-urban migration have demotivate few parents from sending their children to school, to be retained for domestic tasks as rural households faces farm labour shortage. • Migratory pattern of nomadic herders and lack of awareness on benefits of education for their children have impacted enrolment of children from such families. • Children from broken families and orphans lacking financial support are usually left out of the school

SWOT Analysis for Retention

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducive policy for retention in place such as introduction of child friendly concepts; allowing repetition once; remedial classes for weaker ones; monitoring performance of teachers with requirement of minimum pass percentage in the class; allowing poor students to come to school without proper uniform but in any dress and ban of corporal punishment. • Programmes through DYS in place to contribute to wholesome education (such as games & sports, career counseling, scouts and comprehensive health program) • Good advocacy programmes in place to educate the parents (such as parent-teachers meeting, sensitizing through GYT and parenting program in schools to create awareness of parents) • Provision of boarding facility with food and day meals in some schools and existing policy to upgrade schools according to the need. • Policy provision to invite private sectors for schooling • Provision of welfare scheme and teachers contribution to support financially weaker students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall completion rate is much lower at basic level (completion of grade X) as compared to primary levels (completion of grade VI). This is because the dropouts start as early as PP, and throughout primary education increasing more up the ladder at lower secondary, middle secondary and higher secondary levels • With late arrival of teaching-learning materials in remote rural schools, inadequate facilities (improper water, toilet facilities and cramped classrooms) and shortage of teachers, inadequate games and sports facilities, shortage of class rooms, mode of assessment and examination, the quality of education is assessed not to the mark in many rural schools. Students from rural schools faces challenge in retention at higher levels when they face board examinations • Students have to face changes in schools (PS to LSS to MSS). Changes in schools is associated with additional cost for the parents such as travel cost, additional dresses, bedding and rental cost in places where boarding facilities are not available.

<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents' contribution of free labour for some needy school constructions such as construction of temporary sheds in absence of boarding facilities, construction of teacher's quarters, and construction of temporary class rooms have enhanced retention • Emerging financial support system to needy students through Tarayana Foundation, YDF, RENEW in collaboration with the Department of Youth and Sports, and His Majesty's support through Gyalpoi Zimpon's Office. 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scattered settlements and difficult walking conditions to schools in many remote areas still hinder children's access to education. Swollen streams in summer posed risks to students • Poverty of the rural households remains main hindrance towards continuity of children in school and in completion of basic education. This is evident that some children from poor families do not continue to the next levels (lower and middle secondary) as costs on travel, uniform, and contribution are sometimes unaffordable by parents. Lack of boarding facilities in such levels further aggregates the situation. • Rising unemployment of youths has many impacts on retention - some economically weak parents do not take the risk to fund the children and complete basic education; parents retain children for monastic education or for domestic tasks. • Illiterates parents lack the capability to guide the children in studies and competencies of such children may not be to the level when they have to face board examination and are dropped. • Some children that never attended school expressed lack of interest in NFE as NFE instruction dose not have English and mathematics curriculum • Owing to the migratory pattern of nomadic herders, children of migratory families are not enrolled and even if enrolled, owing to lack of awareness of importance of education to their children, they are not retained in schools. • There is trend in growing influences of bad companions where children are easily influenced on bad habits and loose interests in education and are dropped. • Lack of adequate facilities especially in primary schools, children being disturbed owing to issues of broken family, children themselves losing interest in education are other reasons for the children dropping the school. • Despite school awareness programmes, in few occasions parents prefer to take the child away from school after completion of primary level. Boys are preferred for either monastic education or to join some jobs or to be helping parents with domestic tasks. Similarly girls are taken out with the decision of the parents for their either early marriage or to help parents with domestic tasks.
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