

Ethiopia

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Principles and general objectives of education

The main principles, objectives and goals of education in the country are enunciated in the various proclamations of the Government of Ethiopia. These documents include: the Proclamation of the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia of 1995; the Education and Training Policy (ETP) of 1994; the Education Sector Strategy of 1994; and the Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP) I of 1997/98.

The cardinal principles which form the basis for the provision of educational services are: decentralization of the management of education; people/community participation; equitable distribution of educational services; and the development of local culture and language. The general objectives of education are the following:

- to develop the physical and mental potential and the problem-solving capacity of individuals by expanding education and in particular by providing basic education for all;
- to bring up citizens who can take care of resources and utilize wisely, who are trained in various skills, by raising the private and social benefits of education;
- to bring up citizens who respect human rights, stand for the well-being of people, as well as for equality, justice and peace, endowed with democratic culture and discipline;
- to bring up citizen who differentiate harmful practices from useful ones, who seek and stand for truth, appreciate aesthetics and show a positive attitude towards the development and dissemination of science and technology in society;
- to cultivate the cognitive, creative, productive and appreciative potential of citizens by appropriately relating education to environmental and societal needs.

Current educational priorities and concerns

The population of Ethiopia is estimated at about 55 million and the annual growth rate is 2.5%. The agricultural sector accounts for about 40-50% of GDP, 85% of exports and nearly 90% of the labour force.

The military regime which ruled the country for seventeen years (1974-1991) showed poor performance in its attempt to pursue development under a centrally planned economy. The economy grew at a low rate while the population grew rapidly. After the establishment of the new government, new policy measures were taken to

liberalize the economy, aiming at accelerating development. These measures include the creation of an accommodating environment for a market-based economy through the introduction of favourable legal and regulatory mechanisms, and the transfer of government-owned industries and services to the private sector.

Although there are some signs of improvement in the economy, the impact of such policy changes cannot be felt in a short time since the economy is still shackled with all sorts of serious problems which include: rapid population growth (2.23% rural and 4.11% urban) and very low growth of the economy; backward technology and shortage of skilled human resources; mass illiteracy (about 70%) and low labour productivity; very low awareness of the importance of education by the large majority of parents, mostly illiterates; mass poverty (the percentage of population below absolute poverty line is 60%); and low investment levels.

According to the Annual Report of the Ministry of Education (MOE) for 1995/96, the overall gross enrolment rate (Grades I-XII) at national level was about 23.7%, showing that about 76% of the population (age group 7-18 years) was outside the school system. Region XIV (Addis Ababa) had the highest rate of participation (67.4%) while the Afar region had the lowest rate (3.9% only).

According to the same source of information, the participation rate at the first level (Grades I-VIII) was 30%. The situation at the secondary level (Grades IX-XII) was even worse: the total participation rate for the corresponding population (age group 15-18 years) was only 8.1%, leaving 91.9% of the age group outside the system. In 2001/02, the gross enrolment rate at the primary level (Grades I-VIII) was estimated at 61.8%, while the net enrolment rate was 52%. In the same year, the gross enrolment rate at the secondary level (Grades IX and X) was estimated at 17.1%. (Ministry of Education, September 2002).

A new decentralization policy of administration has been introduced. The government's economic and social policy emphasizes the importance of the role of the regional administrations for implementing the policy by assuming a greater role of participation in managing their own affairs.

Educational institutions will be autonomous in their internal administration and in the designing and implementing of education and training programmes, with an overall co-ordination and democratic leadership by boards or committees, consisting of members from the community, development and research institutions, teachers and students.

Following the privatization policy, the government will create the necessary conditions to encourage and give support to private investors to open schools and establish various educational and training institutions.

Until recent years, the Ethiopian school system was divided into primary education (six-year programme), junior secondary education (two-year programme), and senior secondary (four-year programme). Following education reforms in 1994, the new structure includes ten years of general education with eight years of primary education (divided into two four-year cycles) and two years of general secondary education, followed by a second two-year cycle of secondary education and training.

Low and declining quality of education is a problem leading to high drop-out and repetition rates, especially for girls. The poor performance of primary schools is linked to the lack of adequate teaching materials, inadequate teacher training and motivation, and a curriculum that fails to take into account regional, cultural and linguistic diversity. Science, language, and cultural components fail to prepare students for productive life in the community. Teachers are inefficiently utilized in the classroom. At the secondary level, a high proportion of teachers are either untrained or are poorly trained and unmotivated. Overcrowding of secondary schools in urban areas is a serious problem. Schools suffer acute shortages of the most basic equipment and teaching materials, including textbooks. Technical and vocational schools are underutilized due to their low quality and poor linkage to employment requirements. Tertiary education offers limited access, high costs, and curriculum unsuited to the manpower needs of the largely agrarian economy.

To summarize, the main problems of the education system are low access and quality, an inequitable distribution of educational opportunities, inefficient administration, and the lack of adequate financing. Rural areas and girls are especially disadvantaged. The first five-year Education Sector Development Programme (ESDP) 1997/98-2001/02 was launched in 1997 and concluded in June 2002 against this background. The objectives of the ESDP I were to:

- improve overall educational attainment of the population while achieving greater social equity and to lay the foundations for achieving universal primary education by the year 2015;
- expand access to education with special emphasis on primary education in rural areas;
- improve equity by narrowing enrolment gaps for girls and boys and for rural and urban populations;
- improve efficiency by institutional development and capacity building for management of education;
- improve quality and relevance by providing textbooks, materials, curriculum improvements and teacher training;
- improve the financing of education by increasing public spending and facilitating private sector investment.

Targets were to:

- expand access by raising primary enrolments from 3.1 to 7 million and achieve an average gross enrolment ratio of 50% for primary education;
- improve quality by extending the new curriculum to all levels of the system, increasing the number of certified primary teachers from 85% to 95%, and improve the textbook-pupil ratio at the primary level from 5:1 to 1:1;

- increase efficiency by the more effective utilization of teachers with an average 50:1 student-teacher ratio and raising from 60% to 80% the education system coefficient of efficiency reflecting a reduction of the number of dropouts and repeaters;
- improve equity by achieving a gross enrolment ratio for primary education of at least 25% in underserved regions, raise the female participation share in primary schools from 38% to 45%, and increase the number of female teachers from 25% to 35%;
- increase financing of education by raising public expenditure on education to 4.6% of GDP, achieve a target of 5% of new school construction owned by non-government institutions, and introduce cost-sharing at the tertiary level.

Strategies for reaching these targets included: (i) the phasing in of new curricula to improve the quality and relevance of education emphasizing the development of basic skills in literacy, numeracy, and communications with use of mother tongue in primary education; (ii) the decentralization of school control to Regional Education Bureaus to improve responsiveness and efficiency backed by investments in capacity building; (iii) new investments in school construction and classroom renovation with emphasis on rural areas and primary education to improve access and redress regional imbalances; (iv) promotion of an expanded role for the private sector in the financing and delivery of education to improve efficiency and reduce demands for public expenditure; (v) increase non-salary budgets for educational materials, including textbooks, to raise the quality of education and assure a competitive supply of these materials; (vi) promote gender equality that influences both the supply of educational facilities and programmes for girls, and also promote household demand for sending girls to school; (vii) encourage a more efficient utilization of teachers; and (viii) support activities within the Ministry of Education and the Regional Education Bureaus to guide policy development and assessment of learning effectiveness and promote innovations in instructional methodology, school management, distance education, non-formal modes of educational delivery, and other school-based innovations.

At the primary level, enrolment which stood at 4.4 million pupils in 1996/97 reached 7,401,473 pupils in 2000/01, the fourth year of the implementation of the ESDP I. During the same four-year period, the gross enrolment rate (GER) for the first cycle of primary education (Grades I-IV) increased from 54.8% to 83%, while for the second cycle (Grades V-VIII) it increased from 17.9% to 30.8%. A total of 1,386 new primary schools were constructed (against a target of 2,423), reaching a total of 11,780 schools in 2000/01. Significant improvement in access to textbooks by pupils was achieved since the beginning of ESDP I. In 1995/96, there were close to 2.3 million core primary education textbooks in circulation. This increased to over 20 million textbooks in 2000/01. However, the pupil-textbook ratio for the different regions range from 1:1 to 1:3, bringing down the national average to a ratio of about 2.5:1, which used to be 5:1 in many cases. Both pupil-teacher and pupil-section ratios in Grades I-VIII have increased during the period 1996/97-2000/01. The pupil-teacher ratio increased from 42:1 to 60:1, while the pupil-section ratio increased from 52 to 70. This has been mainly due to: (i) the rapid expansion of the coverage; (ii) the pace in construction of primary schools, slower than anticipated; and (iii) the lack of

sufficient capacity of teacher-training institutions to train the required number of qualified teachers. (Ministry of Education, June 2002).

At the secondary level, a total of fifty-five new schools were built during the first four years of the implementation of the ESDP I. The total number of senior secondary schools (Grades IX-XII) increased from 369 in 1996/97 to 424 in 2000/01, while GER reached 12.9% in 2000/01 from 8.4% in 1996/97. Enrolment has grown at a faster rate than the number of schools, resulting in further overcrowding of classrooms; the student-section ratio increased from 65:1 to 78:1 during the four-year period. The major bottleneck for secondary education remains the shortage of qualified teachers. The overall share of qualified teachers declined from 40.1% in 1996/97 to 36.5% in 2000/01. The lack of qualified teachers for secondary schools is even more acute in some of the regions; for example, in 2000/01 only 21.5% of the teachers in Tigray had a first degree or above.

Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is still in its infancy. In 2001, there were 13 government-run and ten private TVET schools enrolling a total of 4,561 students. In addition, there were twenty-five newly established skills development centres functioning in four regions with a total enrolment of 8,516 trainees. Currently, both public and private agencies offer short- and long-term training courses, using both formal and non-formal approaches. In recent years, the government undertook an extensive effort aimed at restructuring the TVET sub-sector. Curricula for twenty-four training areas have been developed in modular form for the 10+1 and 10+2 levels. Still several major issues need to be addressed, including the development of standards for TVET facilities, the system for certification and accreditation of institutions, the assessment of additional trades to be included in the curriculum, and the evaluation of existing training programmes among others.

The higher education sector witnessed rapid expansion during the four-year period. Four new universities have been established through amalgamating and elevating the status of existing colleges and institutions. Five new private higher education establishments were accredited up to 2000/01.

To sum up, remarkable progress has been achieved during the ESDP I implementation period. However, the ESDP I experience brings to surface many persisting challenges to the education system in the areas of equity, quality, organizational capacity, implementation modalities, community and private participation, and financing. Attempts to narrow the gaps in regional and gender disparities have been slow. Community participation in education remains inadequate. Implementation of innovative educational practices still requires much efforts to be exerted.

The ESDP II, which covers a period of three years (2002/03-2004/05), has been prepared in 2002 after an extensive process of consultations. The ESDP II takes into account the last three years of the Government's Five-year Education Programme and as result derives its overall goals and objectives from this Programme. The four major goals are to:

- produce good citizens who understand, respect and defend the Constitution; students who respect democratic values and human rights; develop attitude for research and work and capacity to solve problems, develop skills in various professions and with a sense of citizenship to participate in and contribute to the development of community and the nation.
- realize the goal of achieving universal primary education through expanding access and coverage of primary education with equity and improved quality.
- meet the quantitative and qualitative demand for trained manpower at all levels in order to respond to the socio-economic development needs, bearing in mind the needs of poverty reduction, the strategy of agricultural development and industrialization of the country through vertical integration of the secondary, technical-vocational, and higher education programmes.
- build the capacity within the education system for sustainable development of the system through organizational capacity building for programme implementation, continuous innovation and quality leadership at various levels. (Ministry of Education, June 2002).

Laws and other basic regulations concerning education

According to **Proclamation No. 41/1993** which defines the powers and duties of the central and regional executive organs, the Ministry of Education has the power to formulate the country's educational policies and strategy and, upon approval, follow up and supervise their implementation.

The **Proclamation of the Constitution** of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia of 1995 stipulates that the State has the obligation to allocate ever-increasing resources to provide educational services and it also states that the Federal Government shall establish and implement national standards and basic policy criteria for education. According to the Constitution, education shall be provided in a manner that is free from any religious considerations, political partisanship or cultural prejudices.

The **Education and Training Policy** of 1994 encompasses overall and specific objectives, implementation strategies, including formal and non-formal education from kindergarten to higher education and special education.

The **Education Sector Strategy** of 1994 focuses on seven major areas. First, a curriculum change in line with the new educational objectives and to make education more relevant to the demands of the community. Second, expand primary education as well as vocational and technical education and training, the latter with appropriate linkage to the academic system. Third, restructure the organization and administration of the education system in accordance with the devolution of power to the regional states. Fourth, develop human resources. Fifth, improve the quality of education throughout the system. Sixth, support to research on curriculum development, teaching methods and evaluation techniques. Seventh, increase in public spending for education.

The **Council of Ministers Regulation No. 197/1994** provides for the administration of national higher education institutions located in the regions.

The **Teachers' Career Structure** of 1995-96 provides for the professional development of teachers based on merit and experience.

No specific legal provisions concerning compulsory education are reported.

Administration and management of the education system

The country has nine self-governments and two Administrative Councils. Each one of these organs has the power to establish its own Development Sector Bureau. Each regional state and Administrative Council has its Education Bureau. Powers and duties of the central and regional executive organs of the Government are defined in the Proclamation No. 41 of 1993.

The following chart is a summary of the major responsibilities for education in accordance with the administrative structure at different levels:

MOE (*)	REB (*)	ZEO (*)	WEO (*)
Formulates the country's education policy.	Prepares plans and programmes based on national policy.	Facilitates the implementation of plans and programmes.	Implements plans and programmes at school level.
Determines and supervises the country's educational standards.	Supervises and maintains the educational standards.	Supervises and evaluates the maintenance of the educational standards.	Supervises school and work with teachers to maintain the educational standards.
Determines the curriculum of secondary and higher institutions and assists Regions in curriculum preparation for the first and second cycle of primary education.	Prepares and implements the primary school curriculum.	Supervises the implementation of the curriculum.	- Inspects the implementation of curriculum at school level. - Recommends improvements.
Determines qualifications of teachers; trains teachers at secondary and tertiary levels and educational personnel, and assists training programmes of Regions.	- Recruits qualified teachers for secondary, TVET, TTIs and TTCs. - Identifies training needs. -Trains primary teachers and educational personnel.	Ensures that in-service training is given to teachers and educational personnel.	Recruits teachers and other professionals for in-service training and professional development.

Makes available adequate quality and quantity of materials.	Ensures the provision of textbooks and educational materials.	Facilitates the distribution of textbooks and educational materials on time.	Distributes textbooks and educational materials to schools on time.
Prepares national examinations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supervises the execution of national exams. - Ascertain adequacy of exams and certificates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensures that the exam is conducted as scheduled. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Checks the preparation of students for the exams. - Administers the exams.
Facilitates the expansion of country's education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plans for the provision of education to school age children. - Provides adult education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plans for step by step provision of education for all school age population in Region. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supervises the implementation of plans at community and school level.
Establishes higher education institutions. Licenses private higher education institutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administers elementary and secondary schools. - Establishes junior colleges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mobilizes the people for realization of plans. - Establishes schools and vocational training centres as per the policy guideline. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administers and supervises established schools.
Assists Regions to establish educational mass media.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensures that the education programme is supported by mass media. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitates the provision of mass media supported education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides facilities and programmes for mass media education.
Collects, compiles and disseminates information on education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collects, compiles and disseminates statistical data on education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compiles statistical data and reports to the zone. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collects information and data on education and compiles and submits it to the zonal office.

(*) MOE = Ministry of Education; REB = Regional Education Bureau; ZEO = Zonal Education Office;
WEO = *Wereda* (District) Education Office.

The basic aims of the **Ministry of Education** are to help strengthen the regional offices and concentrate more on fundamental educational policy, broad educational planning and programming, setting standards and procedures for programme implementation. The structure of the Ministry of Education has been changed to enable it to discharge these responsibilities. It has six departments and four services covering: educational supervision; teaching and educational staff development; higher education and research; higher education scholarships; teachers' and students' affairs; planning and projects; women's affairs; administration and finance; auditing; legal and public relations services. It has retained responsibility for

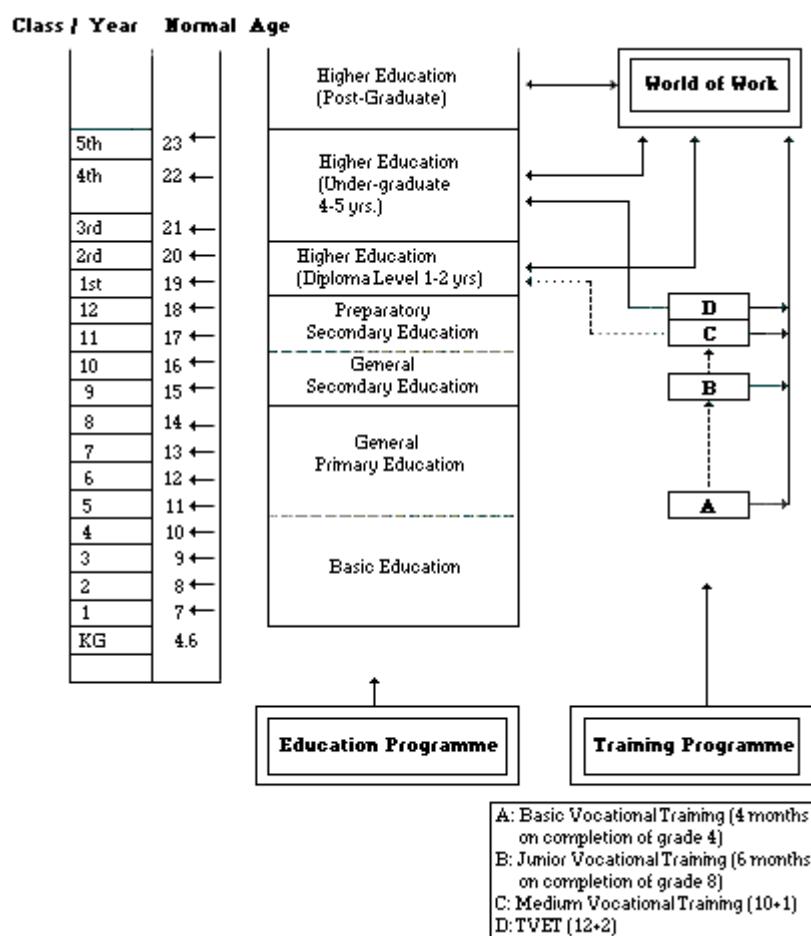
the specialized agencies (Institute for Curriculum Development and Research; Education Media Agency and National Organization for Examinations) and universities and colleges. The Ministry is headed by a Minister, a Vice-minister, and the heads of departments, services and the specialized agencies. The Ministry will continue to have an important role to play in providing technical support to regional offices. Some departments will need strengthening in terms of manpower and equipment to enhance their performance and enable them to perform their new responsibilities.

Each school has a committee and the head teacher is responsible for administration and management.

Regional, Zonal and *Wereda* (District) Councils appoint the regional education bureau head, zonal education office head, and *wereda* (district) education office head of their respective administration. They approve capital and recurrent budget allocations.

Structure and organization of the education system

Ethiopia: structure of the education system



Education reforms, adopted in 1994, changed the structure of the system. Prior to this date, general education was divided into primary (Grades I-VI), junior secondary

(Grades VII and VIII), and senior secondary education (Grades IX-XII), with national examinations at the end of each level. This system has been in place since 1962.

The new system includes ten years of general education, consisting of eight years of primary education and two years of general secondary education (Grades IX and X), followed by two years of upper secondary education. Primary education is divided into two four-year cycles. The first cycle of primary education is expected to achieve functional literacy, while the second cycle prepares students for further education. General education is completed at the end of the first cycle of general secondary education (Grades IX and X). The use of local languages as medium of instruction has been introduced in the first years of primary education.

The system is designed to enable students to leave the formal school system with higher levels of literacy and numeracy and with opportunities for pursuing technical and vocational training at different levels of the education system. The first cycle of secondary education (Grades IX and X) is intended to enable students to identify areas of interest for further training. The second cycle (Grades XI and XII) should prepare students for continuing their studies at the higher education level or selecting their own vocations. Technical and vocational education and training is institutionally separate from the regular education system and runs in parallel with it. Training is offered at the exit points of the academic system (Grades IV, VIII and X).

Pre-school education

Pre-school education lasts two years and caters to children aged 4-6. Pre-school education is not compulsory.

Primary education

According to the new structure of the education system, primary education lasts eight years (age group 7-14) and it is divided into two cycles: basic education (Grades I-IV) and general education (Grades V-VIII). Junior secondary schools no longer exist, as Grades VII and VIII have become the two upper classes of the second cycle of primary education.

Secondary education

As mentioned, secondary education is organized into two cycles: the first (Grades IX and X) and the second cycle (Grades XI and XII); the second cycle prepares students for continuing their studies at the higher education level or selecting their own vocations.

Higher education institutions include eight universities, thirteen colleges (including teacher-training colleges), three institutes (polytechnic, mass media and water technology), and a number of private institutions (mainly colleges). Teacher-training institutes offer one-year courses qualifying for teaching in the first cycle of primary education. Diploma programmes generally last two to three years. First degree courses leading to a bachelor's degree take four to five years (six years in the case of medicine and veterinary). Post-graduate courses require one to three years of study.

The school year consists of thirty-six working weeks (excluding periods for examinations and compilation of results) and it is divided into two semesters. The academic year extends from late September to July.

The financing of education

Education is financed by the Government almost entirely out of general revenues from taxes. The education budget as a share of total public budget has risen from 12.2% in 1992 to 13.7% in 1996/97. The total budget for education, including recurrent and capital expenditure, has risen from 609 million Birr (B) in 1991 to B1,496.6 million in 1996/97. In 2000/01, the total education budget amounted to B2,485.1 million, of which B1,584.6 million for recurrent expenditure and B900.4 million for capital expenditure. (Ministry of Education, September 2002).

No firm estimates are available for the level of private spending for education. A 1995 survey indicates that community contributions amount to less than 1% of annual school income for government schools and 26% for non-government schools.

About half of total public recurrent expenditure on education is for primary education. This percentage has remained fairly stable since 1975. The share spent on secondary education has been approximately 25%. The recurrent budget for higher education, however, has risen from B68.9 million in 1991/92 to B120.8 million in 1996/97. In 1996/97, about 41.9% of the higher education recurrent budget was allocated to Addis Ababa University.

To lower the demand for public financing of school construction and improvement at primary and secondary levels and to promote competition and efficiency, a new regulation has been introduced (No. 206/1995) to liberalize the licensing and supervision of private schools. Studies on household and community financing will be undertaken with the objective of searching for ways to expand this financing without limiting access of the poor to education. To reduce demands for public financing of tertiary education and provide additional resource for quality improvements, support will be provided for testing the introduction of cost recovery measures and development of institutional capacity for administering student loans and grants.

An enlarged role for the private sector in the delivery of education, including communities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), would supplement public investment by increasing private expenditures for school construction and renovation. The estimated target of 5% for new school construction supported by the private sector will enhance and accelerate the government's efforts for achieving the goal of universal primary education by the year 2015. The introduction of cost recovery in tertiary education and increased community financing for primary and secondary education would also enable the government to divert funds for financing unmet demands, particularly of underserved populations. Regulations opening the market to the private sector for the delivery of education are in place and will be closely monitored. Efforts to develop a private market for textbooks and other school equipment are included in the ESD Programme along with steps to implement cost recovery measures in tertiary education.

The educational process

Pre-primary education

The main aim of pre-primary education is the all-round development of children in order to prepare them for formal schooling. The duration of the programme is two years and the target group is children aged 4-6.

The programme is centred on the needs of children and its major components are shown in the table below:

Activity	Number of weekly periods	
	1st year	2nd year
Games	10	6
Languages	3	4
Community/surrounding education	2	2
Mathematics (Arithmetic)	2	2
Music	2	2
Physical education	2	2
Arts and crafts	2	3
Special education for children with problems of sight, hearing, mental growth	2	2
Total weekly periods	23-25	21-23

(Each period lasts twenty-five minutes in the first year and thirty minutes in the second year).

Pre-primary education is a full-day programme, lasting from 8:00 to 16:25.

The demand for pre-school programmes is increasing. In 2001/02, 118,986 children were enrolled in 1,189 kindergartens with 3,676 teachers (of whom 1,192 untrained). Still, the coverage is quite limited and mainly concentrated in five regions. The gross enrolment rate was estimated at 2.1%. According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, in 2005 there were 153,280 children enrolled at the pre-primary level and the total number of teachers was estimated at 4,795 (of whom 74% trained).

The private sector, NGOs and the community usually invest in the development of pre-school programmes and facilities. The parents support their children through the payment of tuition fees and provision of educational materials. The government plays a crucial role in policy development and standard setting. The Ministry of Education develops the curriculum, provides supervision, sets standards for facilities, and issues licences for the institutions. (Ministry of Education, September 2002).

Primary education

The goal of primary education is to offer basic and general primary education to pupils in order to prepare them for further general education and training.

Attempts to reform the curriculum in primary grades, in accordance with the goals of the Education and Training Policy, began before the advent of the ESDP I and continued during its implementation. The emphasis of the curriculum reform was to design and develop learning materials that shall improve the problem-solving capacity of the pupils and to make them more productive members of the community who respect human rights and democratic values. The Institute for Curriculum Development and Research (ICDR) plays a central role in the implementation of the reform, and some regions have established curriculum development departments in order to improve the quality of primary education. (See also: Palme et al., 1996).

In the design of the new curricula two cardinal principles have been determined to guide the development of the contents for each of the core subjects. These are: (i) to connect theoretical knowledge with practical real life situation; and (ii) to use the problem-solving approach.

The modalities and approach regarding the teaching of the languages is not different from the current and widely used language teaching approaches elsewhere. It follows "the communicative language teaching" approach with the learner at the center. With this approach, the learners will create an atmosphere of real-life situations and form social interaction in the classroom, so as to solve their problems through communication. Social science (which includes history, geography and civic education) is essentially a broad-based interdisciplinary subject drawing its contents from the varieties of disciplines under social sciences, so that it really takes the applied science dimension.

Basic social studies skills are the predominant contents in the lower primary cycle. Similarly, awareness of cultural heritages, development of the sense of equality, cooperation and tolerance, fostering love on one's people and patriotism, familiarizing students with the values, culture and mechanisms of democratic governance and forming basic moral and ethical uprightness, are the major contents for the upper primary cycle. The emphasis of history at general secondary level is upon the provision of basic historical knowledge and aquatinting the learner with major methodologies, i.e. the scientific research methods that help learners arrive at truth and sound generalizations. Similarly, geography concentrates on imparting basic knowledge of skills for analyzing spatial distribution and interaction among elements of the environment at community, regional state and federal levels. In other words, the contents are closely related to the major activities of mankind and to contemporary problem related to socio-economic development.

It should be noted that a series of consultations at regional and central levels with all stakeholders such as professional associations, academic societies, trade unions, parent committees, individuals have been undertaken in the process of designing and implementing the new curricula. These consultations led to the first and most important step in the process, i.e. the identification of and agreement upon the core subjects.

The next step was to draft national syllabi that served as prototype for developing textbooks by commissioned textbook writers closely monitored by curriculum experts at the ICDR and their counterparts at Regional Education Bureaus. The strategy was to have wide perspective in textbook writing and at the same time to ensure adaptation of central syllabi to the specific socio-cultural environment of the learner. There has also been a system of on-the-spot evaluation that involved the teachers and pupils comments as the tryout progressed. Supervisors have also been given the task of making classroom observations, collecting the opinion of teachers and pupils to regularly provide up-to-date information on the tryout. These have been used to make quick adjustment to the materials and later complemented the structured formative evaluation carried out by professionals. The other was the summative evaluation recently carried out to assess the outcome in terms of the profile expected at the end of the educational levels. This evaluation has begun with the primary education and has encompassed all the factors pertaining to the success and constraints of the curricula. (Ethiopian National Agency for UNESCO, 2001).

The number of subject to be taught has been reduced to four core subjects in Grades I-IV, and six (on the average) in Grades V-VIII. Curriculum integration has been pursued for the first cycle of primary education. Efforts were also made to improve the layout and approach of the textbooks. The table below shows the weekly lesson timetable according to the new structure of primary education (eight-year programme divided into two four-year cycles):

Primary education: weekly lesson timetable

Area/subject	Number of weekly periods in each grade							
	Basic education				General education			
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
<u>Language:</u>								
Mother tongue	5	5	4	4	3	3	3	3
English	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	6
National language (Amharic)	—	—	6	6	4	4	5	5
<u>Mathematics</u>	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
 <u>Environmental science:</u>								
Environmental science	9	9	9	9				
 <u>Natural science:</u>								
Integrated natural science	—	—	—	—	5	5	—	—
Physics	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	3
Chemistry	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	3
Biology	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	3
 <u>Social science:</u>								
Social studies	—	—	—	—	4	4	4	4
 <u>Aesthetic education:</u>								
Physical education	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3
Music	2	2	2	2	3	3	—	—
Arts	2	2	2	2	3	3	—	—
Total weekly periods	30	30	35	35	35	35	35	35

Source: Ethiopian National Agency for UNESCO, 2001.

Note: Each teaching period lasts 45 minutes. In Grades I-IV, environmental science includes: natural science, social science, home economics, agriculture and handicrafts. In Grades V and VI, integrated natural science includes: biology, chemistry, physics, home economics, agriculture and handicrafts. Social studies include history, geography and civic education.

Continuous assessment in academic and practical subjects, including aptitude tests is conducted to ascertain the formation profile of pupils. A national examination is administered at the end of Grade VIII. Upon passing the national examination, students are awarded a certificate. In order to be promoted from one level to the next students are required to have a minimum of 50% achievement. It is the school that certifies pupils who complete the prescribed courses according to the set standards of the curriculum guide. In 1995/96, the Grade VIII examination pass rate was 61.7%. (Ministry of Education, September 2002).

Overall drop-out rate (Grades I-VIII) increased from 15.7% in 1996/97 to 17.8% in 1999/2000, while Grade I drop-out rate decreased from 29.4% to 27.9%. Grade I repetition rate has fluctuated between a low of 9.7% in 1998/99 to 17.3% in



1997/98, and stood at 10.6% in 1999/2000. Overall repetition rate (Grades I-VIII) has shown a declining trend, from 11% in 1996/97 to 9.1%. This trend is more evident in Grade I (from 16.7% in 1996/97 to 10.6% in 2000/01).

As mentioned, primary level enrolment which stood at 4.4 million pupils in 1996/97 reached 7,401,473 pupils in 2000/01. During the same four-year period, the gross enrolment rate (GER) for the first cycle of primary education (Grades I-IV) increased from 54.8% to 83%, while for the second cycle (Grades V-VIII) it increased from 17.9% to 30.8%. Both pupil-teacher and pupil-section ratios in Grades I-VIII have increased during the period under review. The pupil-teacher ratio increased from 42:1 to 60:1, while the pupil-section ratio increased from 52 to 70. This has been mainly due to: (i) the rapid expansion of the coverage; (ii) the pace in construction of primary schools, slower than anticipated; and (iii) the lack of sufficient capacity of teacher-training institutions to train the required number of qualified teachers. (Ministry of Education, June 2002).

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, in 2005 there were 8,019,287 pupils enrolled at the primary level; the GER was 93% and the NER was estimated at 56%. The total number of teachers was 110,945 (of whom 97% trained) and the average teacher/pupil ratio was 1:72.

Secondary education

According to the new structure of the education system, secondary education lasts four years, divided into two two-year cycles. The first cycle of general secondary education (Grades IX and X) shall enable students to identify their interests for further education, for specific training and for the world of work. General education is completed at the end of the first cycle (Grade X). The second cycle of secondary education and training shall enable students to choose subjects or areas of training which will prepare them adequately for higher education and for the world of work. The table below shows the weekly lesson timetable of the first cycle of secondary education:

First cycle of general secondary education: weekly lesson timetable

Area/subject	No. of weekly periods in each grade	
	Grade IX	Grade X
<u>Language:</u>		
English language	6	6
National language (Amharic)	3	3
Mathematics	6	6
<u>Natural science:</u>		
Physics	4	4
Chemistry	4	4
Biology	4	4
<u>Social science:</u>		
Civic education	2	2
Geography	2	2
History	2	2
<u>Physical education</u>	2	2
Total weekly periods	35	35

Source: Ethiopian National Agency for UNESCO, 2001. Each teaching period lasts 45 minutes.

The table below shows the subjects offered in the second cycle of secondary education (Grades XI and XII):

Subjects offered in the second cycle of secondary education

	Areas or fields of specialization	Special courses	Common subjects	Elective subjects
1	Natural science	- Physics	- English	- National language
		- Chemistry	- Economics	- Foreign language
		- Biology	- Physical education	
			- Mathematics	
2	Social science	- History	- English	- National language
		- Geography	- Mathematics	- Science course
		- Civics	- Physical education	- Foreign language

The low quality of secondary education determines high drop-out and repetition rates. Repetition rates, for example, averaged 16% in 1994. Repetition is higher for girls than boys: the repetition rate for girls in 1994 was 20%, while that for boys was 11%. At the national level, only 33.7% of the secondary school teachers were qualified for the level in 2001/02 (the minimum qualification is at least a first degree). In the same year, 68.5% of secondary schools have reported to use shift

systems. The student-section ratio (Grades IX-XII) was 80:1, and the student-teacher ratio was 49:1. (Ministry of Education, September 2002).

As mentioned, in 2001 there were 13 government-run and ten private Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) schools enrolling a total of 4,561 students. In addition, there were twenty-five newly established skills development centres functioning in four regions with a total enrolment of 8,516 trainees. Currently, both public and private agencies offer short- and long-term training courses, using both formal and non-formal approaches. In recent years, the government undertook an extensive effort aimed at restructuring the TVET sub-sector. Curricula for twenty-four training areas have been developed in modular form for the 10+1 and 10+2 levels. Still several major issues need to be addressed, including: the poor quality of training, the development of standards for TVET facilities, the system for certification and accreditation of institutions, the assessment of additional trades to be included in the curriculum, and the evaluation of existing training programmes. In 2001-2002, a total of 54,026 trainees took part in the newly designed TVET programme (10+1 and 10+2 level in 24 non-agricultural fields) at 123 public and 19 non-public training centers.

In the past, national examinations were administered at the end of each level. The national examination administered at the end of Grade VI is discontinued since 1995. National examinations are administered at the end of Grades VIII, X and XII. The Ministry of Education has recently established the National Organization for Examinations (NOE) with the responsibility of management of examinations at all levels.

Assessing learning achievement nationwide

To date, no national programmes for assessing and monitoring pupils' and students' learning achievement are reported. The NOE is expected to conduct a sample baseline survey regarding learning achievement in Grade IV.

Higher education

The higher education system is expected to respond to the demands of the public and private sectors. To this effect, the Government has given due consideration to promoting, expanding, reorganizing and strengthening the higher education sub-sector. As compared to other Sub-Saharan countries, enrolment rates in Ethiopia are very low. According to the Education Sector Strategy of the Government, the objective of higher education is "to promote a higher education of good quality and relevance, focusing on research and development."

As mentioned, higher education institutions include eight universities, thirteen colleges (including teacher-training colleges), three institutes (polytechnic, mass media and water technology), and a number of private institutions (mainly colleges). Diploma programmes generally last two to three years. First degree courses leading to a bachelor's degree take four to five years (six years in the case of medicine and veterinary). Post-graduate courses require one to three years of study. All higher education institutions except one are under the supervision of the Ministry of

Education. In its internal management each institution is autonomous and has a board of governors.

The sector witnessed rapid expansion in recent years. Four new universities have been established through amalgamating and elevating the status of existing colleges and institutions. Five new private higher education establishments were accredited up to 2000/01. As a result, the total enrolment increased from 42,132 students in 1996/97 to 87,431 students in 2000/01. Institutions in the private sector enrolled a total of 15,201 students, or 17.2% of the total enrolment. The majority of the students are enrolled in diploma programmes. Enrolment in post-graduate programmes accounts only for about 1%.

Draft guidelines are issued for the standards of higher education institutions. The standards are set for physical facilities, educational materials, courses of study, teachers, practical training, and student-teacher ratio. Each institution has established committees to assess the current situation of the establishment. There is a coordinating body of these committees at the national level.

The Ethiopian education policy requires higher education at diploma, degree and graduate level to be practice oriented, enabling students to become problem-solving professional leaders in their fields of study and in overall societal needs. The higher education reform anticipates the establishment of a Quality and Relevance Assurance Agency in accordance with the higher education Proclamation in order to develop standards and evaluate institutions to maintain quality and relevance. The reform has also stipulated a “block grant” budgeting system for higher education institutions. On the other hand, building capacity of leaders and managers through training and experience sharing, decentralization, and autonomy of decision making (mainly administrative and financial) have become strategic issues of the reform.

Special education

The ultimate objective of special education is to enhance equal human rights and specifically the right to education of all children regardless of their individual characteristics. Thus, access to education has to be improved as well as the quality and relevance of educational services, so that every child can learn in accordance with his/her full potential. The objectives of the special education programme are to:

- strengthen the existing special education services, both in scope and quality;
- develop, adapt and adopt new and improved models of integration to provide special education services with the aim of facilitating inclusion of different children with special needs into mainstream education;
- link special education support to the education sector development programme by responding to the needs of the regions.

The development strategy to gain these objectives has two dimensions. These are: strengthening both the regional programmes and the central level, mainly because concrete activities will be carried out by the regions with the technical assistance

provided from the central body. The need for technical assistance from the central level is heightened by the fact that some regions are clearly more disadvantaged than others and also new models for special needs education need to be developed.

The concrete needs of each region are specially outlined in the education sector development programme plans. In addition to this, some technical assistance is obviously needed in developing new models.

At the central level, the main focus will be in strengthening the various responsible departments involved in special needs education and in improving co-operation and co-ordination within and between themselves. The departments directly involved are: the Department of Teachers and Educational Management Staff Development; the Department of Educational Programmes Supervision, including the panel for non-formal education; and the Institute for Curriculum Development and Research.

The Addis Ababa University (AAU), as already planned, will be responsible for training of experts at Diploma, B.A., and M.A. levels in responding to the manpower needs of the regions. Teacher-training institutes and colleges, with technical assistance of the Ministry, will establish special education units/departments and develop courses for both in-service and pre-service teacher training programmes.

Special schools are run by the government and religious organizations. There are no special schools in the following regions: Afar, Ethio-Somali, Benshangul-Gumuz, Gambella and Dire Dawa.

In 1996/97 there were twenty-two schools for the blind (1,020 pupils enrolled with ninety teachers), twenty-eight schools for the deaf (1,274 pupils enrolled with 136 teachers) and nineteen schools for the mentally retarded (411 pupils enrolled with fifty-seven teachers).

Private education

Private education is referred to education provided by organizations outside the government agencies: non-government organizations (NGOs) and private organizations. NGOs include all non-profit organizations, such as the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (EOC), various missionary organizations, Islamic organizations, secular welfare organizations of various types, and community organizations. Private organizations are established as a business venture. The general guidelines for the operation of private schools are provided by the Ministry of Education and regional governments.

The table below shows the types of private schools according to the provider in 1996/97:

Types of private schools, teaching staff and enrolment (1996/97)

Provider	Kindergarten		Primary		Junior secondary		Senior secondary	
	Pupils	Teachers	Pupils	Teachers	Pupils	Teachers	Pupils	Teachers
EOC	609	12	2,590	59	-	-	-	-
Moslem	84	6	938	65	327	-	-	-
Mission	13,446	408	52,721	1,108	6,974	115	3,135	138
Community	45,959	1,069	35,797	1,008	1,794	4	-	-
Private	5,803	251	-	-	232	2	-	-
Foreign								
Community	975	59	419	4	-	-	-	-
Others	2,123	62	935	62	-	-	-	-

With the exception of foreign community schools, all schools follow the curricula established by the Ministry of Education for post-primary schools and by Regional Education Bureaus for primary schools. For pre-school education the MOE provides the general curricula guidelines.

The change from centralized economy of the previous regime to a market economy has opened the way for greater participation of the private sector. Many individuals and organizations have applied to open private schools including higher education institutions. After the Proclamation that encourages the private sector, the number of private institutions expanded. Thus, in 2000/01 there were about 964 kindergartens (109,358 children enrolled), 558 primary schools (338,158 pupils enrolled), and 46 secondary schools (13,748 students enrolled) in the private sector. (Ministry of Education, June 2002).

Means of instruction, equipment and infrastructure

There is a lack of instructional materials at all educational levels. Instructional materials such as maps, mathematical instruments and science teaching kits are non-existent in almost all primary schools in the country. The situation in secondary schools is similar, although some of the schools constructed with loans from the World Bank have laboratory equipment and chemicals for science teaching at the initial stage of their operation. Since there is no replacement scheme concerning consumable materials, most of the schools would be short of everything very soon.

The focus of provision of instructional materials to schools is mainly on textbooks. As mentioned, since the beginning of ESDP I significant improvement in access to textbooks by pupils has been achieved. In 1995/96, there were close to 2.3 million core primary education textbooks in circulation. This increased to over 20 million textbooks in 2000/01. However, the pupil-textbook ratio for the different regions range from 1:1 to 1:3, bringing down the national average to a ratio of about 2.5:1, which used to be 5:1 in many cases. Alternative modes for publishing the textbooks

have been used, and measures to improve the skills and competence of textbook writers have been adopted.

Textbooks for technical schools, colleges and universities are mainly imported although not in adequate quantity to meet the demand. Books are imported in small quantity due to resource constraints. Such institutions rely more on handouts prepared by lecturers than on textbooks.

In 2001/02, about 42% of primary and 68% of secondary schools have reported to use shifts systems. Some 46% of all schools have reported to have water facilities and about 74% of all schools reported to have latrines. It should be noted that significant numbers of schools did not present a report on their facilities. (Ministry of Education, September 2002).

Information Communication Technology (ICT) is introduced in the education system to strengthen the expansion of quality education. The introduction of ICT is done phase by phase starting at the secondary level followed by the primary and then ultimately at all levels. At present (2004) for the secondary level (grades 9-12) multi-faceted programmes and major preparations have been underway to reach the goal of improving the quality of education. The main activities that are accomplished in the ICT project include: production of educational TV programs; installation of satellite receiving devices known as plasma display panels (PDPs) in every classroom at secondary level; establishing a computer network system, and install generators in schools which have no electricity; installation of satellite TV programs transmission system at the center Education Media Agency (EMA); and organizing adequate trainings to teachers, media heads and school directors so as to enhance the practical and effective utilization of the programme. A total of 2,978 television programmes are ready for use. About 458 secondary grades 9-12 will be beneficiaries of the first phase of the ICT project.

Adult and non-formal education

The Education and Training Policy of 1994 called for the provision of non-formal education beginning with and parallel to basic education and at all levels of formal education.

Non-formal education and training programmes are organized by the various development and social institutions in co-ordination with the Ministry of Education. Other ministries (Agriculture, Health, and Community Development) and many governmental organizations have their own departments of education and training for non-formal education programmes. There are also various NGOs and religious organizations that run non-formal adult education programmes.

Non-formal adult education programmes within the education sector are planned and administered by the Regional Education Bureaus. Programmes of adult and non-formal education conducted in some of the regions include: literacy, income generating projects like hollow-block making, carpet making, embroidery, masonry, pottery, smithing, tailoring, weaving and woodwork. Evening classes in primary and

secondary schools and higher education institutions are conducted mainly in urban centres.

Children who do not attend formal school have the possibility to attend traditional education offered by religious organizations and some attempt is being made by some NGOs to bring children together and provide the rudiments of literacy and numeracy.

The basic education programme lasts three years and is equivalent to formal basic education (Grades I-IV). It caters to out-of-school children as well as youth and adults. In 2000/01, the total enrolment of out-of-school children (age group 7-14) amounted to 320,581 children, while the number of youth and adult participants was 1,049,061. The programme is mainly focused on literacy, numeracy and environmental science to enable learners to develop problem-solving abilities and change their mode of life. Skill training centres at the community level train adults in diversified need-based skills. (Ministry of Education, September 2002).

The estimated illiteracy rate was 68% according to the 1994/95 census.

Teaching staff

Efforts to expand access to, and improve the quality of, education require attention to teacher training. Throughout the education system, over 130,000 teachers are employed, the vast majority in primary education. Teacher training takes place in twelve teacher-training institutes (TTIs), five teacher-training colleges (TTCs) and the faculties of education at the Addis Ababa and the Alemaya universities. The Ministry of Education requires teachers for the first cycle of primary education (Grades I-IV) to complete twelve years of schooling plus one year of training at TTIs. A diploma awarded by TTCs is required to teach in the second cycle of primary education, while the minimum qualification required to teach at the secondary level is at least a first degree.

TTIs enrolled a total of 6,224 trainees in 2000/01, of whom 5,772 graduated. In the same year, there were 77,551 teachers in the first cycle of primary education, of whom 38.6% were women. Some 91% of the women teachers were TTI graduates. Another 4,992 teachers were trained in special areas such as music and agriculture, or had higher level of training than TTI. Thus, 96.6% of teachers in the first cycle of primary education were qualified to teach at that level.

In 2000/01, TTCs produced 1,368 diploma graduates through their regular programmes. Women graduates represented 21% of the total. In addition, some 21,400 TTI graduates are enrolled in distance education programmes to upgrade their qualifications to the diploma level. In the same year, there were 43,526 teachers in the second cycle of primary education, of whom 15.5% were women. Of the total, 9,208 teachers (or 21.1%) were diploma holders. Overall, about 24% of teachers in Grades V-VIII held diploma or had higher level of training and therefore were qualified to teach at that level.

In 2000/01, out of the total number of secondary school teachers (14,029), about 5,127 teachers or 36.5% had a first degree or above. The shortage of qualified teachers is even more acute in some of the regions. Currently, about 5,700 diploma holders are enrolled in under-graduate degree summer programme to upgrade their qualifications.

In 2002/03 it is estimated that 97.1% of the first cycle primary school teachers are certified, while in the second cycle (grades 5-8) only 30.9% are certified. About 21,400 primary school teachers are enrolled in the diploma programme through distance education to upgrade their level of qualification (from certificate to diploma level). These teachers are expected to improve the situation in the second cycle. By the same way, only 39% of the teachers who have been serving in secondary schools are qualified. To improve this situation, a total of 5,716 teachers who have diploma and teach in secondary schools, are enrolled in summer undergraduate degree programmes.

Teacher's standard workload is forty hours per week (thirty to forty hours at pre-school level) of which: 22.5 hours used for classroom teaching, 11.5 hours for lesson preparation and monitoring of students, three hours for co-curricular activities and three hours for miscellaneous school activities.

A systematic and continuous in-service teacher training is organized by the Ministry of Education, Regional Bureaus and training institutions. During summer holidays, long upgrading courses and short refresher in-service courses are conducted in TTIs, colleges, and centres at regional level. Additional programmes such as correspondence, self-study modules, and mobile in-service units are also available. In-service teacher training is compulsory.

Under the Teacher Education System Overhaul (TESO) programme new curriculum materials for TTIs, TTCs and the University Faculty of Education have been developed and put into practice. The materials emphasize active learning by way of modular approach. Together with this the development of the teaching skills of teacher trainers is also underway through a higher diploma programme which enables them to go along with the newly developed materials and approaches.

Educational research and information

The Education and Training Policy and Strategy of the Government clearly states the importance of educational research. One of the objectives stated in the policy is to ensure that education, training and research be appropriately integrated with development by focusing on research. One of the strategies to realize the objectives stated in the policy is to carry out research in the fields of curriculum development, instructional methods and evaluation techniques, strengthening the link between academic research and concrete needs.

Various government agencies/institutions and NGOs are engaged in researching educational issues. Government institutions like the Ministry of Education and the Universities and colleges are engaged in different aspects of educational

research. The Institute of Curriculum Development and Research (ICDR) is the major research department within the MOE.

The Institute of Educational Research is the major department within the Addis Ababa University engaged in research activities. Reliable information is not available with regard to the number of professionals and the amount of public and private funding for educational research.

Main fields of research include: basic education, educational policy and planning, educational management and financing, curriculum development, teacher training, communication technologies and distance education, technical and vocational education, science and mathematics teaching, language teaching, non-formal and adult education, community participation and organization, instructional methodology, women in development (gender issues), etc.

Annual statistical information published by the MOE is made available to the different departments and to others who request it. The distribution of the results of much research is limited and researchers themselves in most cases have a serious problem in getting information.

Information needed and used by the different actors varies greatly. The Ministry of Education uses it to support policy decisions, to improve efficiency and effectiveness of educational provision, to improve working conditions of teachers, etc. Donors use it to finance projects or to assess results or impact.

Information available at international level is very much needed, but access is limited due to financial and technological limitations.

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Institute of Educational Research: <http://www.aau.edu.et/research/ier/index.php> [In English. Last checked: October 2007.]

For updated links, consult the Web page of the International Bureau of Education of UNESCO: <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/links.htm>