



Working document in the series:  
*Trends in school supervision*

# Supervision and support services in Asia

## Vol. I: A comparative analysis

Gabriel Carron, Anton De Grauwe and  
Rangachar Govinda

A paper copy of this publication may be obtained on request from:

[information@iiep.unesco.org](mailto:information@iiep.unesco.org)

To consult the full catalogue of IIEP Publications and documents on our

Web site: <http://www.unesco.org/iiep>

Published by:

International Institute for Educational Planning/UNESCO

7 - 9 rue Eugène-Delacroix, 75116 Paris

© UNESCO 1998



**International Institute for Educational Planning**





**Trends in school supervision**

---

# **Supervision and support services in Asia**

Volume I

## **A comparative analysis**

**G. Carron, A. De Grauwe and R. Govinda**



International Institute for Educational Planning

The views and opinions expressed in this booklet are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of UNESCO or of the IIEP. The designations employed and the presentation of material throughout this review do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of UNESCO or IIEP concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning its frontiers or boundaries.

The publication costs of this study have been covered through a grant-in-aid offered by UNESCO and by voluntary contributions made by several Member States of UNESCO, the list of which will be found at the end of the volume.

Published by

International Institute for Educational Planning/UNESCO

7 - 9 rue Eugène-Delacroix, 75116 Paris, France

Printed in IIEP's printshop

ISBN 92-803-1172-7

© UNESCO October 1998

---

## CONTENTS

	Page
List of abbreviations	7
Presentation of the series	9
Introduction	13
1. Methodology	15
2. The state of social and educational development of the five countries	16
I. General overview of supervision and support structures	19
1. Historical background	19
2. The overall structure of supervision and support	22
3. Official functions of the supervisors	26
4. Classical supervision and support services within a broader perspective	29
(a) Relations with other pedagogical services	29
(b) Relationship with internal support and control structures which are school and/or community based	33
II. Management of supervision services: basic facts and critical issues	37
1. Some basic facts	37
(a) Numbers of supervisors, primary schools and teachers	37
(b) Profile of a school supervisor	40
2. Critical issues in the management of supervision services	42
(a) Recruitment	43

(b)	Training	47
(c)	Career development	50
(d)	Monitoring and evaluation	52
(e)	Professional organizations	56
(f)	Support	56
III.	The daily functioning of supervision and support services	59
1.	Working conditions	59
(a)	Offices, service staff and allowances	59
(b)	Budget and salaries	62
2.	The actual operation of supervisory and support services	63
(a)	Planning and distribution between staff	63
(b)	Workload and distribution between tasks	65
(c)	School visits	69
(d)	Reporting	74
(e)	Follow-up, including use of reports	77
IV.	Overall assessment	79
1.	Impact on school functioning and quality	79
2.	Synthesis of main problems	84
3.	Towards the future: trends and suggestions	90
	Bibliography	97

---

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABSA	Assistant Basic Shiksha Adhikari (Assistant Basic Education Officer)
ANTRIEP	Asian Network of Training and Research Institutions in Educational Planning
ATEO	Assistant Thana Education Officer
B.Ed.	Bachelor in Education
BMDC	Bangladesh Management Development Corporation
BPEP	Basic and Primary Education Project
DEO	District Education Officer
ERD	Education for Rural Development
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
GNP	Gross National Product
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
KEDI	Korean Educational Development Institute
NAPE	National Academy for Primary Education
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SLEAS	Sri Lanka Education Administrative Service
SMC	School Management Committee
TEO	Thana Education Officer





---

## PRESENTATION OF THE SERIES

This publication forms part of a series on 'Trends in school supervision', which accompanies the implementation of an IIEP project on 'Improving teacher supervision and support services for basic education'.<sup>1</sup> The project, which began in 1996, is one of the main research components of the Institute's Medium Term Plan 1996-2001. The Institute wishes to express its sincere thanks to BMZ (the German Federal Ministry for Technical Co-operation) and to UNICEF for their support in the implementation of this project.

Earlier research, at the Institute and elsewhere, has pointed to the need, in an era of increased decentralization and school autonomy, to strengthen the skills of personnel involved in supervision and support at local level and in schools.

Two related points are worth mentioning here, as they form both the background to and the rationale for the IIEP's concern with this area of management. Firstly, professional supervision and support services for teachers, although existing in almost every country for a long time, have been ignored, increasingly so since resources have become more scarce. This neglect has, until recent times, been reflected by a similar indifference among researchers. Secondly, one important reason why the quality of basic education has deteriorated in many contexts is precisely related to the weakening of these services.

---

<sup>1</sup> Other titles in the series include:

Ali, M.A. 1998. Supervision for teacher development: a proposal for Pakistan.  
Carron, G. and De Grauwe, A. 1997. Current issues in supervision: a literature review.  
Fergusson, V. 1998. Supervision for the self-managing school: the New Zealand experience.  
Khaniya, T.R. 1997. Teacher support through resource centres: the Nepalese case.  
Perera, W.J. 1997. Changing schools from within: a management intervention for improving school functioning in Sri Lanka.

All titles are published by UNESCO/International Institute for Educational Planning, in Paris.

The IIEP project, developed against this background, consists of research, training and dissemination activities. Its specific objectives are to assist countries in diagnosing and reforming the existing services of supervision and support, and to identify promising strategies for their reorganization and strengthening. The series of publications, of which this monograph forms a part, is the result of research, implemented in several regions, to address a number of questions, such as:

- How is supervision and support organized in different countries? What have been the major trends in their recent evolution?
- What are the principal problems which supervision and support services are presently facing in terms of: organizational structures; overall management; and daily functioning?
- To what extent and under what conditions do these services have a positive impact on the quality of the teaching-learning processes in schools?
- What are the major innovations taking place, mainly in respect of the devolution of supervision and support to the school-site level? How do these innovations operate? What are the main results?

In order to formulate answers to these questions, the project elaborated the following operational definition of school supervision and support services: all those services whose main function is to control and evaluate, and/or advise and support schoolheads and teachers. The focus of the project is on external supervision and support, that is to say on the work of inspectors, supervisors, advisers, counsellors, etc. located outside the school, at local, regional or central levels. A common characteristic of these officers is that regular visits to schools are an essential part of their mandate.

However, many countries, in their attempts to reform and innovate supervision, are increasingly relying on in-school or community-based strategies (such as resource centres, school clusters, in-school supervision by the principal or by peers, school-based management) to complement, if not to replace, external supervision and support. The project therefore also pays attention to a number of such innovations and, in more general terms, the strengths and weaknesses of strategies aiming at the reinforcement of internal quality-control mechanisms.

This series 'Trends in school supervision' thus consists of a variety of titles: national diagnoses on supervision and support, comparative analyses of the situation by region, case studies on innovative experiences, and monographs and discussion papers on specific management issues. It is hoped that this series will fill a gap in educational research as well as be an inspiration, in particular, to policy-makers intending to reform supervision and to supervisors who want to improve on their practice.



---

## INTRODUCTION

There is a growing consciousness, confirmed by the results of recent research undertaken by the IIEP and others<sup>2</sup>, that improving the quality of education is not simply a question of injecting more resources into the system, but that the management of these resources at school-level is fundamental. In this regard, interactions between in-school actors and relationships with their immediate ‘supervisors’ (school inspectors, pedagogical advisers, etc.) are decisive factors. As shown by various studies, one important determinant of the deterioration of the functioning of primary schools precisely relates to the weakening of the professional supervision and support structures for teachers.

This attention to school and teacher supervision and support finds an additional justification in the present trend towards increased school autonomy. The ability of schools to use this freedom effectively will depend to a large extent on the strength of the support services on which they can rely.

It is for these different reasons that the IIEP pays special attention, in its present medium-term plan (1996-2001), to *innovative ways of providing professional support for teachers, as part of its programme on promoting the quality of basic education*. In this respect, a six-year project *Improving teacher supervision and support services for basic education*, has been developed.

The core question underlying this project is how a coherent system of professional support with a direct impact on school and teacher

---

<sup>2</sup> See, among other studies, Carron and Ta Ngoc (1994); Dalin (1993); Heneveld and Craig (1996); Mortimore et al. (1988); OECD (1995).

performance can be developed and sustained. Inspection and supervision services are obviously an essential element of such a system. At the same time, a varied range of new mechanisms has been created that aims at reorganizing and strengthening teacher support and that takes into account the recent emphasis on the need to improve school-level management. These mechanisms therefore concentrate on the role of the headteacher and on decentralizing school monitoring structures.

On the whole, recent research on the situation of school supervision in developing countries is scant and the evidence is mainly anecdotal. Both the present state of traditional services and the spread and impact of innovations are poorly documented. It is precisely in order to collect more detailed information, indispensable to any programme to improve existing services, that the IIEP has included a strong research component in its project.

The first phase of the project was implemented in the Asian region. National diagnoses on supervision and support services were carried out in five Asian countries: Bangladesh, Nepal, the Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka and the State of Uttar Pradesh in India.<sup>3</sup> Research teams, which drew most of their members from national training and/or research institutions specialized in educational planning and management, were set up in each country and they followed guidelines prepared by the IIEP. Volume I analyzes the experiences of the five countries from a comparative perspective and on the basis of the national diagnoses presented in Volume II. Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations are taken from the national diagnoses, without reference to the specific page numbers.

---

<sup>3</sup> Hereafter the *Republic of South Korea* is referred to as *Korea* and the *State of Uttar Pradesh* as *Uttar Pradesh*. Although Uttar Pradesh is not a country, the text refers to *the five countries* rather than *four countries and one State*.

## 1. Methodology

Each team relied on two main sets of information to develop their national diagnosis. On one hand, relevant official and unofficial publications, documents and statistics were extensively reviewed. On the other hand, detailed studies were undertaken in localities that reflect the diversity of the countries. The studies also included interviews with a selected group of actors interested in supervision: supervisors themselves and, in most cases, teachers and school heads (see *Table 1*).

When studying supervision, the research teams were asked to concentrate on external supervision services, i.e. all those services whose main function is to inspect, control, evaluate, and/or advise, assist and support school heads and teachers. The actors involved in

**Table 1. Personnel interviewed for national diagnosis**

	Supervision personnel	School staff	Locations
Bangladesh	65 ATEOs 2 TEOs	16 headteachers 50 assistant teachers	2 districts
Korea	34 supervisors	—	3 regions/cities
Nepal	10 supervisors several resource persons 3 DEOs	Several headteachers and teachers	3 districts
Sri Lanka	8 education officers 19 Master Teachers	70 principals 292 teachers	Different districts of one province
Uttar Pradesh	133 ABSAs/SDIs	119 headteachers	3 districts

these services were located outside the school at local, regional or central levels. A common characteristic of all these officers is that regular school visits are an essential part of their mandate. Research teams were asked to highlight and comment on the extent to which any significant trend towards school-site supervision (either in-school or community-based) was present.

The five national diagnoses have not all followed precisely the same outline or used exactly the same methodology. The Nepalese paper for instance relied, more than the others, on the observations made and the interviews held during field visits to three districts. However, it has less statistical data on supervisors' profiles and distribution. In Korea, the national team, which was based at the Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI), could rely on recent research reports written by the same Institute, which contained, for instance, the results of a survey of a representative sample of supervisors and teachers.

## **2. The state of social and educational development of the five countries**

*Tables 2 and 3* give some indicators on the social and educational development of the countries represented.<sup>4</sup> As only partial data were available on Uttar Pradesh, data are also given for India as a whole. The countries are manifestly very different in size, both from a geographical and a demographic perspective. It is possible, without going into too many details and disregarding the internal disparities that such country averages conceal, to divide these countries into three development situations.

---

<sup>4</sup> To allow for an easy comparison, data for *Tables 2 and 3* were drawn from international sources rather than national documents. Where data were lacking in these international documents, various national documents were consulted. All the data on Uttar Pradesh were also taken from national documents (see the national diagnosis for sources).



The first group consists of those countries with a low GNP/capita, a high infant mortality rate and a largely rural population. Bangladesh, Nepal and Uttar Pradesh, on the whole somewhat less developed than the average Indian State, all fall into this category. These countries face similar challenges in terms of educational development: high illiteracy, wide gender disparities, high pupil/teacher ratios and a serious drop-out problem. Sri Lanka stands somewhat on its own although, from some points of view, it is not very different from the other countries, i.e. its GNP/capita is not much higher and it is still a predominantly rural economy and population. However, its record in terms of social and educational development is much more positive. Finally, Korea has successfully completed its social, economic and educational transformation from a developing to a developed economy, as proven by its recent admission to the OECD.

**Table 2. Selected indicators on social development**  
(latest year available)

	Total population (in millions)	% urban population	Population growth rate (1990-1995)	GNP/Capita US\$	Infant mortality rate
Bangladesh	119.8	18	1.6	240	79
India	929.4	27	1.8	340	68
Uttar Pradesh	140	20	2.3		82
Nepal	21.5	14	2.5	200	91
Korea	44.9	81	0.9	9 700	10
Sri Lanka	18.1	22	1.3	700	16

*Source:* World Bank, 1997.

**Table 3. Selected indicators on literacy and primary education** (latest year available)

	Illiteracy rate		GER		Pupil/teacher ratio	Survival rate to 5th year
	M	F	M	F		
Bangladesh	51	74	84	73	63	-
India	35	62	110	90	63	62
Uttar Pradesh	44	75	88	55	56	66
Nepal	59	86	129	89	39	52
Korea	1	3	100	101	32	100
Sri Lanka	7	13	114	112	28	98

*Source:* UNESCO,1998.

---

# **I. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT STRUCTURES**

## **1. Historical background**

The establishment of a formal education system was accompanied in all five countries by the appointment of officers with a responsibility for supervising schools. In Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka, the first inspectors were introduced as early as the 1850s and 1860s by the then British authorities following the example of England's Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI). The Korean supervision system evolved with the development of the formal education system in 1945 and with liberation at the end of the Second World War. In Nepal, the beginning of formal public education can be traced back to 1951. A school inspectorate existed before that date but its task was mainly to survey school activities to avoid any political problems for the ruling regime. It was only after 1951 that a well-structured system of inspection was developed.

The history of supervision therefore varies from country to country and each case is characterized by a number of changes, some purely cosmetic, others mainly attitudinal and others more profoundly structural.

In general, the term 'inspector' has tended to be rejected in view of its pejorative connotations. Sri Lanka inspectors were renamed 'education officers' in the 1970s. The same title is employed in Bangladesh and Uttar Pradesh, while 'supervisors' is used in Nepal and Korea.

In most cases, these cosmetic changes in terminology have aimed at a more fundamental reform, namely one in attitudes. In all

countries, there have been demands, by education authorities, for supervision staff to become more development oriented and less control focused. This is not just a recent phenomenon. In Sri Lanka, a guideline dating back to 1956 called for inspectors to be “first a guide and counsellor, second an examiner and third an assessor and reporter”. In both Korea and Nepal, the transformation of supervisors into agents of change was promoted as an objective within the context of increasing democracy in society. It is worth noting that such re-orientations of job descriptions have not automatically led to changes in the way supervisors actually undertake their tasks. As will be noted, one of the recurring complaints by teachers everywhere is that supervision still places too much emphasis on control. The lack of actual change is not surprising, as attitudes do not so much depend on policy declarations, but on a number of objective constraints that have undergone little improvement in recent years.

The most crucial changes that have taken place are structural. They are the result of a number of trends, including the expansion in the numbers of schools and teachers, a general policy of decentralization, and, more specifically, the perceived need to decrease the distance between schools and supervisors. Supervision systems have therefore become more elaborate through a vertical and/or a horizontal expansion. Examples of the latter can be found, among others, in Nepal in the 1960s when the number of zones changed from 7 to 14, and in Bangladesh in 1986 when the four deputy directors’ offices were turned into eight regional offices. Vertical expansion, which consists of adding an additional level to the existing ones, is arguably more significant. In 1960s Sri Lanka, districts were subdivided into circuits, then into school clusters that have now been replaced by zones and divisions. Similar clusters have existed in Bangladesh and Nepal since the 1980s.

There has also been an increase in the scope and duties of supervisory personnel. The result has been that, in several countries, separate categories of staff have been created to take care of the different levels or particular types of schools and teachers. This expansion in numbers and scope has turned, as we will see, supervision systems in all countries into fairly intricate structures.

Presently, at least three trends can be noted. There remains everywhere a commitment to strengthen decentralization, including the area of supervision tasks. This partly reflects the fact that previous attempts in this direction were not always successful. In Nepal for instance, the 1974 'Mid-term review of the National Education System Plan' recommended that districts be divided into various inspectorate units, a recommendation that was repeated by the 1991 National Education Commission and which is included in the 'eighth development plan' that is currently being implemented. Decentralization remains equally important in Sri Lanka where responsibility for school supervision is assigned, according to the latest education policy, to the divisional education office. In Korea, there is no longer any department at central level to undertake supervision, as this is no longer considered a task for this level.

A second noteworthy trend is the clearer distinction between control and support functions by entrusting these tasks to distinct types of personnel and/or services. The creation of a special category of 'Master Teachers' in Sri Lanka and 'Resource Centres' in Nepal is a good illustration of this, as is the recent creation of 'Block' and 'Panchayat Resource Centres' in Uttar Pradesh. Finally, there is also a tendency to give responsibility for internal supervision to the schools and, in particular, the headteachers. This is an explicit policy in Nepal, Korea and Sri Lanka (as will be analyzed in more detail in *section 4 (b)*).

## **2. The overall structure of supervision and support**

The structure of supervision and support services is relatively complex and intricate in all countries, although Bangladesh, Uttar Pradesh and especially Sri Lanka, are probably more complex than Nepal and Korea (see *Box 1* for more details on Korea and Sri Lanka). This is mainly because in the first three countries, officers at many different levels are involved in school supervision. In Sri Lanka, schools are supervised by officers at central, provincial, zonal and divisional levels and also by Master Teachers. The intensity of supervision differs somewhat from one level to another: some days are set aside per month for school visits at provincial as well as at zonal and divisional levels. In Bangladesh and Uttar Pradesh, regional, district and field-based (thana or block) staff have at least some supervision tasks.

In Korea, on the other hand, the only supervisors undertaking actual supervision of basic education establishments (elementary and middle schools) are all based at one level ('city' in the case of urban areas, or 'county' in the case of rural areas). The Metropolitan and Provincial Offices of Education, which constitute the urban and rural administrative layer directly above city and county level, are in charge of the supervision of high schools, but are not supposed to get directly involved in the supervision of elementary or middle schools. At the central level, the supervision department was abolished in 1995. Some supervisors still work at that level, but within other departments and without having to visit schools. They are mainly involved in elaborating general policies and plans involving, for example, supervision. In Nepal, supervisors work from district offices. Officers based above that level are not supposed to visit schools. However, even in these two countries, different actors within the same office are concerned with supervision: in Korea,

these are the School Supervisors and the Junior School Supervisors; in Nepal, the District Education Officers and the School Supervisors.

This complexity can be partly explained by the fact that different schools are supervised by different actors. This is most obvious in Sri Lanka, as the five distinct types of schools<sup>5</sup> are supervised by actors at different levels, at times in collaboration with each other. Master Teachers, although they have more of a support than a supervision role to play, should also be taken into consideration. In Uttar Pradesh and Bangladesh, primary and secondary schools come under the responsibility of different supervisors. In Bangladesh, the creation, in 1981, of separate directorates for the management and supervision of primary and secondary and higher education is believed to have strengthened the supervision structure of primary education. In Nepal, until a few years ago, supervision of primary and secondary schools was also the responsibility of different actors. However, following an evaluation in 1989, it was decided to combine these tasks and to assign supervision of both school levels to the same person. Some supervisors who feel inadequately equipped to offer subject-specific guidance at secondary level are now contesting this reform. This issue will become even harder to settle with the attempt to integrate the resource persons who are working in resource centres that are not yet part of the formal supervision system. In Uttar Pradesh, in addition to the distinction between primary and post-primary school supervision, there are specific officers to supervise urban and rural schools and special staff to visits girls' schools.

---

<sup>5</sup> These different schools are: type 1AB (schools with GCE A-level science classes), type 1C (schools with GCE A-level arts or commerce classes), type 2 (schools with classes from year 1 to 11), and type 3 (schools with classes from year 1 to 5 or to 8). To these must be added national schools, a selected number of type 1AB schools.



## Box 1. Structures of school supervision in Korea and Sri Lanka

To illustrate the diversity in the structures of supervision systems, the following are examples of the most and the least complex structures. Only those officers who have to officially visit schools for supervision and/or support purposes are included.

<b>Korea</b>		
<i>Level</i>	<i>Responsible officers</i>	<i>Schools to be supervised</i>
Central ministry	No supervision department	—
Metropolitan and provincial offices	(Junior) supervisors in secondary supervision section	High school
City and county offices	(Junior) supervisors in elementary and middle schools education division	Elementary and middle school
<b>Sri Lanka</b>		
<i>Level</i>	<i>Responsible officers</i>	<i>Schools to be supervised</i>
Central ministry	Education officers, primary/secondary education unit	Primary/secondary sections of national schools
Provincial	Education officers in the provincial department of education	National schools Type 1AB and 1C schools
Zonal	Education officers in the zonal education office	Type 1AB and 1C schools Type 2 and 3 schools
Divisional	Education officers in the divisional education office	Type 1AB and 1C schools
School clusters	Master Teachers	National schools Type 1AB and 1C schools Type 2 and 3 schools

*Note:* Until recently, district offices used to exist between the provincial and zonal levels, but these are now being phased out. In Sri Lanka, supervision is thus a major function at every level. Team supervisory visits are planned at all levels, always in collaboration with officers from the other levels. The officers, closest to schools, are expected to monitor school activities more frequently than others.



To add to this complexity, it is not always easy to distinguish supervisors from other officers, who have purely administrative tasks. In Sri Lanka, no such distinction exists: all supervisors are called education officers and all education officers are authorized and expected to undertake, be it to varying degrees, some supervision visits. In Korea, supervisors and researchers form part of one service and very few data are available on supervisors as a separate entity. In Nepal, the district education officer and the supervisors working within the district are all based in the district office and, partly as a result, their division of tasks is not crystal clear.

Notwithstanding this complicated and sometimes confusing picture, it is possible in several countries to identify the one or two actor(s), who is/are mainly, if not exclusively, in charge of supervision through regular visits to schools. In Korea, this is the ‘junior school supervisor’, while the ‘school supervisor’ reviews reports and manages the supervision tasks. In Nepal the ‘school supervisor’ is the real external supervision agent, while the ‘resource person’ is the core person in charge of giving external support. In Uttar Pradesh and Bangladesh, where, as was said, different levels have staff working in supervision, the ‘real’ supervisors are called ‘Assistant Basic Shiksha Adhikari<sup>6</sup>/Assistant Basic Education Officer’ (ABSA) and ‘Assistant Thana Education Officer’ (ATEO) respectively. The officers at higher levels generally have more of an administrative task and visit fewer, if any, schools. In Bangladesh, for instance, the ATEO is supposed to visit 15 to 20 schools per month, his immediate supervisor, the Thana Education Officer (TEO), 10 schools, and officers at more central levels, only between 2 and 6 schools. As explained above, the situation in Sri Lanka is somewhat more complex.

Finally, in at least two countries a special category of staff is responsible for offering support to teachers (as opposed to control

---

<sup>6</sup> Hindi for Assistant Basic Education Officer.

and supervision as such): the resource persons in Nepal and the Master Teachers in Sri Lanka. In the other countries, support seldom consists of visiting schools, but it is more a case of teachers going to 'support' centres, e.g. for in-service training, as is the case in the resource centres in Uttar Pradesh. Consequently, one of the recurring complaints is that the supervisors who are expected to give support rarely fulfil that role, for reasons referred to later on. However, the creation of a separate support actor does not guarantee that more support will be available to all teachers everywhere. The resource persons in Nepal, for example, experience similar problems to their supervision counterparts. It is arduous for them to visit the most remote schools because they are increasingly obliged by the education authorities to carry out administrative tasks that bear little relationship to teacher support. This seems to be less the case for the Master Teachers in Sri Lanka.

### **3. Official functions of the supervisors**

The following paragraphs will consider only the staff identified above as the main actors in charge of supervision.

Their core task is, not surprisingly, to visit the schools under their jurisdiction, for pedagogic and/or administrative purposes. Generally, the extent of this task is made clearer by specifying the number of schools to be inspected, the number of times each school should be inspected or the number of days to be used for supervision visits. In Bangladesh, for instance, an ATEO is requested to supervise 15 to 20 schools every month and to visit each school at least once a month. In Sri Lanka, officers at zonal level have to organize at least two team supervision visits per week to supervise 100 to 150 schools per year. The Divisional Education officers have a similar task. In Uttar Pradesh, the Deputy Basic Education officers, who are just above the ABSA in the hierarchy, are officially supposed to spend 150 days per year on

visiting schools. However, they can delegate this duty to the ABSAs. School visits consist of many different tasks: checking on records and buildings, classroom observation, and discussions with teachers and the community.

School visits should lead to reports and report writing is, therefore, a supervisor's second core task. Reports are generally produced in numerous copies: in Sri Lanka, three copies are prepared (for the school, the higher authority and one to be kept in the office undertaking the supervision). Regular report writing is a crucial criterion employed by supervisors' immediate superiors to judge their performance. However, the perverse effect of this is that it might incite supervisors to spend more time writing reports, to the detriment of the actual visits. It is therefore not very surprising that in Nepal one of the tasks of the District Education Officer (DEO), the immediate superior of the supervisor, is to "punish supervisors and other personnel who furnish false reports". This opens a wider issue that requires reflection: what is the best way to evaluate the work of supervisors? Can indicators, other than those referring to the number of visits and reports completed, be used that better reflect the impact of their interventions on schools and pupils? These questions will be returned to later.

The official job description of most supervisors also contains a number of support-related tasks, in particular through in-service training and demonstration lessons. In Bangladesh, ATEOs are demanded to "improve the professional ability of the teachers through demonstration lessons and sub-cluster training". In Korea, supervisors will be assessed, in part, on their "ability to give operative guidance to schools and school curriculums", but they do not seem to play a role in in-service training. In Nepal, supervisors have different teacher-support tasks to perform, but it is a regular complaint that they are seldom able to devote time to these duties.

This helps to explain the several initiatives to develop resource centres, manned by resource persons who are supposed to be support actors *par excellence*. In Sri Lanka, where similar support actors exist in the form of Master Teachers, other education officers seem to combine school supervision with in-service training and other support activities as their main tasks more successfully.

Several administrative tasks are added to these supervision and support tasks, including the collection of statistical data and information. In Bangladesh, this is an explicit responsibility of the TEO rather than the ATEO, but the former relies on the latter to carry out this task. Equally important is the control over or participation in the financial management of schools, which is an explicit responsibility of supervisors in Bangladesh, Korea, Nepal and Uttar Pradesh.

Supervision staff also have to play a role in teacher promotion and discipline, even if in practice their advice in this respect is often overruled for political and bureaucratic reasons. This disciplinary role is regularly perceived to have perverse effects. In Nepal, for instance, as supervisors “can transfer teachers from one school to another, they come as a threat to many teachers”. It is undoubtedly true that such an employer-employee relationship makes it difficult to turn supervisors into teachers’ guides and counsellors.

In all countries, the list of tasks still contains a number of other duties. In Nepal, for instance, a supervisor “checks whether School Management Committee (SMC) meetings are held regularly”. ABSAs in Uttar Pradesh are, in a similar vein, expected to promote community participation. In Sri Lanka, Uttar Pradesh, Nepal and Bangladesh, supervisors are also involved in the administration of examinations, while in Korea they undertake some research.

On the whole, and in all countries, supervision staff have many duties, a large number of which are administrative rather than pedagogical. In Uttar Pradesh, for example, ABSAs are expected to undertake 31 tasks – 15 administrative and 16 pedagogical (although some of these involve substantial administrative work). *Box 2* (on the following page) contains examples of some of these tasks taken from the official job description.

It can be seen that supervisors in all countries have to play different roles, some of which are difficult to combine. For example, there is an understandable tension between giving guidance and support to teachers and at the same time issuing control and discipline. The conflict between the core task of visiting schools and the less important, but equally urgent, duties such as administration and report writing, is also difficult to solve.

#### **4. Classical supervision and support services within a broader perspective**

##### **(a) Relations with other pedagogical services**

External supervision is only one component of a system aimed at improving pedagogical practices in the classroom. Among the other services, the following can be mentioned: teacher pre-service and in-service training, pedagogical research, curriculum centres and examination and evaluation units. One crucial issue concerns the relationship between supervision and these other services that all have one overarching aim – to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the classrooms. It is then somewhat disappointing, but not unexpected, that there are in general very few institutionalized relationships in the five cases studied.

**Box 2.      Job description of the Assistant Basic Shiksha  
Adhikari/Assistant Basic Education Officer  
(Uttar Pradesh)**

The official job description contains 31 items – 15 administrative and 16 pedagogical. The selection of responsibilities mentioned hereafter illustrates the wide diversity of tasks, their heavy administrative bias and the problematic distinction between pedagogic and administrative functions:

*Administrative*

- To submit proposals for disciplinary proceedings within the Block Panchayat area before the Zila Basic Shiksha Adhikari and, if any deductions are to be made from salaries etc., take final action after obtaining the permission of the Zila Basic Shiksha Adhikari.
- To send the records of life insurance of retired male/female teachers and other employees to Basic Shiksha Adhikari and Accounts Officers.
- To prepare the pay-slips of all male/female teachers and other employees of Parishad and send them to the Accounts Officers for disbursement, and ensure the disbursement of salaries in time and maintenance of their service books.
- To prepare the bills of pensions, family pension and relief pension of all retired male/female teachers, send them to the Accounts Officers and ensure their disbursement.

*Pedagogic*

- To inspect all the schools in the Kshetra Panchayat and keep the administrative and educational set-up intact. To send the inspection reports of the schools inspected by him/her, and subordinate inspectors, to the Zila Basic Shiksha Adhikari.
- To ensure the proper management of all the students' funds and check for possible misuse.
- To seek community participation for education and assist in making the village Education Committee effective.
- To collect all the educational statistics of the Block/Kshetra Panchayat and analyze the data.
- To create an efficient management system for the village education libraries and co-ordinate the Education Expansion Office and also the payment of remunerations.



Teacher training is the one where contacts are most prevalent. This, however, is much more the case for in-service than for pre-service training. In different countries, some education officers are in regular contact with teacher-training institutions, but this is not the case for acting supervisors. In Korea, in some cases, supervisors are appointed to manage teacher-training institutions but they then stop working as supervisors. In Sri Lanka, some supervisors are attached to colleges of education in order to closely guide and assess final-year students but they have no direct contact with the supervisors working in the field. In Bangladesh, some officers, not the ATEOs, maintain links with teacher-training institutions “to suggest measures for improvement of their academic and professional ability”. No structured relationships whatsoever seem to exist in Nepal and Uttar Pradesh.

Obviously, in in-service teacher training, supervision staff have a more active role to play, but this is only the case in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. In Bangladesh, the ATEOs devote a considerable amount of their time (13 per cent on average) to running and improving sub-cluster training. In Sri Lanka, a distinction has to be made between short-term and long-term in-service training. Supervisors are of little importance to the latter, as it is mainly the concern of training institutions. Where short-term programmes are concerned, they enter the picture, as one of their main responsibilities is precisely to organize such programmes, including for instance management training for headteachers of type 2 and 3 schools. The Sri Lanka report notes, in this regard, that “the greatest and most direct link between supervisors and improvement of pedagogy is seen in the short-term in-service programmes”. However, it also comments that the “lack of co-ordination between different implementing organizations leads to duplication in in-service training”.

In Korea, Nepal and Uttar Pradesh supervisors have no involvement in in-service teacher training and it does not appear in any of the job descriptions. In Korea, in-service training is in the hands of institutions with which supervisors have no regular, organized contact. In Nepal, the interviews with supervisors show that they do not consider in-service training to be an important part of their job, although giving informal advice to teachers during school visits is deemed essential. As a matter of fact, it is the officers in charge of resource centres who have the official responsibility for in-service training.

While supervisors in most countries are involved in the organization of examinations, they seem to have little relationship with the agencies in charge of setting these examinations and thus no influence on their content. Two exceptions can be noted. In Sri Lanka, Master Teachers do take part in the preparation of examination papers for the zonal-level tests. In Bangladesh, in some areas, the task of setting questions for half-yearly and yearly examinations in Grades III, IV and V has been taken over by the ATEOs from the teacher associations. They do not, however, take part in preparing the end-of-cycle Primary Scholarship Examination.

In addition, it is clear from the available evidence that supervisors have little impact on pedagogical research and on curriculum development.

On the whole therefore, supervision and support staff although, in principle, rich sources of information and support for other agencies involved in pedagogical improvement, are seldom used by these agencies and no institutional links between these different services with a common purpose seem to exist. It is quite appropriate that the 1991 National Education Commission in Nepal recommended that “supervision, curriculum and teacher training should be perceived in totality” and “a Supervision Co-ordination Committee



should be established at the centre for this purpose”. So far, however, it appears that nothing has been done to achieve these aims.

**(b) Relationship with internal support and control structures which are school and/or community based.**

There is, as was commented upon earlier, a trend, discernible in an increasing number of countries, towards giving more responsibilities for supervision to schools and, in particular, to the headteachers. In Korea, School-Based Autonomous Supervision (SBAS) was recently introduced to “allow schools to develop and run supervision policies that are appropriate for their circumstances and demands”. Principals now have the following supervisory duties: “planning and organizing overall supervision work, encouraging staff to foster supervision work, using qualified resource persons from outside, and establishing overall management plans that reflect national supervision policy”. In many schools, peer supervision is becoming equally prominent, with grade senior teachers in elementary schools and subject senior teachers in middle schools being central to this process. Recently, there has been the suggestion that a Master Teacher System should be established in primary and secondary schools.

In Sri Lanka and Nepal (although the policy is not as fully developed as in Korea) headteachers have also received a growing number of supervisory tasks. In Sri Lanka, the overall responsibility for internal supervision is entrusted to the school head who, in larger schools, can delegate some functions to teams and individuals. A teacher is thus supervised both by an external actor and by the school head. “There is also the use of collegial supervision, where all teachers in, for instance, the primary section are supervised by their colleagues with the leadership of the principal. Supervision in such cases is implemented as a project, in order to cover all the teachers and all classes in the primary.”

In Nepal, according to the 1992 regulations, headteachers evaluate the job performance of teachers and make recommendations for promotion or transfer. They can also penalize subject teachers by, for example, stopping the grade increment “if the student cohorts of any grade fail for three years to attain the minimum marks as set by the Ministry in any particular subject”. The country experimented in the 1980s, within the framework of two projects, Seti-ERD and the Primary Education Project, with an approach emphasizing both in-school and community supervision and at the same time reorganizing schools into clusters and setting up resource centres. The major ideas of these two projects have been integrated in the Basic and Primary Education project (BPEP), which is presently being implemented in 40 out of 75 districts. The field visits undertaken as part of the Nepalese national diagnosis indicate, however, that both in BPEP and non-BPEP districts in-school supervision is poorly developed.

In Bangladesh, “there is no official devolution of supervision and inspection responsibilities to the headteacher, but the head is verbally instructed by the supervisors to inspect and supervise all aspects of the school”. According to the sample of the 16 headteachers who were interviewed for the Bangladeshi national diagnosis, all heads undertake some supervisory duties, three quarters every day. The areas supervised include classroom teaching, student and teacher attendance, record keeping and overall administration. It is not clear, however, to what extent supervision is understood by the head as intensive teacher observation and support or the more superficial ‘walking through the corridors’. In Uttar Pradesh, finally, very little information was collected on in-school supervision, which probably reflects the fact that very little is being carried out.

As far as supervision by the community is concerned, this is still more of an aspiration than an actual policy everywhere. In Korea, for example, the Presidential Commission for Educational Reform has

recently recommended that all schools establish School Management Committees to resolve management problems by themselves and that such committees should be composed of parents and community representatives in addition to teachers and school administrators. In Uttar Pradesh, village education committees exist, which are “authorized to make efforts for the development of basic education”, and members of the Zila Parishad/Municipal Board have the power to visit any basic school located in the area concerned and submit their report. However, there is no information about the extent to which such visits actually take place. The situation is not very different in Bangladesh, where School Management Committees (SMC) exist. “Some of the SMCs are very active looking after all the aspects of a school and supervising different activities including the teachers’ classroom performance, while some are very inactive. In some other cases, the role of SMCs is detrimental to the interest of the school”.

SMCs also exist in Nepal, where a more ambitious approach was tried out by the Seti-ERD project. Community participation in school supervision and in instructional improvement was promoted, for instance, through the inclusion of community members in the Resource Centre Management Committees. The results were not entirely positive. Community support was high where it consisted of donating land, providing free labour and materials and mobilizing people for the provision of drinking water. However, where more substantial pedagogic inputs were aimed at, problems cropped up: local people were inadequately represented in the Resource Centre Management Committees and a majority of education officers considered these committees to be incapable of planning school activities or efficiently using the resource centres. A conflict of opinion also arose: school staff want supervision to be of help and assistance to them, but the lay people and the SMC members want schools to be run with strict discipline and expect supervisors to bring such discipline into the schools. This does not imply that there

was no agreement at all between these different actors. All expected supervisors to observe classroom teaching, to play a catalytic role in improving the school and its social and political environment, and to ensure its efficient administration.

---

## **II. MANAGEMENT OF SUPERVISION SERVICES: BASIC FACTS AND CRITICAL ISSUES**

As pointed out in the previous section, the job description of a variety of officials specifies school supervision as part of their duties. However, closer analysis of the extent of involvement in actual school visits and supervision revealed that it is mainly those who work at the district level and below who could be considered as real supervisors. Thus, in order to understand the present state of the teacher supervision and support system, some basic facts and critical issues in the management of these 'real supervisors' will be analyzed hereafter.

### **1. Some basic facts**

#### **(a) Numbers of supervisors, primary schools and teachers**

It is often stated that the number of supervisors is inadequate to ensure effective supervision of the primary schools within their area of operation. In other words, an important criticism of the supervision system in many countries is that the supervisors are burdened with too many schools. Thus, the adequacy of the supervision system has to be seen in relation to the number of schools to be supervised and the number of teachers to be guided by each supervisor.

It is difficult to determine the ideal ratio between supervisors, on the one hand, and schools and teachers, on the other. Nevertheless, in both cases the ratios should be reasonably low if supervisors are to play an effective role in influencing the functioning of primary schools. It is rather complicated to make comparisons from this point of view between the five countries, mainly because of the difference in responsibilities between actors. Some, such as the SLEAS Officers

in Sri Lanka, have more than supervision tasks. Others, the resource persons in Nepal for instance, have a more limited responsibility. In addition, transport and communication problems are obviously of a different nature in Nepal to those in Korea. Keeping this in mind, one can nonetheless draw a number of conclusions. The situation is undoubtedly best in Korea, where there is one supervisor for every four to five schools and for less than 80 teachers. We will see in the following chapter that Korean supervisors actually spend little time on school visits for different reasons, including the increased reliance on in-school supervision, but probably also because of the relatively low number of schools under their charge. A Sri Lankan SLEAS Officer is responsible for about 10 schools and almost 200 teachers. This could be considered a manageable workload, if it was not for the fact that these officers have, as mentioned above, many different tasks. This is not the case for Master Teachers, but they have on average some 800 teachers to assist each.

**Table 4. Number of schools and teachers per supervisor posts**

		Schools per Supervisor	Teachers per Supervisor
Bangladesh	ATEO	18.6	80
Korea	Junior supervisor and supervisors	3.2	63
Nepal	Supervisors	32.9	173
	Supervisors + resource persons	16.3	85
Sri Lanka	SLEAS Officers	10.6	193
	Master Teachers	44.0	796
Uttar Pradesh	ABSA (all posts)	67.9	188
	ABSA (occupied posts)	83.2	231

*Notes:* For Bangladesh, Korea and Uttar Pradesh, only primary schools are taken into account; in Nepal and Sri Lanka, both primary and secondary schools are considered. Note also that resource persons in Nepal are functioning in only 40 of the 75 districts and that the information given on 'supervisors + resource persons' refers to those districts only.

Looking at school/supervisor ratios, supervisors in the other three countries are in a worse position, although to varying degrees. Bangladesh has an ATEO for every 20 schools, Nepal a supervisor for about 33 schools and, on average, one ABSA in Uttar Pradesh is responsible for over 80 schools (partly due to the high number of vacant posts and the small size of the schools). Even if the task of the supervisor is well defined, the prevailing ratios combined with the lack of resources make it difficult for regular supervision to take place in a meaningful manner. It is not surprising therefore that, in many countries, supervisors pay very little attention to academic guidance and carry out school visits mainly as administrative routines. One should, of course, keep in mind that in both Korea and Sri Lanka the pressure on primary education enrolment has stabilized and, in many places, is even decreasing in response to demographic changes in the population. On the other hand, Bangladesh and Uttar Pradesh as well as Nepal have to contend with a fast-growing student population. Consequently, the increase in the number of schools and teachers has brought tremendous pressure on the system and has outpaced the increase in the supervisory staff.

Two points are worth stressing here. Firstly, those countries with the highest numbers of schools and teachers per supervisor are the same countries where schools are least accessible because of the inadequate road network, the lack of transportation facilities and the scarcity of transport allowances. At the same time, teachers in these countries are probably more in need of regular support and supervision because of their poor qualifications. Secondly, the figures in the table are national averages. The situation within countries can be very different indeed from one region to another. We have data for Sri Lanka and Uttar Pradesh. The average number of schools per SLEAS Officer differs in Sri Lanka from 7 in Southern Province to 15 in North Eastern. The number of schools per Master Teacher varies even more widely, from 18 in Uva to 71 in North Eastern.



Unfortunately, no information on teacher/Master Teacher ratios was available. In Uttar Pradesh, as is shown in *Table 5*, some ABSAs have to supervise more than 50 schools, others more than 70. The number of teachers under the responsibility of one ABSA ranges from 116 to 259. This is on condition that all posts are filled, which is not the case. Information on the geographical distribution of vacant posts is not available, but it is probable that these can be found in a disproportional way in the most disadvantaged regions.

### **(b) Profile of a school supervisor**

It is difficult to gather information on a uniform set of indicators for all the countries, in fact, even within one country such information is not easily available for all provinces or regions. In most cases, therefore, observations are based on the samples selected for the study. Within this limitation certain broad trends can be delineated from an analysis of the available data from different countries.

A common factor characterizing the supervisors in different countries is their age.<sup>7</sup> Supervisors are most likely to be in the age group 45 and over. This is not that startling, as the recruitment criteria generally specify a significant amount of experience. Both in Sri Lanka and Korea, the majority of supervisors are aged 55 years and above. In fact, in Korea, 76.4 per cent of all supervisors are over 50 years old. The ATEOs and TEOs, who are the field-level supervising staff in Bangladesh, are relatively younger, with 53 per cent in the age group below 45 years. In fact, 11 per cent of these are 25-35. This could possibly be due to the high proportion (80 per cent) of ATEOs being recruited through open competition and the relatively higher level of educational qualifications prescribed, which does not favour practising primary-school teachers.

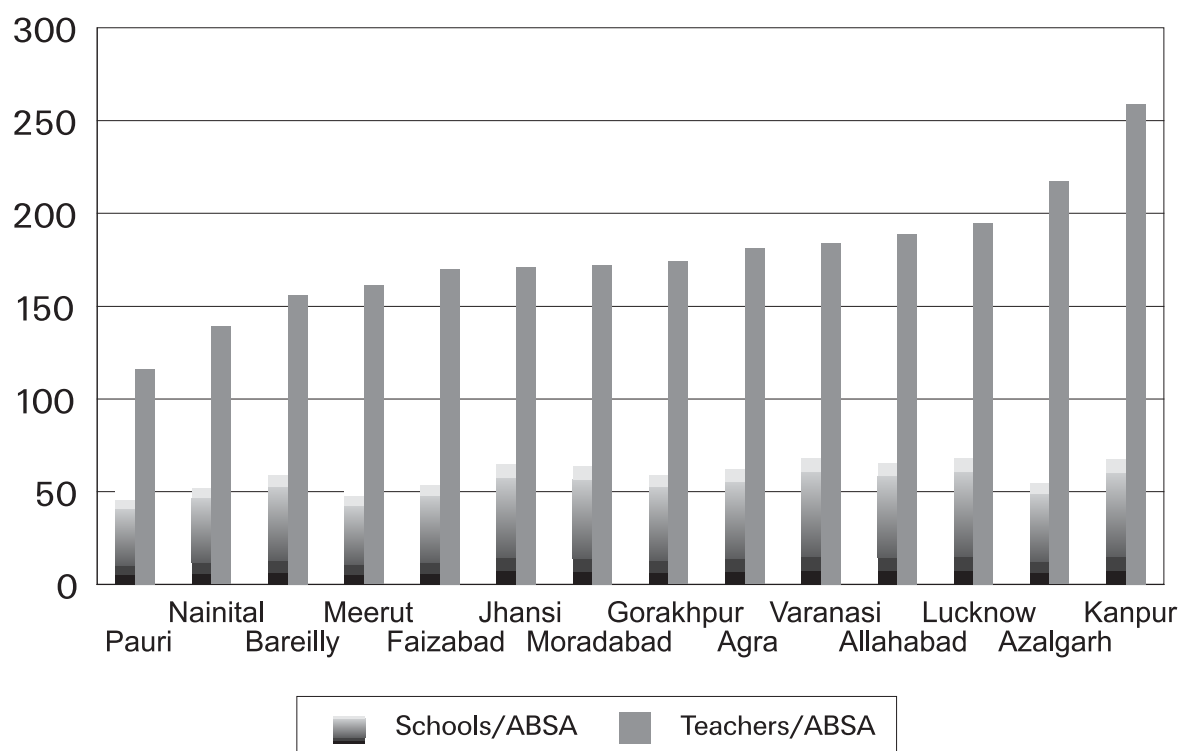
---

<sup>7</sup> No data on age were available in the case of Nepal and Uttar Pradesh.



**Table 5. Uttar Pradesh: number of schools and teachers per ABSA, by region**

	ABSA posts	Schools	Teachers	Schools/ABSA	Teachers/ABSA
Pauri	120	6,166	13,881	51	116
Nainital	89	5,146	12,335	58	139
Bareilly	97	6,430	15,142	66	156
Meerut	146	7,758	23,566	53	161
Faizabad	160	9,581	27,220	60	170
Jhansi	87	6,299	14,840	72	171
Moradabad	69	4,889	11,835	71	172
Gorakhpur	133	8,756	23,158	66	174
Agra	135	9,362	24,479	69	181
Varanasi	96	7,295	17,669	76	184
Allahabad	90	6,556	16,990	73	189
Lucknow	156	11,923	30,393	76	195
Azamgarh	100	6,096	21,667	61	217
Kanpur	91	6,820	23,602	75	259



In all the countries under study, males dominate the supervisory services. Interestingly, both in Korea and Sri Lanka, statistics reveal that the proportion of women teachers is very high at the primary level. However, even in these countries, the proportion of female supervisors is very small. In Sri Lanka, it is less than a third. In Korea, only about 20 per cent of all supervisors are women as compared to 57 per cent female teachers in elementary schools. This might be due to many factors but is possibly partially related to the recruitment procedure for supervisors, which does not necessarily draw on the existing set of teachers. The presence of a higher proportion of females among Master Teachers in Sri Lanka (81 per cent) who are essentially drawn from among teachers is revealing in this respect.

What is the academic profile of supervisors in different countries? Again this depends on the availability of qualified human resources in the country as well as the required entry qualification. In general, supervisors have to have completed a first degree at university level. In addition, the candidates are required to have some qualification in pedagogy. Invariably, the majority of the supervisors in all the countries possess either a bachelor's or a master's degree. For instance, in Korea, 42 per cent of supervisors hold a master's and another 35 per cent a bachelor's degree qualification. In Bangladesh, an analysis of the sample selected for the study showed that 79 per cent of them have master's and 19 per cent have a bachelor's degree: only about 2 per cent are higher secondary graduates. In Sri Lanka and Uttar Pradesh also, the supervisors are very well qualified in terms of their academic credentials and pedagogic training qualifications.

## **2. Critical issues in the management of supervision services**

As mentioned earlier, supervision is not a new concept and a separate management set up for supervision of primary schools has been in existence in all the countries of the region for a long time.

Yet, in most countries, with some exceptions, the system seems to be in a highly fluid stage. Some countries appear to be still grappling with the question of the ideal profile of a primary-school supervisor and the precise functions that a primary-school supervisor should perform. The issue is further compounded by the continuing debate on whether separate personnel are to be employed for carrying out administrative monitoring and academic supervision. Should experienced teachers carry out supervisory tasks or should such personnel be recruited through open competition based on merit and qualifications? What kind of skills are imparted to primary-school supervisors? What is the career development path of a supervisor? These and several such questions form a central part of any discussion on supervision in all the countries concerned. Some of these are presented in the following section.

### **(a) Recruitment**

The recruitment of supervisors remains a contentious issue in several countries. How can the right candidates for supervision work be identified? Should they be experienced teachers or headteachers? What kind of general education and professional training are expected as prerequisites? What is the best procedure to follow? As can be seen from *Table 6*, the situation differs considerably across the countries in this respect. In Korea, all junior supervisors are recruited by the metropolitan or provincial offices through competitive examination followed by interviewing. In Bangladesh, 50 per cent of the Assistant Thana Education Officers (ATEO) are appointed through open competition and the remainder are selected from internal candidates in the Education Department. In Uttar Pradesh, 80 per cent of posts are filled through direct recruitment following a competitive examination and interview while the remainder are promoted from the headteachers' or teachers' cadre. On the other hand, no such quota is reserved for internal candidates in Sri Lanka.

In addition, in all the countries at least a bachelor's degree is essential for direct recruitment. A degree or certificate from a teacher-training college is also essential in most cases. However, internal candidates who are to be promoted have a relatively lower qualification requirement. For instance, in Uttar Pradesh the candidates from the cadre of Head Masters must have at least 10 years' experience, they have to be 'matriculate', they must have a 'Teachers' or Basic Teachers' Certificate diploma, and pass a probationary period of two years.

As already mentioned, Sri Lanka has separated academic support from administrative supervision by creating a special post – that of Master Teacher – which is only concerned with academic aspects. The procedure for the recruitment of Master Teachers has undergone a number of changes that have also influenced their qualification requirements. Master Teachers were originally appointed on a part-time basis. Also, in the original scheme there was considerable decentralization in the appointment of Master Teachers. Currently, Master Teachers are recruited at the divisional level and selection is carried out through a national-level written examination followed by interview. The selection is open to those holding a university degree in addition to a teacher-training qualification.

The prerequisite academic qualifications and training are apparently quite high in all the countries. There is, however, an important issue that is often overlooked in this regard. The basic task of a primary-school supervisor, as specified in the job chart, is to provide guidance to teachers for improving the classroom teaching-learning process. This obviously assumes that the supervisors are well versed in the task of teaching at primary level. Do the qualifications and experience of the supervisors correspond to this assumption? It is interesting to note that in the case of direct recruitment, a university qualification, necessary to take a degree for teaching at secondary level, is often needed. The demand for

fairly high academic qualifications risks excluding people with backgrounds in secondary-school teaching, who seldom have such an academic background.

Furthermore, the teaching experience required from the candidates for direct recruitment can be quite limited and does not necessarily relate to primary education. In fact, an analysis of the profiles of existing supervisors indicates that they do not necessarily possess either the essential professional training for teaching in primary classes or the experience of teaching at that level. In fact, in many instances the supervisory cadre is different from that of the primary teachers, which is a complicating factor for the efficient functioning of support services. In Bangladesh as well as in Nepal, the lack of practical primary-school teaching experience on behalf of the supervisors (including resource persons in the case of Nepal) is one of the main criticisms voiced by teachers. In Sri Lanka, on the contrary, Master Teachers seem to be more easily accepted precisely because of their practical professional experience.

It was noted earlier that the number of supervisors is not relative to the magnitude of the task involved. An even more problematic part of the recruitment process has been the discrepancy in the number of posts sanctioned and the number actually in position. Both in Sri Lanka and Uttar Pradesh, the problem is quite serious, with over one-fifth of the posts lying vacant. The situation is even worse with respect to TEOs in Bangladesh where, at the time of this research, more than one-third of the positions had not been filled.

Among other things, bureaucratic delays seem to be the main hurdle for the timely appointment of supervisors in these countries. The worst affected in this regard is Uttar Pradesh which already has a very small number of supervisors in proportion to the number of schools in the state. It is in this context that the new project initiative

**Table 6. Recruitment rules of external supervisors**

Country and Post	Procedure	Age limit	Qualification	Experience
Bangladesh ATEO	50 % promotion of departmental candidates	45 years	2nd class masters	Not specified
	50 % open competition	30 years	2nd class masters	Not specified
Korea Junior supervisor	Competitive examination and interview	No official specification	College graduate	5 years in education (of which at least 2 years in teaching) or 9 years (of which at least 2 years in teaching) for those without college degree
Sri Lanka Education officer class III	25 % open competitive examination	22 - 26 years	University degree	To be acquired after recruitment if not acquired before
	45 % limited competitive examination	25 - 45 years	University degree or trained teacher certificate	5 years' teaching experience
	30 % promotion on merit	No official specification	—	3 years' experience as a principal
Sri Lanka Master Teacher	competitive examination and interview	N/A	Trained graduates or trained teachers	Belong to class I or II of teachers' service
Uttar Pradesh ABSA	90 % direct recruitment*	N/A	Bachelor's degree and a degree in education	N/A
	10 % promotion from head teachers' cadre	N/A	Matriculate and Teachers' certificate	10 years' experience
Nepal Supervisor	Open recruitment with competitive examination	N/A	Bachelor's degree	N/A

\* At the moment, 80 per cent through direct recruitment and 10 per cent from extension teachers and craft teachers, until this category has been exhausted.

for 'Education for All' in Uttar Pradesh has begun establishing block-level and cluster-level resource centres with qualified staff drawn mainly on deputation from within the system who will exclusively provide academic guidance and training support to primary schools.

**Table 7. Discrepancy in approved and actual numbers**

		Approved	Actual	Vacancies
Bangladesh	- TEO	481	295	186 (38.66%)
	ATEO	2,060	2,025	35 (0.02%)
Sri Lanka	- SLEAS officers	2,143	1,566	577 (26.92%)
Uttar Pradesh	- ABSAs	1,577	1,239	338 (21.43%)

### **(b) Training**

The need for professional training of supervisors is well recognized in all the countries. Yet, the arrangements do not seem to be satisfactory as revealed by the empirical information available.

Induction training is conducted systematically in only two countries. In Korea, new supervisors are offered a four-week training course on their duties and other management aspects. In Sri Lanka, the SLEAS Officers are given pre-service training for a period of about 6-12 months, which is generally residential. The main component of the programme organized by the National Institute of Education is educational management and administration. Pre-service training of Master Teachers is currently done by the same institute in the form of a 10-day residential programme. In Nepal, the situation is slightly different: the Faculty of Education of Tribhuvan University offers a B.Ed. programme for prospective supervisors, which almost all acting supervisors have attended.

There is no provision for induction courses in the two other countries except for some brief orientation on general administrative



procedures. For instance, in Uttar Pradesh, the newly appointed officers are simply asked to work with a senior colleague in order to gain first-hand knowledge of the job assigned to them.

Arrangements for in-service training also vary from one country to another. Generally, these are short-term courses organized on an ad-hoc basis by specialized training institutions with specific orientation on management aspects of primary education. In Bangladesh, such courses ranging from 3-12 days are offered by the National Academy of Primary Education and the Bangladesh Management Development Corporation (see *Table 8*). In Uttar Pradesh, training is the domain of the State Institute of Education and the newly established State Institute of Educational Management and Training. Similar national-level institutions organize in-service courses in Nepal and Sri Lanka. In Korea, training courses are offered by the National Institute for Training of Educational Administrators but also by municipal and provincial teacher training centres and many other institutes.

However, in general, there is no officially set amount and content of training that supervisors are required to take in any of the countries. This varies according to supervisors' individual circumstances. In Bangladesh, the training imparted by the National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE) to TEOs and ATEOs is supposed to be compulsory but this is not a precondition for career development. In the case of promotion, preference is given to those with management training from Bangladesh Management Development Centre (BMDC). In fact, only 28 per cent of the ATEOs interviewed had received management training and only 16 per cent had received orientation for organizing sub-cluster training of teachers.

In Korea, a 60-hour and a 30-hour training course is available to junior school supervisors and school supervisors respectively. However, again it is not compulsory to take these training programmes.



Consequently, there is a wide variation in the average length of training attended by different supervisors. According to a study carried out in 1990, all of them had received some hours of training and one-third had been exposed to more than 100 hours in an average year.

In contrast to the Korean situation, the numbers that are covered by the various institutions on a recurring basis in other countries are inadequate in proportion to the total size of the supervisory staff and the programmes are of very short duration. Obviously, with a larger number of schools and teachers, the existing national institutional capacity is quite inadequate. In order to overcome this problem, countries have started supplementary training provided at the national level by orientation programmes at provincial level. The District Institutes of Education and Training are attempting to play such a role in Uttar Pradesh. What is maybe still more important is the content of these programmes. While no specific information was collected about this, some supervisors in at least two countries – Bangladesh and Nepal – have voiced the opinion that the training is not clearly linked to their practical work.

**Table 8. Short duration in-service courses for supervisors in Bangladesh**

Supervisory staff	Training agency	Subject area of training	Duration
Assistant Thana Education Officer (ATEO)	NAPE	School management and supervision	9 days
	NAPE	Orientation in sub-cluster training	2-3 days
	BMDC	management	12 days
Thana Education Officer (TEO)	NAPE	Management of primary education and supervision	6 days
	BMDC	Management	12 days

### **(c) Career development**

Lack of motivation on the part of school supervisors is a criticism heard in many countries. However, why are the supervisors not motivated? This obviously depends on a variety of factors including, very importantly, the prospects for career growth and development in the chosen line of work. How are supervisors placed in this regard?

Career prospects have to be seen bearing in mind the hierarchical structure of the education department within which the supervisory system is located. Thus, supervisors measure career development essentially in terms of the available scope to move up the career ladder. Seen from this angle, career prospects in general for a primary-school supervisor are limited in every country. Four factors in particular should be considered. One is the scope for promotion to higher levels within the administrative system. The second factor is the normal time lag or waiting period before seeking promotion. The third is the openness of the next higher level for direct recruitment, which would decrease the relative chances of getting selected through open competition. The fourth is the degree of objectivity and transparency of the evaluation and promotion procedures.

As far as ATEOs in Bangladesh are concerned, only 20 per cent of the vacant posts of TEO, the next position in the hierarchical structure, are filled by promotion. The rest are filled through direct appointment. In principle the age limit is 30 years, but this is relaxed to 45 years for internal candidates. TEOs have better prospects as 80 per cent of their next superior level is filled through internal promotion.

The SLEAS in Sri Lanka consists of a three-tier hierarchical structure. The promotion from level III, which is the basic entry level, to level II is through a competitive examination followed by an interview. Officers at level III are generally required to have served

10 years before being promoted to the next level. From level II to level I, the promotion comes after a long period of service and the criteria are based on merit and seniority. Master Teachers are in the newly created teacher service and it is not clear how their career development prospects will be worked out. The same applies to Nepalese resource persons.

The ABSAs in Uttar Pradesh have to wait for a long period, 18-20 years or more, before promotion and a large number of them retire from their posts of first appointment.

The Junior School Supervisors in Korea can be promoted to School Supervisors or Educational Researchers. They can also be transferred to a position of vice-principal or promoted to one of principal of elementary and middle schools. As the job of a (vice-) principal is considered less arduous, this type of horizontal transfer is particularly attractive to them. However, once again, the waiting period is very long. Junior School Supervisors need to have at least 2 years of service in their actual post and over 17 years' experience in teaching, educational administration or educational research before they can be appointed as vice-principals. They need over 22 years' experience to be promoted to become principals. Alternatively, a person with more than 10 years of service as a junior school supervisor and with 10 years of experience in teaching can be transferred without restrictions.

This picture raises at least two questions. Firstly, faced with lengthy waiting periods and with a recruitment process characterized by open competition, supervisors need adequate opportunities for in-service training. Unfortunately, as we saw, this is not the case. The issue to be examined more closely is the ways and means of establishing a proper link between the participation of supervisors in professional enrichment programmes, and their career promotion. A second issue relates to the destination of supervision staff who

gain promotion. It seems that in Nepal and Uttar Pradesh, for instance, this staff is being promoted away from actual supervision work. The situation is somewhat different in Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, where staff higher in the hierarchy continue to visit schools and observe teachers. Korea, with its transfer between school management and supervision posts, could have a particularly attractive scheme, were it not for the fact that the former jobs are more prized than the latter ones. In any case, reflection should be given as to how to develop a career path that allows supervisors to gain promotion without losing the more or less regular contact with the schools.

#### **(d) Monitoring and evaluation**

The monitoring and evaluation system for supervisors is generally a reflection of the bureaucratic set-up of the education departments. Within the hierarchical structure, the higher officer is expected to monitor the work of the junior officers. In Bangladesh, Nepal and Uttar Pradesh, annual confidential reports are written by the immediate controlling officers which are then followed up by the reporting and reviewing of officers at higher levels. These reports form an important input into deciding promotions.

The major indicator of performance for ATEOs and TEOs in Bangladesh is the number of school visits made in relation to the set targets. In Uttar Pradesh, the supervisor's work is monitored and evaluated by checking how he/she handles the following duties: construction of school buildings, ensuring the timely distribution and supply of educational materials, disbursement of salaries, inspection and supervision of classroom instruction and help provided in raising standards, and visiting every school at least twice in one academic session. In both cases, supervisors are monitored in a rather routine fashion.

The evaluation of supervisors' performance is more complex than it might seem. The simplest assessment criteria concern the numbers of visits made and reports written, but this gives little information about the quality of the work performed or its impact on schools. From this point of view, the monitoring and evaluation procedures seem to be better streamlined in Sri Lanka (see *Box 3a on the following page*). The Ministry has issued specific guidelines on the basis of which regular monitoring of supervisors is to be carried out. It also specifies the way in which monitoring reports are to be prepared. Such an approach considerably helps to make the evaluation more professional and reduces subjectivity, which in turn leads to greater credibility of the system. However, it is not clear to what extent this more ambitious and more time-consuming procedure is actually implemented.

Korea also has a fairly systematic approach for the purpose of monitoring and evaluation. Assessment, which is important for promotion, is carried out annually in December and focuses on the supervisors' ability, attitude and work output. This is done according to fixed standards, as indicated in *box 3a*. The assessment covers the following five aspects: character, dedication to work, guidance and management of education, guidance and management of teachers, and management of administration and educational research. Not surprisingly, problems with assessment still occur, as much depends on the subjective judgement of the assessor.

However systematic the approach may be, monitoring and evaluation are likely to remain sensitive issues. Two observations often made in this regard concern the lack of linkages between the performance of the supervisor and the internal system of incentives and the lack of transparency and objectivity. Monitoring is likely to remain a relatively formal and routine exercise if it is not linked in a transparent and efficient way to accountability, on the one hand, and to recognition and promotions, on the other.

### **Box 3a. Monitoring the work of supervisors in Sri Lanka**

Within the hierarchical system, all officers have to submit a monthly advance programme of work and a progress report of the work done to the superior officer.

Guidelines issued by the Ministry for monitoring specify the following:

- i. Analysis of log entries made by the supervisory staff on their school visits; this may be done by taking a stratified sample of schools covering a time period of 6-12 months;
- ii. Regular meetings with the supervisory staff; and
- iii. Analysis of supervision reports submitted by the supervisory staff.

The monitoring report prepared on the above basis will normally refer to:

- (a) the quality of work carried out by the supervisors;
- (b) the impact of supervision on the school;
- (c) aspects that are covered and left out in supervision;
- (d) abilities and weaknesses of the particular supervisor.

Monitoring and evaluation of the Master Teachers is done by the concerned zonal director with the assistance of the divisional office according to the guidelines provided by the Ministry of Education.

### Box 3b. Monitoring the work of supervisors in Korea

Ability and attitude		
<i>Character</i>	<i>Dedication to work</i>	
Philosophy on education; pride and awareness as an educator; commitment to education; self-education and dignity.	Ability to carry out orders, give directions and issue guidance; ability to abide by the law; co-operation; ability to solve problems; interactivity; creativity; ability to show positive attitude towards revamping; ability to maintain harmony between seniors and subordinates; ability to offer assistance.	
Work output		
<i>Guidance and management of education</i>	<i>Guidance and management of teachers</i>	<i>Management of administration and educational research</i>
National policy; ability to give operational guidance to schools and school curricula; ability to organize the conditions of teaching.	Ability to assess teachers and fairness in personnel matters; plans, methods and achievements of guiding educational research on schools.	Rationality, accuracy, and effectiveness of applying plans; researching theories educational research and methods: and work output (method and amount of contribution).



### **(e) Professional organizations**

Registered organizations of supervisory staff that are officially recognized by the government are found in Bangladesh, Uttar Pradesh and Sri Lanka. In Bangladesh, there are separate professional organizations of TEOs and ATEOs, and a similar arrangement exists in Uttar Pradesh. In Sri Lanka, there is only one registered professional association of the SLEAS, with about 500 members. There is no registered professional organization of Master Teachers, but they have informal professional associations at provincial and zonal levels. In Korea, supervisors do not have the legal right to be a member of a trade union and there is no association.

The main focus of these organizations is on the professional development of their members and the improvement of their working conditions, including salaries, career promotion and prospects. In addition to this, many of the professional groups regularly meet at the local level to exchange experiences on academic and professional matters. The Supervisors' Association in Uttar Pradesh is by far the most active. It publishes a periodical in which articles dealing with professional matters and activities of educational interest are presented and copies are circulated all over the state amongst members of the school Supervisors' Association as well as other officers interested in supervision. The periodical also acts as a mouthpiece for the profession to articulate grievances and demands.

### **(f) Support**

The support available to supervisors, in the form of instruments, manuals and the like, is insufficient. While not all countries gave specific information in this regard, the impression is that little more exists than standard report forms and a number of circulars and official letters. In Sri Lanka and Uttar Pradesh, some guidelines were prepared on ethical aspects and other matters but they are



considered, at least in Sri Lanka, not sufficiently detailed to be really helpful. Bangladesh has arguably the most complete instrument – a checklist containing about 150 items to be covered during a full inspection. However, the quality of the instrument leaves much to be desired in the eyes of many supervisors. It lacks structure, contains too many items and is inconsistent with the report forms.

The inadequacy of such useful instruments, the scarcity of in-service training opportunities and the virtual absence of a motivational career path are three fundamental weaknesses in the present management of supervision.



---

### **III. THE DAILY FUNCTIONING OF SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT SERVICES**

#### **1. Working conditions**

##### **(a) Offices, service staff and allowances**

The material working conditions of supervisors are generally poor in the four countries of the South Asian region. ATEOs in Bangladesh, supervisors in Nepal and ABSAs in Uttar Pradesh are in a comparable situation. They do not have individual offices but work instead in the offices of their superiors, and they have no service or support staff for their personal use. The situation in Sri Lanka is somewhat different, as education officers, who have supervision among their various tasks, have permanent office buildings, basic equipment and some service staff, although the staff serves the whole office and all its personnel. Master Teachers are worse off. As they officially are assigned to a school rather than to an education office, several do not even have a desk within the divisional office from where they can organize their work. Resource persons in Nepal are, from that angle, better off, as they can use their own resource centre as an office.

This lack of office space does not only render the work more difficult to plan and implement, it has other negative effects. In Uttar Pradesh, ABSAs are in principle working at the block level but in practice they are based in the district. As a result, the distance between their office and the schools becomes greater and the opportunity to visit schools smaller. In Nepal, where supervisors are posted in the district offices, they have to take over the job of the DEO whenever he is absent, which is very regularly the case. In addition, as supervisors in these countries seldom have secretarial support staff, much of their time is spent writing and sending reports and filing.

In all four South Asian countries, the lack of efficient support for travelling is a serious problem. Supervision and support staff are generally provided with some form of transport and a transport allowance. ATEOs in Bangladesh get a bicycle, TEOs a motorbike. Supervisors in Nepal are also provided with a bicycle, while Master Teachers in Sri Lanka are offered cheap loans to purchase a motorbike. The allowances are low: 125 Taka per month in Bangladesh for an ATEO (with an extra 200 Taka for the few who fulfil their inspection target); 900 Rs in Nepal for a supervisor and between 1,500 and 3,000 Rs per month in Sri Lanka.<sup>8</sup> On the whole, this is clearly insufficient in view of the vast distances between schools. In Sri Lanka, zonal and district offices have, in principle, one vehicle but some divisional offices have to share and access is therefore restricted to two or three days a week. Even some provincial officers complain about transport. In one province, there was only one car for 14 officers, and inadequate transport facilities were thus cited as the main reason why provincial team supervision was not carried out as planned. Transport allowances are generally scant and have not been revised to take into account the real cost of travelling. In several cases they are paid only after visits have actually been undertaken and with some delay.

The following situation described by one Master Teacher in Sri Lanka is therefore not exceptional: “In my area, only a few schools can be visited by bus. To other schools I have to travel about 30 to 40 miles on foot. The travelling allowance I get is insufficient. Difficulties in travelling forced two of my predecessors (women) to resign from the post.” Because of the time it takes to reach a school, supervisors are regularly obliged to spend the night in the village. Lack of appropriate logistic support for school visits is also mentioned as the main problem of supervisors in Nepal (see *Box 4*). Problems of impartiality in evaluating and resolving difficulties clearly arise when supervisors have to rely on local people for their board and lodging.

---

<sup>8</sup> 125 Taka is about US\$3; 900 Nepalese Rs is about US\$15; 1,500 Sri Lankan Rs is about US\$27.

#### **Box 4. Issues of logistic support in Nepal**

“The main issue of supervision pertains to the lack of effective logistic support to the supervisors. The school per supervisor ratio is generally erratic and is considered high in all districts of the country. The supervisors complain that it is beyond their physical ability to cover all the schools in their areas. The problem is heightened by the fact that, in most cases, the only means to reach the schools is by walking, as there are no roads for access by car. Moreover, the provision of motor vehicles is non-existent. The supervisors often need to stay overnight on the way to a school or in the school area. In doing so, they generally encounter board and lodging difficulties. Therefore, most supervisors pointed out the need for the provision of basic amenities such as a sleeping bag, a torch and safe drinking water. This demand may seem out of context in many other parts of the world, but in Nepal most parts of the country do not have electricity, the roads are simple walking trails and safe drinking water is difficult to get. Food and accommodation need to be procured through special connections, but not with money alone. Money does not go very far in such a place. Carrying out field visits under such conditions often seriously hinders the field work of the supervisors.”

“... supervisors are compelled to live as the guests of the headteacher, or the teachers or the School Management Committee members. Such a situation restricts the supervisors from being objective in accomplishing their tasks.”

As can be expected, supervisors' working conditions in Korea are substantially better than in the other countries. They do face problems, but on a different scale altogether. A desk, chair, cabinet and stationary are provided to each supervisor, while computers and phone lines are provided for the office. Supervisors, however, do not have their own separate offices or their own computers or phone lines. Their complaints are mainly about the lack of space and individual service staff and, mainly in cities, about noise disturbance.

## **(b) Budget and salaries**

Not one of the five studies gives specific information about the budget for supervision as such. This is easily explained, as everywhere supervisors belong to offices with other staff and budgets are made available to these offices, not to specific supervision personnel. The most that can be found is what share of the budget is allocated for specific recurrent expenditures, such as supplies, travelling, contractual services, etc. We know this is fairly little because of the overall weight of salaries in any educational budget. In the Central Province of Sri Lanka for instance, only about 0.3 per cent of the recurrent budget for education goes to 'travelling' and this has to be shared by all officers. Moreover, only about half of the allotted amount was spent, because of administrative delays and poor planning. The lack of earmarked funds for supervision is also quoted in Nepal as a serious hindrance to supervision and support work: "The supervisors and resource persons commented that they don't have resource or budget allocation for any programmes and other activities that may be necessary in an effective school supervision. Therefore there is not much they could do except to provide suggestions to help the schools."

As supervision and support personnel belong to the public service, their salaries are decided in accordance with its rules. Although supervisors are not always happy with their salaries, they do not necessarily list them as a major complaint. In Bangladesh, the posts of both ATEO and TEO were upgraded recently and their salaries accordingly increased. The particular situation of Sri Lanka and Korea can be noted. In Korea, as was seen, the career ladder puts junior school supervisors at the same level as vice-principals and school supervisors as principals. They should therefore receive similar salaries, but this is not the case. Vice-principals receive extra allowances in the form of 'expediency funds' and 'confidential expenses' as part of their sundry payment, which is not the case for

supervisors. Coupled with the fact that headteachers' work is considered lighter, this leads to a migration away from supervision to school principal jobs. Supervisors' pay is only about 70 to 80 per cent of that of a worker with similar experience and degrees in a major company and, not surprisingly, 96 per cent of supervisors claim to be unsatisfied with their salaries.

In Sri Lanka, teachers and education officers belong to different cadres. The salaries of both cadres were recently revised upwards. As the revision took place for teachers about one year before that of education officers, teachers' salaries were more than double those of supervisors during that period. This made their supervision work clearly more difficult.

Two points deserve further attention here. Firstly, both the Bangladesh and the Uttar Pradesh reports identify the absence of a linkage between performance and salary increments as a serious weakness. Secondly, the difference between (head)teachers' and supervisors' salaries has an impact on the supervision process. Where that difference is small, or where teachers are better paid, it is more difficult for supervisors to exercise their authority. Where the opposite is true, supervisors might become too distant from schools and too haughty towards teachers.

## **2. The actual operation of supervisory and support services**

### **(a) Planning and distribution of work between staff**

The national diagnoses offer some details about how supervisors plan their work. Generally, all staff are asked to prepare yearly plans. In many cases, more detailed monthly or weekly plans, indicating the number of school visits, must be presented to the superior. In Sri Lanka, because several offices are supervising the same schools, co-ordination between them is crucial. Divisional offices communicate

their plans beforehand to the zonal office and school visits are planned so that they do not coincide. This, however, is still at times the case, with different officers or Master Teachers visiting the same school within one week. In Nepal, little planning is done and supervision is taking place on an ad-hoc basis: "Supervisors visit schools in accordance with the instruction of the DEO or on the demand of the local SMC and headmaster. Such instructions or demands are mostly prompted by certain problems in schools." Supervisors in Nepal deplore their lack of autonomy and the need to obtain approval from the DEO for any type of activity. The DEOs, however, disagree with this analysis and claim that their lack of control over supervisors, because of political interference, hinders their work.

In Bangladesh, Nepal and Uttar Pradesh, schools are distributed between staff on a geographical basis, using educational circles or sub-divisions of districts as a unit. This has the advantage of allowing supervisors to get to know 'their' schools well, as long as there are not too many, but when posts are vacant, there is the risk that some schools will not be visited at all. Sri Lanka relies on a different organization. A group of officers within a divisional office, rather than an individual, are in charge of all the schools in the relevant geographic area. As such, the total number of schools assigned to one group of officers can be fairly large. In one province, the number in a division ranged from 18 to 156. The advantage is that vacancies can be more easily managed than in other countries. Master Teachers can be posted to divisional or zonal offices but are assigned individually to specific schools. Among the sample of Master Teachers in the national diagnosis, those working at divisional level were responsible for 20 to 70 schools, at zonal level for up to more than 200 schools. In order to remedy the inadequacies of the present system, a new scheme is being introduced whereby the country will be divided into 299 divisions. Each division will comprise an average



of 40 schools and will have two Master Teachers for primary education who will be full time.

### **(b) Workload and distribution of time between tasks**

Supervision staff in every country have to cope with a heavy workload. Two factors help to explain this. They have, as was shown before, a demanding job description to which many other, less crucial but at times very urgent, tasks are added. According to the official norms, they are supposed to supervise a large number of schools and teachers, but as these official norms are not always respected (many supervision posts being left vacant), their charge still increases.

The information in *Chapter I.3* on supervisors' official duties showed the variety of tasks they have to perform. In practice, the situation is often worse and their job is an increasing assortment of different duties. One reason is that they are asked to take care of some of the work of their immediate superiors when they are out of the office. Moreover, and more importantly, as they are among the few public servants to visit remote villages and schools, once they are there, they will be expected to complete many tasks which are not part of their job description. In Nepal, the result is that supervisors regularly do the work of the District Education Officer, while in the BPEP districts resource persons have to tackle some of the tasks (such as data collection), which should be a supervisor's work. In Uttar Pradesh, supervisors are involved in, among other things, "the distribution and supervision of midday meals, health check-up, census work, small savings scheme, tree plantation drive, family planning, scholarship distribution, animal census", and so on.

In four of the five countries, a sample of supervision and support staff was interviewed to obtain some information on the distribution of their work between the different tasks. *Tables 9 to 12* present the

averages of the individual answers from these samples. As answers are not presented in the same way, it is rather difficult to compare between countries. A few points can be made none the less. There are quite important differences between Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, on the one hand, and Uttar Pradesh and Korea, on the other. In the first two countries, school supervision takes up more than half of the time. It is not clear, however, to what extent school inspection in Bangladesh includes actual classroom observation. In Sri Lanka, classroom observation and assistance to teaching are the number one tasks for both supervision staff and Master Teachers. In Uttar Pradesh, less than 10 per cent of their time is spent on academic supervision; in Korea, less than 10 per cent on school visits as such. The most important tasks are 'the construction of buildings and collection of information' in Uttar Pradesh, and 'administrative/office work' in Korea. An 'excessive non-supervisory workload' is cited by Korean supervisors as their main problem. All supervision and support staff are of the opinion that school and classroom supervision should be their main task, and they complain when they are not in a position to allocate enough time to this activity.

**Table 9. Distribution of supervisors' workload between different tasks: ATEOs in Bangladesh (N= 65)**

School inspection	56.2 %
In-service (in-cluster) training	12.8 %
Others*	31.0 %

\* Includes desk-work, meetings, public relations, report writing and supervising the food-for-work programme.

**Table 10. Distribution of supervisors' workload between different tasks: supervisors in Korea**

(N = 34, of which 31 junior and 3 school supervisors)

School visits	7.5 %
Guiding educational institutes	5.2 %
Report writing on school visits	4.7 %
Meetings	7.3 %
Staff management	6.4 %
Research on supervision techniques	6.3 %
Managing research and experimental schools	5.0 %
Administrative / office work	54.5 %

**Table 11. Distribution of supervisors' workload between different tasks in Sri Lanka**

(N = 8 officers, 19 Master Teachers)

Tasks	SLEAS Officers	Master Teachers
Supervision of primary classes	32.1 %	39.7%
Supervision of other classes	12.2 %	-
Assistance in teaching	5.0 %	33.7%
Supervision of school administration	21.4 %	0.3%
In-service training	1.9 %	7.2%
Report writing	8.6 %	4.3%
Clerical work	6.0 %	4.3%
Organizing, participation in meetings	6.2 %	7.4%
Other	6.6 %	3.1%

**Table 12. Distribution of supervisors' workload between different tasks: ABSAs in Uttar Pradesh (N = 133)**

Academic supervision	8.7 %
Co-curricular activities	1.8 %
Supervising buildings and construction	30.3 %
Meetings	11.7 %
Collection of information	28.6 %
Plan preparation	1.7%
Departmental work	7.1 %
Distribution of scholarships	2.1 %
Midday meal distribution	3.3 %
Others*	4.7 %

\* Census operation, election duties and social work.

As shown in *Chapter II.1*, supervision and support staff are responsible for a considerable number of schools and teachers, in all countries except in Korea. According to the official rules, in Uttar Pradesh, an ABSA should call upon between 50 and 60 schools. However, as more than one-fifth of ABSA posts are left vacant, on average more than 80 schools are under the charge of one supervisor. This discrepancy between rules and reality is equally striking in Bangladesh. According to the norms, an ATEO is in charge of 15 to 20 schools, which he has to visit at least once a month. But for a sample of 65 ATEOs, some 85 per cent have responsibility for more than 20 schools and on average about 30 schools. This is mainly because many non-government schools (whose increasing numbers are not taken into account by the official rules) also have to be visited.

The expected result of this heavy workload is that many officers fail to visit all schools regularly. To illustrate this well-known complaint, some data can be quoted on Sri Lanka. Only two out of a sample of eight officers and four out of a sample of 19 Master Teachers succeeded in visiting all of the schools under their responsibility during the last

year. Moreover, most Master Teachers could only visit most schools once, which sheds some doubt on their capacity to offer significant and continuous support and guidance to individual teachers.

The picture painted by the responses by school heads and teachers is even more worrying. About half of a sample of 69 headteachers stated that their school had not been visited during the last year by an education officer, and about one-fifth claimed that their school had not received any visit from a Master Teacher. When interviewing a sample of 292 teachers, it was found that a quarter had not been supervised by any officer or Master Teacher. On the other hand, while some schools were not visited at all, four headteachers indicated that their school had been subjected to three or more team supervisors over the last year. This leads to the conclusion that, even if time is probably insufficient to visit all schools, the distribution of time between schools is equally problematic.

Although fewer details are available for Bangladesh, the picture that emerges is similar. Out of a sample of 65 ATEOs, 63 claimed to have been able to visit more than 10 schools in the month preceding the survey, thus respecting the official minimum norm. However, this still left a significant number of schools unsupervised. While 54 ATEOs have the responsibility for more than 20 schools, only 3 actually visited more than 20 schools. At the same time, however, a number of schools received a visit by the ATEO more than once in the same month.

### **(c) School visits**

The previous paragraphs have indicated that not all schools receive regular supervision and support visits. The first question to be asked is how are schools selected? Most countries have defined some criteria in this regard, such as schools with specific problems, schools with a new headteacher, schools that have not been visited

for a given time, schools in a disadvantaged area, etc. Equally important, however, are instructions from superiors or the need to collect some specific information. In Uttar Pradesh, about 70 per cent of a sample of inspections was undertaken because of 'departmental instructions', 20 per cent to undertake specific enquiries and the remainder, one out of ten, for 'academic supervision'. As we saw above, in Nepal, little planning is done as most visits are undertaken on an ad-hoc basis.

In practice, the most important criterion is probably the accessibility of the school. As indicated in the national diagnosis of Sri Lanka, "there is a general tendency to visit frequently schools situated along motorable roads". In Korea, a significant shift has recently occurred: "School visits have changed from supervisors randomly selecting schools to schools actually requesting them. That is, school visits have changed from being authoritative to democratic in character".

Generally, supervisors are expected to make some preparations for their visits by, in particular, consulting previous inspection reports. How far they are able to do that is not clear. In Uttar Pradesh, "due to excessive workload, it was found that many of a sample of ABSAs were not able to make any preparation and only about a quarter could prepare themselves for academic supervision and support". The quality and relevance of the preparation depends on the quality of the information available and, in particular, on previous inspection reports. It will be seen later that this indeed poses problems. In Sri Lanka, preparations should be made easier by the fact that schools have logbooks, into which supervisors and Master Teachers are supposed to note conclusions and recommendations resulting from their visit. However, most of these remarks are pure statements of fact that are of little use to the schools and other supervisors. The following examples of quotes illustrate this: "Visited incidentally.

The school functions well”; “Visited the school to supervise classes. Office management and teaching are satisfactory”.

Several countries make a distinction between different types of visits. This is most clear-cut in Sri Lanka with team supervision as compared to incidental supervision. A team generally includes several education officers, at times from different (national, provincial, zonal and divisional) levels, some Master Teachers and, occasionally, principals from other schools. The team can consist of four to fourteen people. Such supervision should be carefully planned to avoid overlap between the levels and it should be announced in advance. Incidental supervision is undertaken by an individual officer and can occur without any previous planning. To this should be added a third type – individual visits by Master Teachers. Team supervision covers more areas than incidental supervision. In team supervision, both general management/administration and curriculum implementation/classroom teaching will be looked at, as can be seen from *Box 5*. Incidental visits will only look at one or a few of these topics. Master Teacher visits are much more focused on classroom observation and teacher guidance.

Sri Lanka seems to be the only one of the five countries where such a team supervision exists. In Korea, school visits are organized in groups of two supervisors. In the other countries, distinctions can also be made between different types of visits, but on another basis. In Uttar Pradesh, a full inspection is different from a casual or surprise inspection. Generally, the headteachers of cluster schools are informed that nearby schools will receive a full inspection. This is obviously not the case for surprise visits, their main purpose precisely being the control of pupil and teacher presence. The objectives of a full inspection are similar to those in Sri Lanka, but include community relations as a specific item. In Bangladesh, all



visits are supposed to be full visits. As mentioned earlier, an ambitious checklist of about 150 items is available for this purpose, but supervisors are seldom able to check on all or even most of these items. As a result, in reality a distinction is made between full visits and short visits, neither being announced.

### Box 5. Sri Lanka – areas covered by team supervision

General management and Administration	Curriculum implementation and classroom teaching
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Office management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>record keeping</li> <li>teachers' leave</li> <li>student attendance</li> <li>filing</li> <li>financial records</li> </ul> </li> <li>School planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>timetable</li> <li>school development plan</li> <li>school calendar</li> </ul> </li> <li>Establishment matter of teachers e.g. extension service</li> <li>Teacher requirements excesses and deficits</li> <li>Teacher and student welfare</li> <li>School premises, cleanliness</li> <li>School climate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>principal/teacher relationships</li> <li>teamwork</li> <li>leadership</li> <li>principal's general conduct and discipline</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>lesson planning</li> <li>schemes of work</li> </ul> </li> <li>Classroom environment teaching aids</li> <li>Teacher commitments</li> <li>Student evaluation and public examination results</li> <li>Special education needs and remedial teaching</li> <li>Implementation of innovation</li> <li>Teaching methodology</li> <li>Co-curricular activities</li> </ol>



This brings us to the issue of what actually takes place during school visits. Some of the national diagnoses do not present adequate information about this crucial point. This might well reflect the fact that many visits are routine affairs. An impression of the nature of such visits can be gained from the analysis of logbooks and inspection reports, as referred to earlier. The first point to mention is that many visits are relatively short. In Uttar Pradesh, generally two to three primary schools are supervised in one day because of the large number of schools to be visited, while one or two full days may be devoted to the supervision of an upper-primary school. In Bangladesh, more short visits are undertaken than full visits. A short visit will seldom take more than two hours, while a full visit can take more than one day, but on average a supervisor will spend four to six hours on a full visit. The main activities during a short visit are to check attendance, to observe the school environment and its cleanliness and to check co-curricular and food-for-work related activities. No time is set aside for classroom observation. In Uttar Pradesh and Sri Lanka, as in Bangladesh, more incidental or casual visits take place than full or team visits.

In Korea, a visit includes mainly classroom observation and feedback meetings with staff. Recently, the Seoul Office has initiated what is called a 'comprehensive supervision', the main focus being to evaluate the extent to which schools have implemented their own annual education plan.

Some more details are available for Sri Lanka<sup>9</sup> on the time spent during a visit on different items. An incidental visit takes about five hours, two of which are spent on classroom supervision, another two on office supervision, the rest of the time being allotted to discussion with the teachers and the principal, welfare issues and

---

<sup>9</sup> This is based on information collected from only six officers.

other topics. It is interesting to note that three of the six officers did not spend time on any formal discussions. ABSAs in Uttar Pradesh are explicitly expected during their visits to have discussions with the teachers and the headteacher. A large majority indeed appear to do so and more than half claim to have some discussions with the village community.

Supervisors are not satisfied with the superficial nature of many of their visits. In Nepal, they felt that they were not able to undertake effective and useful supervision and monitoring for several reasons, including the heavy workload and the lack of resources to address problems raised by schools or recommendations which they themselves make.

#### **(d) Reporting**

Writing reports after school visits is an important task for a supervisor, partly because his/her superior judges efficiency on the volume of reports produced. It is therefore not unexpected to note that most supervisors claim to write reports after all school visits. It is rather more surprising that in Uttar Pradesh a significant number (14 out of 119 respondents) admit not to do so systematically. Furthermore, when contrasting headteachers' answers to this question with that of supervisors in Uttar Pradesh, the number of supervisors who do not write reports is even higher. Nepal is slightly different from the other countries, as apparently supervisors only have to prepare a written report 'if necessary'. They are not required when the visit's main purpose is instructional support.

As discussed in an earlier chapter, all countries have some type of supervision report form that is used by almost all supervisors. The reports obviously contain information about the date and duration of

the visit, its main purpose, some basic data, problems noted and recommendations made. Their length differs: in Korea they contain “about ten pages on the result of supervision and one to two pages on the results of experiments and meetings”. In Bangladesh, they are a maximum of six pages and generally less than two. In the Central Province in Sri Lanka, the format for team supervision reports is fairly comprehensive. Part I gives an overall assessment of the 15 items to be covered (mentioned above); Part II consists of reports of classroom observations by various officers. These contain four sections: introduction (class observed, teacher, subject, theme, preparation for teaching); observations (what actually happens during the lesson, the teaching-learning process), suggestions for improvement, responsibility for implementation. Other provinces have their own fairly similar report forms. In the North Western Province, the report contains a detailed evaluation of the lesson, using a six point scale (zero to five) on 20 criteria: five for lesson planning and objectives, nine for development of the lesson, three on assessment procedures and remedial measures and three for an overall evaluation.

When supervision reports are analyzed, it appears that they seldom address the more profound issues and are thus of little help to the school staff for future supervisions. Arguably this reflects the rather superficial nature of many visits. In Uttar Pradesh, “it was found that most facts and figures regarding enrolment and attendance of pupils are given in the inspection reports. But nothing was given about subject-teaching in different classes, academic support provided to the teachers, demonstrations, if any, or the material aids being used in the teaching-learning process.” The same is true for Bangladesh, where there is a problem of inconsistency between the checklist for school visits and the reporting format. “This inconsistency hinders the proper reflection of the supervision activities in the report”.

Team supervision reports in Sri Lanka suffered from three shortcomings:

- Vague and brief statements are made about important aspects (e.g. *“Duty/weekly notes are written”*, but no comments are made about the quality of these notes).
- Lack of specific instructions for improvement (e.g. *“The first part of admission register is incomplete”*, but no instructions about how to make improvements and no deadlines are given).
- The suggestions made are sometimes unrelated to the reported situation.

Master Teachers do not always have to prepare reports, but a summary of their findings is reported in the logbook, which remains at the school. These logbooks also contain entries on incidental supervision. The remarks made earlier about team supervision reports are still more relevant in relation to these log-entries, which seldom contain much more than a pure statement that a visit has been made.

In all countries, a copy of the report is supposed to be sent to the supervisors' superior. In Sri Lanka and Uttar Pradesh one is also supposed to be sent to the school (in Sri Lanka, within two weeks after the visit), while in all cases one will be left in the office undertaking the supervision. In Korea, no official report is left at the school but, in principle, a feedback meeting is held on the day of the school visit to give some advice and to discuss the conclusions of the supervisors. No country publishes reports to make them available for the public. It seems that in Bangladesh, Uttar Pradesh and Sri Lanka, as in Korea, most supervision and support staff discuss the results of their school visit with the staff before finalizing their report. In Bangladesh, for instance, only one out of 67 ATEOs said that he or she did not discuss the report with anyone before its finalization and 52 had discussions with the headteacher, the teachers and community members. The duration, nature and substance of

these discussions are not known. On the whole, there seems to be an insufficient feedback of information and recommendations toward the schools. This brings us to the issue of follow-up on school visits and supervision reports.

### **(e) Follow-up, including use of reports**

The lack of substance of many supervision visits and reports renders any significant follow-up difficult to implement. There is therefore little opportunity for a well-structured follow-up. In all five countries, supervision reports are put to some use, but seldom to quickly remedy problems noted in specific schools. In Bangladesh, about 90 per cent of a sample of ATEOs claim that some follow-up is given to their reports, but its exact nature is not indicated. About half of those claimed to be unsatisfied with the follow-up. In Sri Lanka, “there is no established procedure to discuss the reports with officers at different levels. However, information regarding good and bad practices are communicated verbally at staff meetings and principals’ meetings.”

In Korea, no department is specifically responsible for monitoring follow-up on reports, but reports are used as a resource material and for the selection of outstanding schools to be given rewards. In Uttar Pradesh, in principle, “if some demand has been made for providing the schools with any materials, or if the attention of district authorities has been drawn towards any serious problem in schools, matters are discussed in meetings with district-level authorities and necessary steps are taken.” Yet, when a sample of 133 inspectors were questioned, more than 60 per cent claimed to be dissatisfied with the administrative action taken on their reports and recommendations. Everywhere, the lack of a clear follow-up structure or procedure is deplored.

School staff show similar if not greater dissatisfaction. Teachers in Sri Lanka are of the opinion that supervisors “collect all the

information regarding deficiencies of teachers and physical resources but never take action” to improve matters.

Among the reasons quoted by supervisors to explain the weakness of follow-up, the lack of authority of supervision and support staff to take action, especially if this implies disciplining teachers or releasing additional resources, can be highlighted. In Sri Lanka, supervisors also deplore the lack of an accepted code of ethics and a written job description, which would help them in assessing teachers. In Bangladesh and Nepal, supervisors believe that the political authorities give more attention to teachers and teachers’ associations than to their recommendations, while at the same time the teachers’ indifference is denounced. Supervisors also feel that the odds are stacked against them. The poor school environment and the acute lack of resources impede the improvement of teacher motivation and performance and are factors over which they have no control.

---

## **IV. OVERALL ASSESSMENT**

### **1. Impact on school functioning and quality**

Opinions of supervisors, headteachers and teachers on the impact of supervision on schools and on the teaching-learning process are somewhat mixed. On the one hand, all are convinced that school supervision and support is indispensable to improving the quality of education. On the other hand, for a number of reasons, the teaching staff in particular is not satisfied with the present impact of supervision on their school. Not surprisingly, opinions differ between supervisors, headteachers and teachers.

Supervisors themselves do not express much dissatisfaction with the impact of their work. In Bangladesh, for example, all the supervisors interviewed state that their supervision positively affects the teaching-learning process, but without specifying the precise nature of this effect. In Sri Lanka, a large majority has a positive opinion of their work. In Uttar Pradesh, about three-quarters of the sample of ABSAs express the view that their work has had a positive effect on the quality of teaching. This does not imply that there are no critical voices among the supervisors. Many realize the present limits on their efficiency and deplore the various factors over which they have little control and that render their work less beneficial. Supervisors in Korea seem to be the least satisfied. They find their impact on schools diminishing and consider the reasons to be the heavy workload and the scarce training opportunities. Everywhere, inspection staff comes up, as we will see later, with a number of useful suggestions to improve the state of their services.

Headteachers and, more clearly, teachers have less difficulty in expressing critical views about supervision. In Nepal, although “there



is no negative attitude towards the idea of being supervised among the headteacher and the teachers”, they are of the opinion that supervisors have little impact on school management or on teaching/learning at the moment. This is partly caused by the overall lack of resources for the schools, but also by the absence of supervisors from where teaching actually takes place – the classroom. A headteacher pointed out that “the supervisors should come and see the actual classroom so that they would be able to find out who are conducting good classes and who are the problem teachers”.

In Sri Lanka, both principals and teachers were asked to evaluate the impact of supervision. The results are presented in *Table 13*. The table shows, among other things, that headteachers are less critical than teachers. Heads of schools might well, at times, consider supervisors as partners in their attempts to discipline and control teachers. However, it seems the closer one comes to the classroom, the less benefits are felt from supervision. Teachers appreciate the visits by Master Teachers, or teams of supervisors which include Master Teachers, more than those by SLEAS Officers. The fact that the latter are more interested in teacher control and the former more in teacher support helps to explain this.

Furthermore, school staff in Sri Lanka were explicitly asked how supervision and support acted positively or negatively on their work. The positive effects that they mentioned can be summarized as follows. First, and this point is made more strongly by principals, supervision improves teacher motivation and student enthusiasm. The visits of outside specialists tend to make students more active and to reinforce the commitment of teachers. This seems to be particularly the case in deprived schools where regular visits (mainly by Master Teachers) are received by the teachers as a real sign of



interest and encouragement. Second, and this is stressed more by teachers, supervision helps to improve the teaching-learning practices. Inputs received from supervisors and again mainly from Master Teachers, help teachers to strengthen their knowledge of teaching methodology, subject content, use of remedial teaching and the use of teaching aids. Principals indicated that this is particularly the case for new teachers, who like to be supervised and to receive advice. Third, supervision encourages better planning and preparation by the teachers. Since Master Teachers examine term notes, weekly notes, and students' exercise books, teachers say that they tend to keep those records more systematically. Moreover, as stated by one principal, "Frequent supervision stimulates teachers to be prepared and plan their activities. They are reluctant to be caught unprepared in incidental supervision that is unannounced."

**Table 13. Sri Lanka: percentage of school principals and teachers with a positive opinion on impact of supervision**

*a. School principals (N = 69)*

Type of supervision	Positive impact
Incidental supervision	83 %
Team supervision	87 %
Master Teacher visits	81 %

*b. Teachers (N = 181)*

Supervision by	Positive impact on teaching-learning process	Positive impact on teacher motivation
SLEAS Officers	60 %	60 %
Master Teachers	76 %	71 %

Among the negative effects of supervision, two in particular might be worth mentioning. First, there is a lack of planning by supervisors, characterized by the haphazard way in which supervision takes place. Teachers indicated that sometimes supervisors visit schools only towards the end of the year, which makes their work less effective. They also felt that in some instances supervisors come to the class without any preparation, while in others their visit is confined to a few minutes of observation. The second negative effect is related to the attitude of the supervisors. Principals stated that sometimes teachers are hurt by the remarks made by supervisors either during or after their visits in other schools or public places. This last remark is not only made in Sri Lanka. In Bangladesh, for instance, almost all teachers expressed the feeling that supervision staff suffer from an attitude “of a controller and superior officer”. According to them, supervisors show little patience and respect for teachers, even in the presence of the learners. Their visits to schools therefore lead to stress among teachers, rather than helping them to develop their skills. This is also evident in Nepal, where many teachers “perceive supervisors as a threat as they feel they could transfer them without good reason”. Korean teachers also complain about supervisors’ authoritarian and bureaucratic attitude and their lack of professional knowledge.

The above opinions relate mainly to supervision and support through school visits. The only assessment of the other work undertaken by supervisors comes from Bangladesh, where teachers were asked to evaluate the in-service training activities undertaken by ATEOs. More than a third of the interviewed teachers considered this training to be “completely meaningless – simply a waste of time”. Another 20 per cent considered ATEOs the wrong people to provide this training. This fairly negative appreciation of the training provided by the supervisors has to be related to the fact that a fair proportion of them have no primary school teaching experience themselves.

Indeed, the majority of teachers interviewed said that some ATEOs, precisely because they lack such experience, cannot have a positive impact on their performance. From the same interviews it became evident that supervision by headteachers is considered more effective than that by external supervisors. The reasons mentioned are that headteachers have a more intimate understanding of the classroom realities, a more cordial and more support-oriented attitude and, also, that they can provide advice and guidance on a daily basis. In Korea, in a similar way, teachers prefer advice from peers and from senior teachers.

The question that then crops up is – how can supervisors have a beneficial impact on teaching and learning in the classroom? Firstly, a number of more practical problems relating to workload and working conditions need to be solved. The following section will look in more detail at these issues. Secondly, supervisors' attitudes have to change. One way of doing this is by improving their working conditions. Thirdly, and this is the crux of the matter, the job-description must reflect what teachers and supervisors consider to be the activities with the most impact. School visits are only one of the ways in which teaching can be influenced. Presently, because such visits take place too seldom, are too short and too focused on control rather than support, they are not the most useful type of intervention. That point is recognized by supervisors themselves. They draw the conclusion that the nature of their visits needs to change, but do not propose a change in the type of activities they engage in. Arguably, less time should be spent on routine visits, but more on activities such as the exchange of good practices between schools, school-based, practice-oriented training, demonstration classes and teachers' meetings to allow them to discuss their problems and develop school mission statements. The ultimate objective of supervision should be to empower teachers to solve their own problems. The Sri Lanka diagnosis, in its concluding paragraphs, gives

some examples of supervision strategies which work successfully towards that objective.

## 2. Synthesis of main problems

When summarizing the main problems which supervision and support services encounter (see *Table 14*), a few points should be taken into consideration. Firstly, the opinions of supervisors, headteachers and teachers do not always precisely coincide. On the whole, however, their views are not very different. Secondly, while the same situation might prevail in two or three countries, it is not necessarily experienced as a similar problem everywhere. Some diagnoses were more selective in listing problems than others. Thirdly, the order in which the problems are listed does not indicate an order of importance. Such detailed information was only available in Korea. There, just above 60 per cent of supervisors consider “an excessive non-supervisory workload” their principal problem, followed by “a negative attitude towards supervision” (mentioned by about 20 per cent).

These are indeed the two problems that are emphasized in every country. Excessive workload is a constraint encountered by supervisors everywhere. This has, as we know, two dimensions. Firstly, supervision and support staff are responsible for too many schools and as a result certain schools are not visited for a long time. In Bangladesh, for instance, more than half of all ATEOs are responsible for over 25 schools, while the official norm is between 15 and 20. The situation in Uttar Pradesh is still more preoccupying: an average ABSA has to supervise more than 80 schools, the official norm being an already excessive 50 to 60.

SLEAS Officers in Sri Lanka consider the number of schools acceptable although they were unable to visit all schools. In the preceding school year, 28 per cent of primary teachers had not been

supervised by these officers. On average, the Master Teachers interviewed, whose interventions should be more regular, were not able to visit a quarter of ‘their’ schools. The continued growth of the system, unaccompanied as it is by an expansion in the number of inspectors, makes this problem increasingly difficult to solve. Secondly, supervisors have too many different tasks, some – if not most – of which have little relationship with supervision as such. This has a number of negative effects. The more administrative tasks, which are less crucial but generally more urgent, are given more time than the real pedagogical issues. When visiting schools,

**Table 14. Summary of main problems in school supervision and support according to interviews of supervisors and school staff**

	Bangladesh	Korea	Nepal	Sri Lanka	Uttar Pradesh
Excessive workload	X	X	X	X	X
Supervisors' attitudes and procedures	X	X	X	X	
Lack of training	X		X	X	X
Inefficient recruitment	X	X	X	X	
Poor material working conditions and support	X		X	X	X
Poor status of supervision career		X	X		X
Lack of follow-up	X			X	
Inefficient planning	X			X	
Insufficient budget		X		X	
Lack of teacher support services					X
Lack of self-supervision allowance		X			

supervisors spend little time in classroom observation. If they do so, their attitude is more evaluative than supportive.

This brings us to a second problem: the fact that teachers view supervisors' attitudes as condescending. Supervisors do not necessarily disagree, although they use another adjective. They feel that their work is more disciplinary than developmental. This is because they are requested to perform the tasks of both teacher support and teacher control. A role conflict thus easily arises, which distorts the relationship between supervisors and teachers. Everywhere, supervisors aspire to work more towards teacher support and advice, even in Sri Lanka and Nepal, where specific support actors exist (Master Teachers and resource persons respectively).

The issue of attitudes is linked to that of procedures. The point is not simply that these are too bureaucratic, but a few more specific points are mentioned in the different reports. Both Nepal and Sri Lanka, for instance, deplore the lack of monitoring of supervisors' work by their superiors, which could be as much an incentive as an aid for them. In two countries, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, poor planning, particularly of school visits, is offered as an additional explanation for the inefficiency of present supervision procedures. An issue explicitly mentioned in Sri Lanka, but probably of relevance elsewhere, concerns the lack of incentives to officers to work in the more disadvantaged areas. In Korea, supervision is felt to be insufficiently flexible to meet the varied needs of schools and teachers. Because of the standardized approach, a school visit becomes a perfunctory exercise that is of little use to many teachers.

However, negative attitudes, inadequate supervision procedures and poor planning are not simply the result of an unreasonably heavy workload. What also contributes is the insufficient, if not non-

existent, provision of training for supervision and support staff. A distinction can be made in this regard between Sri Lanka and Korea where induction training, in particular, is fairly well established, and the other three countries, where induction as well as the in-service training of supervisors lacks structure, continuity and a focus on supervision and support issues. In Bangladesh, for instance, all ATEOs are involved in sub-cluster training, while less than 20 per cent of those who were interviewed have received training themselves. However, even in the first two countries, supervisors are not satisfied. In Korea, they find the opportunities for continuous upgrading too scarce, and in Sri Lanka criticisms are heard about the lack of co-ordination between the agencies involved in training and the fact that the content does not sufficiently cover pedagogical issues.

Such scarcity of training is particularly deplorable in view of the inefficient recruitment procedures. It is mainly in regard to this issue that political interference is most evident, especially in Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka, where it is mentioned that “the professional quality of the service has deteriorated to some extent due to irregular promotions”. Another related problem in Nepal, and to a lesser extent in Bangladesh, is the recruitment of young university graduates with no teaching experience at all. The difficulties this can create are evident. Few teachers will accept advice from people, however well educated, who have never worked in a classroom. The alternative solution, namely to recruit experienced teachers or headteachers, is undoubtedly preferable but not completely flawless either, as people with such a profile might find it difficult to use innovative approaches and try out non-conventional strategies.

Education authorities are not blind to the need for a change in recruitment practices. In Sri Lanka, it is proposed that, in addition to the competitive examination and interview, there should be criteria to evaluate the actual teaching ability of the candidates for Master



Teacher positions. In Bangladesh, the stress is put on the need for supervisors to have teaching experience or B.Ed. training. In Korea, it is planned that recruitment will be reorganized, relying on publicized examinations rather than the simple transfer of teaching staff, in order to make it more objective and to attract younger and more qualified candidates.

The previous chapters have highlighted in detail the problems related to poor working conditions and support instruments, which obviously render the already heavy workload still more difficult to manage. Again, the cases of Korea and Sri Lanka should be distinguished from those of the other three countries, where the lack of material and financial resources should not be underestimated. When insufficient funds are available for travelling or no vehicles exist, the impact on the coverage and the quality of supervision is detrimental. In addition, the weakness of support instruments is specifically mentioned in the cases of Bangladesh and Nepal. Generally, what is available is limited to broad overall guidelines and to a standard supervision form. In Bangladesh, a school visit checklist also exists but, as this list is too long (containing about 150 items) and does not treat the same issues as the report form, both tools become rather useless if not confusing. The Sri Lanka diagnosis stresses the absence of a good information base for supervision purposes, the utility of which needs little comment.

The lack of follow-up, a serious problem everywhere but mentioned in particular in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, has different dimensions. Supervisors' recommendations are not acted upon by their superiors, who seldom give any attention to them. Supervisors themselves do not systematically ensure continuity in terms of their visits. School heads and teachers seldom implement the advice of supervision and support staff. The irregularity of school visits and the superficial nature



of many supervision reports clearly further limit efficient follow-up. In addition, in some cases, political interference stops follow-up, in particular where teacher discipline is concerned. Nowhere, it seems, is a satisfying procedure in place that enables efficient follow-up. Neither is there a specific unit in charge of these matters. The Korea diagnosis deplores in particular the fact that supervision results are not used to reward deserving schools.

The absence of a specific budget for supervision and support and the general insufficiency of funds available to decentralized offices, on the one hand, and the poor status of the supervision career (in Korea, especially when compared to school principals) on the other, are linked and cannot be seen as separate from the poor material working conditions. In Sri Lanka, a career ladder aimed at improving staff motivation has been implemented for all teachers, including Master Teachers. This puts more emphasis on classroom performance and participation in in-service training, rather than on experience and qualifications. Education officers, on the other hand, have an even more 'traditional' career ladder.

Two final problems are mentioned in only one country. The lack or weakness of specific teacher-support services that could assist supervisors and take over some of their responsibilities is an issue in Uttar Pradesh. Actually, it is in this state probably more than anywhere else that a number of support structures has been created in the form of Resource Centres at block and village level. However, some of these are "lacking in initiative and institutional planning, according to the local needs and problems", and others "simply perform their routine duties of collecting information and disseminating instructions". In Korea, where school-based supervision and support receives a growing emphasis, the lack of funds for schools to undertake their own supervision is referred to.

As a result of this problem-ridden environment, many supervisors feel frustrated in their job. This expresses itself in the form of lack of motivation, which makes overcoming the various obstacles ever more of a struggle. However, the picture is not completely dark. To get an impression of supervisors' job satisfaction, samples in Bangladesh and Uttar Pradesh were asked if they would opt again for the post of supervisor if given the chance. In Bangladesh, 61 per cent said they would and 39 per cent, who referred to the various problems listed above, said that they would not. Among the reasons given by those who would choose supervision again, some show a clear commitment to the profession, but others seem to hold the opinion that any job is better than none. In Uttar Pradesh (see *Table 15*), just over half would opt for the same profession. Those with less experience show slightly less dissatisfaction with their job. The main reason behind the lack of interest is "the bleak prospects of promotion and opportunities for career development". Poor career prospects are indeed a major cause of frustration for supervisors in most countries.

### 3. Towards the future: trends and suggestions<sup>10</sup>

A widespread sense of scepticism on the value of inspection and supervision persists in all the countries which has led, in the past, to the deterioration of the system of external supervision. However,

**Table 15. Uttar Pradesh: job satisfaction of supervisors (N = 133)**

Work experience (years)	Would you opt for the ABSA job again, if given the chance?				
	Yes		No		Total
0 - 10	44	55 %	36	45 %	80
10 - 20	7	54 %	6	46 %	13
over 20	20	50 %	20	50 %	40
TOTAL	71	53 %	62	47 %	133

the service is gradually regaining its importance, while it is undergoing change: its traditional conception as a mechanism of policing the work of teachers, by taking punitive action wherever necessary, is giving way to viewing supervision as an essential component of a support system for the school and the teachers. So far, it appears that no comprehensive plans have been developed or implemented, but several trends can be discerned, some of which have already been highlighted above.

Firstly, supervision staff are asked to focus more on giving support to teachers and contributing to their professional development than on controlling and inspecting. The change of terminology in different countries is the first expression of this trend. More importantly, it is recognized that in order to give more attention to pedagogic issues, supervision should become a more comprehensive and more frequent exercise. In order to increase the frequency of school visits, there is a need to recruit more supervisors, a suggestion specifically made in, for instance, Korea, Nepal and Sri Lanka. However, probably more fundamental is a reform in structures, which is bringing supervision and support staff closer to schools.

The five countries are indeed attempting, in different ways, to decrease the distance between supervisors and teachers and to make supervision a developmental exercise. Two trends can be observed in this regard. In Korea, efforts are being made to curtail external supervision from the ministry and replace it with school-site supervision and support practices. In several countries of South Asia, where schools are often small and unable to develop a school-based supervision mechanism, clusters are being created with resource

---

<sup>10</sup> This section is partly based on the discussions held at a seminar on *Teacher supervision and support in Asia*, organized in Seoul, Korea, at the Korean Educational Development Institute by the Asian Network of Training and Research Institutions in Educational Planning (ANTRIEP) and the IIEP, in May 1997. The five regional diagnoses were presented on this occasion.

centres, to serve and support the schools within the cluster. This is particularly evident in the massive basic education projects being implemented in Nepal and India. The ATEOs in Bangladesh are to function as cluster-level supervisors with the explicit charge of carrying out training programmes and helping the schools in their area of work towards quality improvement. Sri Lanka has the system of Master Teachers who operate in a relatively small area and act as academic guides to teachers in the primary schools within this area. However, these strategies in South Asia need considerable strengthening as the incumbents are invariably burdened with too large a number of schools and teachers to make a significant impact on quality.

The next step in this process of decentralization is to reinforce school-site supervision and support practice, a trend which can be observed worldwide, including in the Asian countries studied under this project. *Chapter I.4.(b)* of this volume highlighted in detail in how far each country has given responsibilities in supervision to the school staff and the community. Korea, for instance, relies increasingly on in-school supervision and has actually abolished the central department of supervision. Headteachers in Sri Lanka and Nepal have also received growing responsibilities in supervision. While this is much less the case in Bangladesh and Uttar Pradesh, one of the specific suggestions made in the Bangladesh report is that supervisors should allow teachers more autonomy. This reliance on in-school supervision is part of a wider strategy towards increasing school autonomy in different fields. The experiences so far in this area have shown that such reforms are conditioned by important changes, both structural and attitudinal, and that some countries are attempting this reform without giving sufficient attention to these conditions. The same is probably true for strategies that aim to include the community in the supervision process. As explained in *Chapter I.4(b)*, several countries, in theory, foresee a role for the community, but for well-known reasons, this role has rarely been more than superficial.

These trends should engender changes in the role definitions of the various actors at each level. The Korean diagnosis offers a detailed proposal in this regard. The central level should: “focus on nationwide planning and co-ordination and research and development to spread innovative models of supervision; screening excellent personnel; operating in-service training; reorganizing and spreading exemplary cases of supervision; and the provision of the latest information and theories. The decentralized offices of education should adapt their supervisory work to the local needs. Their tasks should include research and development to devise instructional models and teaching methods suitable to the local curriculum; screening and training of the local personnel; helping schools to exchange information on supervisory activities and collaborate; and motivating teachers to participate in various supervisory options by supporting subject-matter meetings. Finally, individual schools should extend autonomous supervisory activities.”

In almost all the countries, the legitimate role of external supervision has come to be seen, whatever the nomenclature used, as one of improving teaching-learning processes through academic guidance of teachers. Accordingly, the current trend in most countries is still to focus on individual teacher supervision and training. In the short run, this effort is likely to continue. But, in the long run, one can expect that this approach will be replaced by a more holistic perspective of monitoring total school improvement which integrates pedagogic and management dimensions of supervision and support. This is particularly so in countries where many primary schools continue to be small units with relatively poor internal resources, both physical and human. This recent shifting of the focus from individual teachers to the whole school can be observed at least in South Korea and Sri Lanka. There, attempts are made to link this with school development planning or total school quality improvement. With increased emphasis on school-level planning, school

performance is seen from a new angle, making self-set goals and targets as the basis for evaluating the performance of a school.

A related trend with an impact on the functioning of supervisors is that of creating an information base at the local level, containing detailed data by school. In different countries of the South Asian region, one can find examples of concerted attempts to carry out school mapping and micro-planning exercises through participatory rural appraisal methods. This approach, coupled with the increased focus on community participation and decentralized management, is compelling the supervisors to move towards support and improvement based on empirical information instead of merely emphasizing adherence to administrative norms. In a project in Sri Lanka<sup>11</sup> on improving the functioning of primary schools in plantation areas, such an information base has become an effective tool for supervisors and resource persons. Indirectly, the indicators developed through the information base also act as a means of assessing and monitoring the performance of the schools in a context-specific manner.

This need for objective information is further strengthened by the growing consciousness that an efficient supervision and support system needs to be flexible and diversified. Schools that function properly with competent and experienced principals and efficient internal control mechanisms, have little need for intensive external supervision and support. On the other hand, poorly functioning schools, with untrained principals and poorly motivated teachers, do need systematic and sustained supervision and support services, of different kinds. The implementation of such diversified services demands the development of a reliable and relevant information system on the quality of schools.

Linked to these different reform attempts, and an essential pre-condition for their success, is a trend towards more transparency.

---

<sup>11</sup> For more information, see: Perera, 1997.



For the moment, this is a transparency mainly within the education community. Supervisors are supposed to hold discussions, during and after their school visit, with the staff they have evaluated. Standard report forms and checklists are available, so that teachers have a better idea of the inspection procedures. In a few places, for instance in Uttar Pradesh, it is expected that supervision and support staff discuss with communities. Visits have lost their surprise character in Korea and Sri Lanka where schools now have to request them. On the other hand, in Uttar Pradesh, a specific category of 'surprise visits' exists, and a number of headteachers, there and elsewhere, prefer visits to be unannounced, in order to help them discipline teachers. Nowhere yet have inspection reports been made open to the local community or to the public.

In the same vein the accountability of supervisors needs to be rethought. Traditionally, schools are held accountable to the supervisors, who report back to their superiors and are judged on the basis of the number of visits and reports written. A framework is slowly emerging, which places combined accountability with the school authorities and the supervisor and is based on learning outcomes. Many countries in the region have specified, at the national level, a minimum or an essential set of learning outcomes to be achieved at the end of primary education. Correspondingly, regular assessment of learner achievement has gained ground in many countries. In one way or the other, achievement test results are likely to become the main indicators of school performance. At the same time, it is recognized however that performance in external tests cannot fully reflect the health of a primary school and attempts are being made to develop a broadened framework incorporating a larger set of process indicators.

Within this new perspective, the supervision system is bound to be held accountable, jointly with the school authorities, for the achievement of results. This is well illustrated by the moves

contemplated in Sri Lanka. The emphasis in the changed set up will be on accountability to parents and students as indicated by learner performance. The supervision system in the case of a group of innovative schools run by an NGO in Bangladesh<sup>12</sup> also highlights this point: the number of supervisors is not decided based on norms for school-inspector ratio or school-teacher ratio, but on the performance of the students. The basic objective of these approaches is to create a sense of shared responsibility between authorities internal and external to the school, paving the way for integrating control and support functions of supervision and thus solving what is one of the main dilemmas in supervision.

---

<sup>12</sup> The NGO is: Gonoshahajjo Sangstha (GSS), which means: People Support Organization. See Govinda and Tapan (forthcoming).



---

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Carron, G. and Ta Ngoc, C. 1996. The quality of primary schools in different development contexts. Paris: UNESCO/IIEP.

Dalin, P. 1994. How schools improve: an international report. London: Cassell.

Govinda, R. and Tapan, S., forthcoming. Quality primary education through school-based supervision and support to teachers: case-study of GSS primary schools in Bangladesh. Paris: UNESCO/IIEP.

Heneveld, W. and Craig, H. 1996. Schools count. World Bank project designs and the quality of primary education in sub-Saharan Africa. Washington DC: World Bank Africa Technical Department.

Mortimore, P. et al., 1988. School matters: the junior years. London: Paul Chapman Publ.

OECD. 1995. Schools under scrutiny. Paris: OECD Centre for Educational Research and Innovation.

Perera, W. 1997. Changing schools from within: a management intervention for improving school functioning in Sri Lanka. Paris: UNESCO/IIEP.

UNESCO. 1998. World Education Report 1998. Paris: UNESCO.

World Bank. 1997. World Development Report 1997. Oxford: Oxford University Press.



## IIEP publications and documents

More than 1,200 titles on all aspects of educational planning have been published by the International Institute for Educational Planning. A comprehensive catalogue, giving details of their availability, includes research reports, case studies, seminar documents, training materials, occasional papers and reference books in the following subject categories:

*Economics of education, costs and financing.*

*Manpower and employment.*

*Demographic studies.*

*The location of schools (school map) and sub-national planning.*

*Administration and management.*

*Curriculum development and evaluation.*

*Educational technology.*

*Primary, secondary and higher education.*

*Vocational and technical education.*

*Non-formal, out-of-school, adult and rural education.*

*Disadvantaged groups.*

Copies of the catalogue may be obtained from the IIEP Publications Unit on request.



## The International Institute for Educational Planning

The International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) is an international centre for advanced training and research in the field of educational planning. It was established by UNESCO in 1963 and is financed by UNESCO and by voluntary contributions from Member States. In recent years the following Member States have provided voluntary contributions to the Institute: Denmark, Germany, Iceland, India, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and Venezuela.

The Institute's aim is to contribute to the development of education throughout the world, by expanding both knowledge and the supply of competent professionals in the field of educational planning. In this endeavour the Institute co-operates with interested training and research organizations in Member States. The Governing Board of the IIEP, which approves the Institute's programme and budget, consists of a maximum of eight elected members and four members designated by the United Nations Organization and certain of its specialized agencies and institutes.

### *Chairman:*

*Lennart Wohlgemuth* (Sweden)

Director, The Nordic Africa Institute, Uppsala, Sweden.

### Designated Members:

*David de Ferranti*

Director, Human Development Department (HDD), The World Bank.  
Washington, USA.

*Carlos Fortin*

Deputy to the Secretary-General, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Geneva, Switzerland.

*Miriam J. Hirschfeld*

Chief Scientist for Nursing, Division of Analysis, Research and Assessment, World Health Organization (WHO), Geneva, Switzerland.

*Jeggan Senghor*

Director, African Institute for Economic Development (IDEP), Senegal.

### Elected Members:

*Dato'Asiah bt. Abu Samah* (Malaysia)

Corporate Advisor, Lang Education, Land and General Berhad,  
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

*Klaus Hüfner* (Germany)

Professor, Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin, Germany.

*Faïza Kefi* (Tunisia)

President, National Union of Tunisian Women, Tunis, Tunisia.

*Tamas Kozma* (Hungary)

Director-General, Hungarian Institute for Educational Research, Budapest, Hungary.

*Teboho Moja* (South Africa)

Special Adviser to the Minister of Education, Pretoria, South Africa.

*Yolanda M. Rojas* (Costa Rica)

Professor, University of Costa Rica, San José, Costa Rica.

*Michel Vernières* (France)

Professor, University of Paris I, Panthéon-Sorbonne, Paris, France.

### *Inquiries about the Institute should be addressed to:*

The Office of the Director, International Institute for Educational Planning,  
7-9 rue Eugène-Delacroix, 75116 Paris, France.





Working document in the series:  
*Trends in school supervision*

# Supervision and support services in Asia

## Vol. II: National diagnoses of five countries

Gabriel Carron, Anton De Grauwe and  
Rangachar Govinda

A paper copy of this publication may be obtained on request from:

[information@iiep.unesco.org](mailto:information@iiep.unesco.org)

To consult the full catalogue of IIEP Publications and documents on our

Web site: <http://www.unesco.org/iiep>

Published by:

International Institute for Educational Planning/UNESCO

7 - 9 rue Eugène-Delacroix, 75116 Paris

© UNESCO 1998



**International Institute for Educational Planning**







**Trends in school supervision**

---

# **Supervision and support services in Asia**

Volume II

## **National diagnoses**

Bangladesh

The State of Uttar Pradesh (India)

Republic of Korea

Nepal

Sri Lanka



International Institute for Educational Planning

The views and opinions expressed in this booklet are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of UNESCO or of the IIEP. The designations employed and the presentation of material throughout this review do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of UNESCO or IIEP concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning its frontiers or boundaries.

The publication costs of this study have been covered through a grant-in-aid offered by UNESCO and by voluntary contributions made by several Member States of UNESCO, the list of which will be found at the end of the volume.

Published by

International Institute for Educational Planning/UNESCO

7 - 9 rue Eugène-Delacroix, 75116 Paris, France

Printed in IIEP's printshop

ISBN 92-803-1172-7

© UNESCO October 1998

---

## CONTENTS

	Page
Presentation of the series	7
Introduction	11
Chapter I. Bangladesh	15
List of abbreviations	16
Introduction	19
I. General overview of supervision and support services	23
II. The management of supervision and support services	34
III. The daily functioning of supervision and support services	42
IV. Overall assessment	53
Bibliography	60
Chapter II. Republic of Korea	61
List of abbreviations	62
Introduction	65
I. General overview of supervision and support services	70
II. The management of supervision and support services	77
III. The daily functioning of supervision and support services	89
IV. Overall assessment	95
Appendix I.	
Organization of the metropolitan and provincial offices of education	103
Bibliography	104
Chapter III. India: Uttar Pradesh	105
List of abbreviations	106
Introduction	109
I. General overview of supervision and support services	113

II. The management of supervision and support services	125
III. The daily functioning of supervision and support services	132
IV. Overall assessment	144
Appendix I.	
Format of the inspection report for schools	155
Bibliography	156
<b>Chapter IV. Nepal</b>	<b>159</b>
List of abbreviations	160
Introduction	163
I. School supervision in Nepal: an overview	167
II. The management of supervision services	179
III. The daily functioning of supervision and support services	186
IV. Overall assessment	200
Bibliography	212
<b>Chapter V. Sri Lanka</b>	<b>215</b>
List of abbreviations	216
Introduction	221
I. General overview of supervision and support services	226
II. The management of supervision services: basic facts and critical issues	243
III. The daily functioning of supervision and support services	258
IV. Overall assessment	292
Appendices	310
Bibliography	316

---

## PRESENTATION OF THE SERIES

This publication forms part of a series on “Trends in school supervision”, which accompanies the implementation of an IIEP project on “Improving teacher supervision and support services for basic education”.<sup>1</sup> The project, which began in 1996, is one of the main research components of the Institute’s Medium Term Plan 1996-2001. The Institute wishes to express its sincere thanks to BMZ (the German Federal Ministry for Technical Co-operation) and to UNICEF for their support in the implementation of this project.

Earlier research, at the Institute and elsewhere, has pointed to the need, in an era of increased decentralization and school autonomy, to strengthen the skills of personnel involved in supervision and support at local level and in schools.

Two related points are worth mentioning here, as they form both the background to and the rationale for the IIEP’s concern with this area of management. Firstly, professional supervision and support services for teachers, although existing in almost every country for a long time, have been ignored, increasingly so since resources have become more scarce. This neglect has, until recent times, been reflected by a similar indifference among researchers. Secondly, one important reason why the quality of basic education has deteriorated in many contexts is precisely related to the weakening of these services.

---

<sup>1</sup> Other titles in the series include:

- Ali, M.A. 1998. Supervision for teacher development: a proposal for Pakistan.
- Carron, G. and De Grauwe, A. 1997. Current issues in supervision: a literature review.
- Fergusson, V. 1998. Supervision for the self-managing school: the New Zealand experience.
- Khaniya, T.R. 1997. Teacher support through resource centres: the Nepalese case.
- Perera, W.J. 1997. Changing schools from within: a management intervention for improving school functioning in Sri Lanka.

All titles are published by UNESCO/International Institute for Educational Planning, in Paris.

The IIEP project, developed against this background, consists of research, training and dissemination activities. Its specific objectives are to assist countries in diagnosing and reforming the existing services of supervision and support, and to identify promising strategies for their reorganization and strengthening. The series of publications, of which this monograph forms a part, is the result of research, implemented in several regions, to address a number of questions, such as:

- How is supervision and support organized in different countries? What have been the major trends in their recent evolution?
- What are the principal problems which supervision and support services are presently facing in terms of: organizational structures; overall management; and daily functioning?
- To what extent and under what conditions do these services have a positive impact on the quality of the teaching-learning processes in schools?
- What are the major innovations taking place, mainly in respect of the devolution of supervision and support to the school-site level? How do these innovations operate? What are the main results?

In order to formulate answers to these questions, the project elaborated the following operational definition of school supervision and support services: all those services whose main function is to control and evaluate, and/or advise and support schoolheads and teachers. The focus of the project is on external supervision and support, that is to say on the work of inspectors, supervisors, advisers, counsellors, etc. located outside the school, at local, regional or central levels. A common characteristic of these officers is that regular visits to schools are an essential part of their mandate.

However, many countries, in their attempts to reform and innovate supervision, are increasingly relying on in-school or community-based strategies (such as resource centres, school clusters, in-school supervision by the principal or by peers, school-based management) to complement, if not to replace, external supervision and support. The project therefore also pays attention to a number of such innovations and, in more general terms, the strengths and weaknesses of strategies aiming at the reinforcement of internal quality-control mechanisms.

This series “Trends in school supervision” thus consists of a variety of titles: national diagnoses on supervision and support, comparative analyses of the situation by region, case studies on innovative experiences, and monographs and discussion papers on specific management issues. It is hoped that this series will fill a gap in educational research as well as be an inspiration, in particular, to policy-makers intending to reform supervision and to supervisors who want to improve on their practice.





---

## INTRODUCTION

There is a growing consciousness, confirmed by the results of recent research undertaken by the IIEP and others<sup>2</sup>, that improving the quality of education is not simply a question of injecting more resources into the system, but that the management of these resources at school-level is fundamental. In this regard, interactions between in-school actors and relationships with their immediate ‘supervisors’ (school inspectors, pedagogical advisers, etc.) are decisive factors. As shown by various studies, one important determinant of the deterioration of the functioning of primary schools precisely relates to the weakening of the professional supervision and support structures for teachers.

This attention to school and teacher supervision and support finds an additional justification in the present trend towards increased school autonomy. The ability of schools to use this freedom effectively will depend to a large extent on the strength of the support services on which they can rely.

It is for these different reasons that the IIEP pays special attention, in its present medium-term plan (1996-2001), to *innovative ways of providing professional support for teachers, as part of its programme on promoting the quality of basic education*. In this respect, a six-year project *Improving teacher supervision and support services for basic education*, has been developed.

The core question underlying this project is how a coherent system of professional support with a direct impact on school and teacher

---

<sup>2</sup> See, among other studies, Carron and Ta Ngoc (1994); Dalin (1993); Heneveld and Craig (1996); Mortimore et al. (1988); OECD (1995).

performance can be developed and sustained. Inspection and supervision services are obviously an essential element of such a system. At the same time, a varied range of new mechanisms has been created that aims at reorganizing and strengthening teacher support and that takes into account the recent emphasis on the need to improve school-level management. These mechanisms therefore concentrate on the role of the headteacher and on decentralizing school monitoring structures.

On the whole, recent research on the situation of school supervision in developing countries is scant and the evidence is mainly anecdotal. Both the present state of traditional services and the spread and impact of innovations are poorly documented. It is precisely in order to collect more detailed information, indispensable to any programme to improve existing services, that the IIEP has included a strong research component in its project.

The first phase of the project was implemented in the Asian region. National diagnoses on supervision and support services were carried out in five Asian countries: Bangladesh, Nepal, the Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka and the State of Uttar Pradesh in India. These teams drew most of their members from national training and/or research institutions, which are members of the Asian Network of Training and Research Institutions in Educational Planning (ANTRIEP).

Each team relied on two main sets of information to develop their national diagnosis. On one hand, relevant official and unofficial publications, documents and statistics were extensively reviewed. On the other hand, detailed studies were undertaken in localities that reflect the diversity of the countries. The studies also included interviews with a selected group of actors interested in supervision: supervisors themselves and, in most cases, teachers and school heads (see *Table 1*).

When studying supervision, the research teams were asked to concentrate on external supervision services, i.e. all those services whose main function is to inspect, control, evaluate, and/or advise, assist and support school heads and teachers. The actors involved in these services were located outside the school at local, regional or central levels. A common characteristic of all these officers is that regular school visits are an essential part of their mandate. Research teams were asked to highlight and comment on the extent to which any significant trend towards school-site supervision (either in-school or community-based) was present.

The five national diagnoses have not all followed precisely the same outline or used exactly the same methodology. The Nepalese

**Table 1. Personnel interviewed for national diagnosis**

	Supervision personnel	School staff	Locations
Bangladesh	65 ATEOs 2 TEOs	16 headteachers 50 assistant teachers	2 districts
Korea	34 supervisors	—	3 regions/cities
Nepal	10 supervisors several resource persons 3 DEOs	Several headteachers and teachers	3 districts
Sri Lanka	8 education officers 19 Master Teachers	70 principals 292 teachers	Different districts of one province
Uttar Pradesh	133 ABSAs/SDIs	119 headteachers	3 districts

paper for instance relied, more than the others, on the observations made and the interviews held during field visits to three districts. However, it has less statistical data on supervisors' profiles and distribution. In Korea, the national team, which was based at the Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI), could rely on recent research reports written by the same Institute, which contained, for instance, the results of a survey of a representative sample of supervisors and teachers.

This second volume presents an edited version of each diagnosis. A first volume, written by the same editors, analyzes the experiences of the five countries from a comparative perspective and points at possible strategies to reform and improve supervision.

---

## **Chapter I**

### **National diagnosis on Teacher supervision and support services for basic education in Bangladesh**

**AKM Abdul Muqtadir (Team leader),  
Md. Mozammel Haque,  
Roohi Zakia Dewan<sup>1</sup>**

---

<sup>1</sup> Team members from the National Academy for Educational Management (NAEM), Bangladesh; advisers: Mr Md. Khurshid Alam, Director General, NAEM, and Mr Anwarul Aziz, Director, National Academy for Primary Education.

---

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACR	Annual Confidential Report
ADPEO	Assistant District Primary Education Officer
ATEO	Assistant Thana Education Officer
BMDC	Bangladesh Management Development Corporation
DPE	Directorate of Primary Education
DPEO	District Primary Education Officer
DPI	Director of Public Instruction
NAPE	National Academy for Primary Education
PMED	Primary and Mass Education Division
SMC	School Management Committee
TEO	Thana Education Officer



---

## **CONTENTS**

<b>List of abbreviations</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>19</b>
1. The country	19
2. The study	21
<b>I. General overview of supervision and support services</b>	<b>23</b>
1. Historical background of supervision	23
2. The overall structure of supervision and support	25
3. Official functions of the different categories of supervisors	25
4. Relations with other pedagogical services	30
5. Relation with school-site supervision	31
<b>II. The management of supervision services</b>	<b>34</b>
1. Basic facts	34
2. Critical issues	37
(a) Recruitment of supervisors	37
(b) Training of supervisors	38
(c) Professional organizations	40
(d) Career prospects	40
(e) Monitoring and evaluation	40
(f) Support	41
<b>III. Actual functioning of supervision and support services</b>	<b>42</b>
1. Working conditions	42
(a) Material working conditions and service staff	42
(b) Financial conditions	43

2. Daily operation of supervisory and support services	43
(a) Planning and workload	43
(b) School visits	45
(c) Reporting	49
(d) Follow-up on visits and reports	51
IV. Overall assessment	53
1. Impact on school functioning and quality	53
(a) The views of the supervisors	53
(b) The views of the teachers	55
2. Synthesis of problems	56
3. Suggestions for improvement	57
Bibliography	60

---

# INTRODUCTION

## 1. The country

Bangladesh, a South Asian developing country with a population of about 120 million, is facing the challenge of educating its fast-growing population which has a literacy rate of only 35 per cent. Enhancing the literacy rate necessitates undertaking a mass education programme as well as ensuring basic education for all children in the eligible age group (six to ten years). Several steps taken by the government in recent years have resulted in a considerable rise in the enrolment rate of primary-school-age children. It is worth mentioning that the expansion of the non-government sector in education has been equally, if not more, impressive. The gross enrolment rate at primary level increased between 1980 and 1995 by approximately 30 percentage points and now stands at just under 90 per cent. Net enrolment is estimated at about 70 per cent. Government spending on education has increased in recent years and stands between 11 to 12 per cent of the budget.

However, this expansion cannot hide the serious problems that exist in ensuring quality education. According to recent national statistics, there are on average 63 pupils per teacher and the average attendance in primary schools is less than 75 per cent. Only about half the number of pupils complete the five-year primary-school cycle and almost half of those who actually finish remain illiterate (Ahmed, 1996). Studies conducted among 11 to 12 year-old children who have completed the primary-school cycle show that only 46 per cent of primary-school graduates have obtained basic education skills, including reading, writing, numerical and life skills (Chowdhury et al.,

1996). The combination of high drop-out rates, low retention rates and low levels of achievement by pupils underlines the urgency of ensuring quality education for all children.

Teacher quality is one of the most important factors in ensuring quality education. The extent of teacher qualifications is one indicator of quality, and a worrying one in Bangladesh, as half of all primary-school teachers have only obtained a secondary-school diploma (see *Table 1*). Teacher supervision and support services are crucial elements influencing the quality of teaching. Effective inspection and supervision of schools and teachers are perceived as key factors for both quality control and for improving the quality of education.

**Table 1. Educational qualifications of primary-school teachers (in percentages)**

Secondary School Certificate	Higher School Certificate	College Degree	Other
49.6	35.7	13.4	2.3

*Source:* UNICEF, 1995. Referred to in Chowdhury et al., 1996.

The government's plans on primary education are designed to achieve the following fundamental goals over the short to medium-term:

- ensure that a gross enrolment rate of 100 per cent is reached by 2000-2001;
- increase the primary education cycle completion rate to 70 per cent by 2000-2001;
- improve the length, content and methods of classroom instruction;
- improve the curriculum, learning materials and teaching-learning aids;
- improve the quality of teaching through effective teacher training;
- improve school management and academic supervision;

- strengthen the primary education infrastructure by improving skills in management, management information systems, programme planning and implementation;
- improve programme delivery by monitoring input and process and evaluating output;
- develop a national research and development capacity to support the introduction and testing of innovation within the sub-sector;
- provide adequate physical facilities; and,
- encourage moral values.

It is against this background that the present study has been undertaken. It is an endeavour to diagnose the system of teacher support and supervision in the basic education sector with a view to identifying promising strategies for improving its efficiency.

## **2. The study**

The scope of the study is limited to basic education. In Bangladesh, this refers to primary education: a five-year cycle for the five to ten year-old age group. Classified on the basis of ownership and management, there are ten categories of educational institutions in the primary education sub-sector. However, this study mainly examines the supervision and support system for teachers of state-owned primary schools, which form the mainstream and account for 40 per cent of the total number of primary schools in the country, and the largest share of pupils.

The focus of our primary data collection was on the Assistant Thana Education Officers (ATEOs), who have the main responsibility for regular routine supervision of primary schools and teachers. To get first-hand information on their work, two thanas were selected, located within two different districts (thana is the lowest administrative unit of the country). The 10 ATEOs working in these

thanas were interviewed, as were an additional 55 who were undergoing a training course in the National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE) and who are working in other thanas.

In addition, a field study of 16 primary schools located in the two thanas was carried out. Interviews were conducted with 16 headteachers and 50 teachers, as well as the two Thana Education Officers (TEOs) and the two District Primary Education Officers (DPEOs) in charge of the respective offices. Several senior educational functionaries were also interviewed.<sup>3</sup>

Separate questionnaires were prepared for the TEOs, ATEOs and the headteachers, while a format was developed for the Deputy Director (DD), Assistant Director (AD) and DPEOs. No questionnaires, however, were prepared for the teachers. Instead, members of the research team met them, talked with them and exchanged views on matters related to their supervision and the professional support they receive.

---

<sup>3</sup> Including the Director, National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE); Deputy Director (Dhaka Division) DPE; Assistant Director (Training Division), DPE; Assistant Director (Monitoring), DPE ; and Programme Officer, DPE.

---

# **I. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT SERVICES**

## **1. Historical background of supervision**

The beginning of formal public primary education in Bangladesh can be traced back to Wood's Dispatch, a report from 1854. This report recommended the establishment of a Department of Public Instruction, the appointment of a Director of Public Instruction and the introduction of groups of inspectors for each province in British India. These recommendations were implemented shortly after the report.

The organization of primary education changed in the twentieth century in line with its expansion. The first Primary Education Act was passed in 1919. In 1930, in order to expand primary schooling for rural children in the 6 to 11 year-old age group, the Rural Primary Education Act was passed, and district School Boards were entrusted with the responsibility for primary education.

In 1931, the 'Bengal Education Code', containing all the executive orders and rules issued by the Director of Public Instruction (DPI) for the inspectorate, was prepared. These rules were to be followed by the inspectorate while discharging their administrative responsibilities and those related to inspection.

In 1952, the duration of the primary school cycle was extended from four to five years. The Director of Public Instruction created the posts of Divisional, District, Sub-divisional Inspectors and Sub-inspectors of schools at the division, district, sub-division and circle levels respectively. Afterwards, the post of 'Divisional Inspector of Schools' was changed to 'Range Inspector of Schools'.

Over time, the scope of the duties and responsibilities of the inspectors expanded, resulting in several restructurings of the services at both central and lower levels. At central level, in 1981, the existing Directorate of Public Instruction was split into two separate Directorates: the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE), and the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE). The Chief Executive of these two Directorates was designated as Director General.

In 1961, the six range offices at central level were replaced by four divisional offices, which were turned into eight regional offices in 1986. This last change resulted in the number of officers being doubled. Certain administrative powers of the DPI were delegated to the Deputy Directors heading these regional offices. At the district level, two separate posts were created for primary and secondary levels. For primary education, the post of District School Inspector, later renamed District Primary Education Officer (DPEO), was retained. For the secondary schools, the post of District Education Officer (DEO) was created. The sub-divisional level disappeared in 1983, when, as a result of decentralizing the administration, 64 subdivisions of the country were upgraded into districts.

At the circle level, the post of Circle Sub-inspector of schools was changed into Thana Education Officer (TEO). At this level, clusters comprising 15-20 schools were created and for each cluster one post of Assistant Thana Education Officer (ATEO) was established. Before 1983, the TEO had responsibility for looking after both the secondary and primary educational institutions of the thana. However, following the division of the Directorate of Public Instruction, TEOs were made responsible for the primary education sub-sector only. As a result, the number of officers engaged in intensive inspection of primary schools increased.



## 2. The overall structure of supervision and support

Supervision staff exist, in principle, at all levels: central, regional, district, thana and cluster (see *Organogram 1*). At central level, within the Directorate of Primary Education, all officers in theory have to visit field offices, including primary schools, as part of their job. Originally, inspection was not made a separate part or component of the administration. This was done under the Third Five Year Plan (1986-1991) when the post of Assistant Director for Inspection was created.

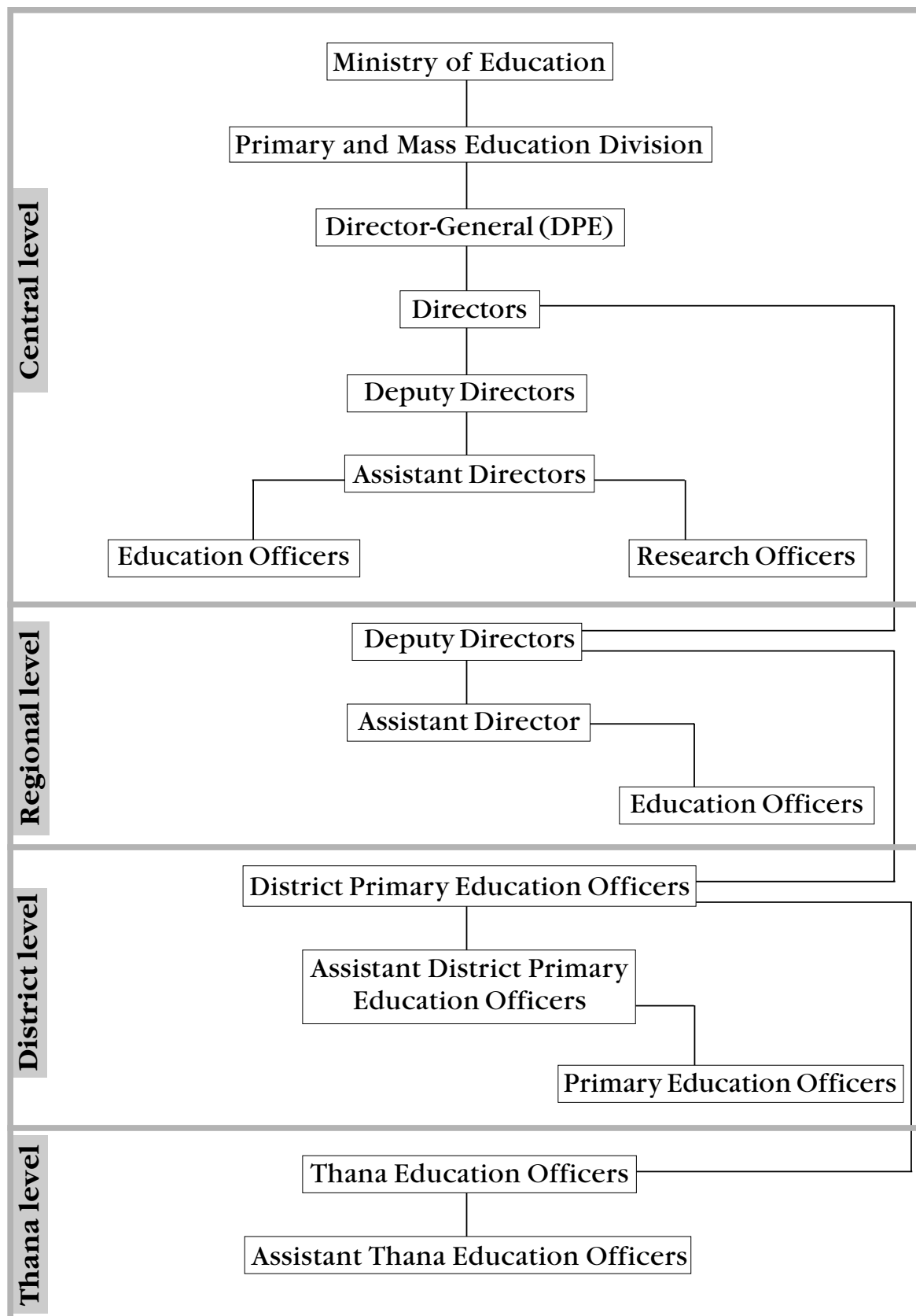
Similarly, Deputy Directors and Assistant Directors at regional level, District Primary Education Officers and Assistant District Primary Education Officers at district level, and Thana Education Officers in each thana, have school supervision tasks. But the ‘inspectorate’ – as it is called – comprises mainly the Assistant Thana Education Officers. All the activities of the ATEOs centre around their school visits, which are aimed at both teacher supervision and school inspection.

## 3. Official functions of the different categories of supervisors

In order to gain an impression of the official functions of each category of supervisor, we can refer to the job charts of these officers at different levels.

At the central level, several officers have supervisory tasks, related to their specific field of responsibilities. According to the job chart, Deputy Directors for training look specifically after the training of personnel, Deputy Directors for book distribution look at all the activities relating to the distribution of books to schools and pupils. The same goes for Deputy Directors and Assistant Directors in charge of other sections like cluster training, curriculum and research,

**Organogram 1. Structure of supervision**



planning and development, monitoring and evaluation and establishment of schools. In order to supervise, all are required to visit primary schools. In principle, the number of schools to be visited per month is five.

The tasks of Divisional Deputy Directors of primary education working at the regional level are mainly administrative. They inspect primary education offices, co-ordinate their activities, transfer and grant casual leave to officers and staff of these offices, conduct inquiries into allegations, and allocate deputation quotas for the training of primary teachers. The Divisional Assistant Directors of primary education do the same sort of administrative work but for the group of officers and staff belonging to lower strata of the primary education offices and primary schools. However, both the Divisional Deputy Director and Assistant Directors have to visit schools, two and four each month respectively. While supervising primary schools, they are expected to make use of a checklist provided by the DPE which covers the following three major areas:

- management of primary schools;
- governance of primary schools;
- classroom teaching.

The District Primary Education Officer is the chief officer of the Primary and Mass Education Division (PMED) at district level. This entails responsibility for all administration and school establishment matters and the academic development of primary schools under his/her jurisdiction. Both the District Primary Education Officer and the Assistant District Primary Education Officer (ADPEO) are supposed to visit six schools per month, using the same checklist as their colleagues at regional level.

The Thana Education Officers have been described as the chief functionaries of the PMED in respect of primary education at thana

level. Their responsibilities include: to spend at least 15 days per month visiting schools and to visit at least 10 schools a month; to identify schools to be inspected by the Assistant Thana Education Officers; to collect information regarding primary education and report this to the higher authority; to prepare an annual programme for inspection; to maintain separate files for every primary school under their jurisdiction containing information regarding the school; and to manage a number of financial matters. They have to plan their inspection schedule in such a way that every school is inspected at least twice a year. On average between six and seven ATEOs fall within the control of one TEO.

The ATEOs are the central actors in supervision as they are based closest to the schools. ATEOs must inspect 15 to 20 schools every month and plan their tours to visit each school at least once a month. In addition, they are required to assist the TEOs in all activities: maintaining contact with the school management committees and local people in positions of influence in order to ensure effective inspection; sending reports to the TEO and DPEO on primary schools; inspecting and countersigning the monthly returns and salary bills of the teachers and other employees of the schools under their jurisdiction; and improving the professional skills of teachers through demonstration lessons and sub-cluster training. Their tasks are therefore multi-faceted, combining supervision and support tasks, and working on administrative and pedagogical matters.

*Table 2* shows the number of schools each officer is expected to visit every month. Not surprisingly, the closer to schools an officer is based, the more schools he has to visit. The only exceptions to this 'rule' are the Deputy Directors at central level, whose tasks are fairly specific,

related for instance to curriculum and research or cluster training, while lower graded personnel have more comprehensive duties.

As all the officers in *Table 2* inspect and supervise primary schools according to the same DPE checklist, covering therefore the same areas and aspects of a school, there is certainly a risk of overlap. This was confirmed in interviews with several officers such as DPEOs and Deputy Directors.

**Table 2. Number of schools to be visited per month by education officers**

Level	Responsible officer	Number of schools
Central	Deputy Director	5
	Education Officers / Research Officers	5
Region	Deputy Director	2
	Assistant Director	4
	Education Officers / Research Officers	5
District	District Primary Education Officer	6
	Assistant District Primary Education Officer	6
	Primary Education Officer	6
Thana	Thana Education Officer	10
	Assistant Thana Education Officer	15 to 20

*Source:* Conversation with the Dhaka Division DPE.

#### **4. Relations with other pedagogical services**

Classroom and school inspections by external inspectors is only one of several forms of teacher support. The other components include:

- pre-service and in-service training of teachers;
- pedagogical research;
- curriculum development and implementation;
- evaluation, examination and testing.

As candidates for appointments as primary-school teachers do not require pre-service training, the provision of in-service training is important. Not surprisingly, Deputy Directors and Assistant Directors in charge of training at central level are actively involved in initiating and managing training programmes and preparing and disseminating training materials. They are therefore in regular contact with the different training institutions in the country. Field-level staff are also involved in organizing in-service training, but in general in a less regular fashion. One of the most important functions of ATEOs is to organize sub-cluster training, an activity that takes up more than 10 per cent of their time.

The field-level supervisors, i.e. the TEOs and ATEOs, do not play any role in pedagogical research and curriculum development and implementation. The Deputy Director and Assistant Director of the Curriculum and Research Division conduct some research work on curriculum development but they mainly assist the Director (training) in the following areas: developing the curriculum materials for teaching and training; organizing seminars and workshops on curriculum development; initiating proposals for modification and improvement of primary-school textbooks; collecting statistical information relating to the curriculum; and initiating proposals for evaluation of the curriculum. All these activities are undertaken in conjunction with the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB), the national body in charge of the curriculum and textbooks.

The supervisors have some role to play in evaluation, examination and testing. Pupils in the first two years of primary school do not undergo tests or examinations. They are taught in accordance with the newly introduced competency-based curriculum and are subject to the ‘continuous pupil assessment’ programme. All supervisors, particularly ATEOs and TEOs, verify and evaluate whether pupils achieve the stipulated competencies. Pupils in classes three to five sit half-yearly and annual examinations that are managed by the school authorities. Question papers are prepared by the teachers’ associations. In some areas, however, the task of setting questions has been taken over by the ATEOs, and the teachers mark the examination papers. In the case of the ‘primary scholarship examination’ (for awarding scholarships to the best Grade five pupils), the questions are set by the DPE, the management of the examination rests with the Divisional Deputy Director, and marking is undertaken by secondary-school-level teachers, Primary Training Institute instructors and primary-school teachers.

On the whole, the relationship between field-level supervisory staff and other teacher-support personnel is fairly weak as there is no strategy to co-ordinate the activities of these partners. Education officers at central level, who carry out some supervision tasks, are involved on a more regular basis in teacher training and curriculum development as well as the preparation and management of examinations.

## **5. Relation with school-site supervision**

An informal internal supervision system runs alongside the external system in primary schools. While there is no official delegation of inspection responsibilities to headteachers, they are involved in such work on a daily basis, and are verbally instructed by the supervisors to supervise all aspects of the school. In order to

gain a more precise picture of the internal supervision system, the headteachers of 16 schools were interviewed. This group was very diverse in age, experience as a teacher, and length of service as a headteacher. Worryingly, a considerable proportion have poor educational qualifications: seven out of the 16 hold only a secondary-school certificate. According to the present recruitment rules, the minimum qualifications for the post of assistant teacher is a higher secondary certificate. Their training was better as all but one of the headteachers have completed a Certificate in Education course. However, they do not receive any training on management or supervision. Moreover, about half considered the sub-cluster training they receive as only partially effective. About two-thirds said that more training was needed, in particular in areas such as teaching methods, school supervision and management and financial and service rules.

All headteachers said they undertake supervision work and most claimed to engage in some form of supervision every day. According to them, about a quarter of their total working time is spent on 'supervision and administration', with more than half devoted to teaching. Of the 16 headteachers 13 claimed that they had been delegated supervision tasks, but the DPE personnel said no official delegation of responsibilities had been made. The precise nature of headteachers' supervision tasks is therefore not clear from the interviews. There are no official guidelines for these tasks and no formal reporting system.

Six out of the 16 respondents prepare supervision reports, the remainder inform the TEOs and ATEOs verbally of the results of their supervision. Ten headteachers said they receive some follow-up to their written or verbal reports, and they claimed to be satisfied with the reaction from their superiors. The remainder were either not satisfied with the follow-up or their reports were not followed-up at all.



The survey revealed that the headteachers are a great help to the teachers. They seem to offer support to teachers in the following core areas: classroom administration; preparation of lesson plans; assistance in solving personal problems; and creating a good working environment.

In principle, School Management Committees (SMCs) also participate in supervision. However, their impact is varied. While some SMCs are very active in all aspects of the school functioning and supervise different activities, including the teachers' classroom performances, others were reported to be very inactive. In some cases SMCs are actually detrimental to the interests of the schools.

---

## II. THE MANAGEMENT OF SUPERVISION SERVICES

### 1. Basic facts

The total number of officers at all levels within the Directorate of Primary Education who have, in principle, to carry out supervision tasks, is 2,521. This includes 60 Directors, Deputy Directors and Assistant Directors and about 10 research officers, working at central and regional level. There are 64 District Primary Education Officers and an equal number of Assistant District Primary Education Officers. The total number of TEOs and ATEOs, the field-level inspectors who are responsible for regular supervision of the primary schools and teachers, is shown in *Table 3*.

**Table 3. Number of TEOs and ATEOs, primary schools and teachers\* – 1996**

Posts	Sanctioned	Working	Vacant
TEO	481	295	186
ATEO	2,060	2,025	35
Schools	37,710	37,710	—
Teachers	165,097	161,458	3,639
Schools/TEO	78	128	—
Schools/ATEO	18	19	—
Teachers/TEO	343	547	—
Teachers/ATEO	80	80	—

\*Data on schools and teachers for public education only.

Source: DPE National Report, 1996.

If all TEO and ATEO posts were filled, a TEO would on average have to supervise about 80 schools with some 350 teachers, and an ATEO about 20 schools and 80 teachers. The difference between the sanctioned and occupied posts, which is especially important in the case of TEOs, will be dealt with later.

Information regarding the distribution of the TEOs and ATEOs by age, length of service, level of general qualifications and exposure to specific in-service training is not officially available. However, from the field-level survey and interviews conducted for this diagnosis, data relating to the above-mentioned variables have been collected from a small sample of supervisors. The sample size is 67 and comprises 65 ATEOs and two TEOs. *Tables 4 to 8* present this information. Although it cannot claim representativeness it does give an idea of the variety of characteristics of the supervision staff in the country.

The majority of the sample of ATEOs fall within the 45-years-plus age group, and have quite extensive experience: about two-thirds of the sample have worked for more than 10 years as an ATEO (*Tables 4 and 5*). As for teaching experience, about half worked for 10 or more years as a teacher before becoming an ATEO. At the same time, a fair proportion (18 out of a sample of 67) taught for less than five years, four ATEOs have no teaching experience at all, and about 10 per cent have worked only at secondary level (*Table 6*).

Regarding qualifications (*Table 7*), the picture is fairly satisfactory: all but one have a tertiary education degree, although four hold non-education-related degrees. Their training background (*Table 8*) is mixed. More than half have obtained a certificate in education, but only about 15 per cent of the respondents have received specific ‘curriculum dissemination’ and ‘cluster training’ – subjects which are most relevant to their professional duties. Moreover, 11 of the 67 ATEOs have had no training in supervision.

**Table 4. Sample of supervisors by age (Total N = 66)**

Age limit	% (N)
25-34	11 % (7)
35-44	42 % (28)
45 and above	47 % (31)

**Table 5. Sample of supervisors by length of service**  
(Total N = 67)

Time (years)	% (N)
0-2	11.9 % (8)
3-5	1.5 % (1)
6-10	19.4 % (13)
11-15	58.2 % (39)
Above 15	9.0 % (6)

**Table 6. Sample of supervisors by teaching experience**  
(Total N = 63\*)

Years	In primary schools	In secondary schools	In primary and secondary schools
0 to 5	6	6	6
5 to 10	12	1	1
10 to 15	17	0	1
15 and above	13	0	0

\* Four ATEOs have no teaching experience whatsoever.

**Table 7. Sample of supervisors by educational qualifications** (Total N = 67)

Qualification	% (N)
Masters	20 % (13)
Graduates	79 % (53)
Higher Secondary Certificate	1 % (1)

**Table 8. Sample of supervisors by training received**  
(Total N = 67)

Type of training	Number
Certificate in education	40
Management training	19
Cluster training	11
Curriculum dissemination	10
Orientation training	3
Visualization in participatory planning	2
Civic defence	1

## 2. Critical issues

This section looks at the issues of recruitment, training, professional organization, career prospects of the supervisors, the monitoring and evaluation of their tasks, and the support they receive.

### (a) Recruitment of supervisors

All categories of education officers have their specific recruitment rules.<sup>4</sup> The Public Service Commission (PSC) is in charge of selecting supervisors. Recruitment is conducted via competitive examinations overseen by the PSC, and via internal promotion of departmental candidates. In the case of ATEOs, half of all posts are reserved for departmental candidates, with the other half filled by open competition. In the event of an insufficient number of eligible departmental candidates, all remaining posts are filled through open competition. In the case of TEOs, fewer opportunities are given to internal candidates: only 20 per cent of the posts are filled through the promotion of ATEOs, and 80 per cent through direct recruitment.

<sup>4</sup> Recruitment and appointment is made according to the rules titled 'Recruitment Rules for the Gazetted Officers and Non-Gazetted Staff of the Directorate of Primary Education, 1985'. Some amendments to these rules were made in 1994.

The current recruitment criteria relate to age and qualifications. For both ATEOs and TEOs, the age limit is 30 years, but this can be relaxed up to 45 years in the case of departmental candidates.

Qualification requirements are also the same for both groups: all prospective ATEOs and TEOs should have at least a second class master's degree and a second class bachelor's degree from a recognized university. Candidates promoted from ATEO posts must have five years of service in that position. The posts of TEOs and ATEOs were upgraded from second class and third class officers to first class and second class officers respectively.

There is no hard and fast rule regarding the frequency of recruitment of the supervisors. Generally, the authorities receive many more applications for TEO and ATEO posts than the actual number of posts available. This does not, however, guarantee that all posts are filled by candidates with the requisite qualifications. For example, as noted above, most ATEOs in the small sample used for this study do not hold the required master's degree.

### **(b) Training of supervisors**

No arrangements exist for pre-service training of supervisors. However, different in-service training programmes are offered to ATEOs and TEOs by the National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE) and the Bangladesh Management Development Corporation (BMDC). As shown in *Table 9*, these training courses are all of short duration.

The training imparted by NAPE to TEOs and ATEOs is compulsory, but it is not a pre-condition for career development. In selecting candidates for promotion, preference is given to those with management training from the BMDC. In the small sample used for this study, only a minority had followed in-service training, in either management or cluster training.

**Table 9. In-service training programmes for TEOs and ATEOs**

Trainee	Training agency	Training topic	Duration
ATEO	NAPE	School management and supervision	9 days
	BMDC	Management	12 days
	NAPE	Orientation on sub-clusters	2/3 days
TEO	BMDC	Management	12 days
	NAPE	Management of primary education and supervision	6 days

NAPE also offers short-term training in education management and monitoring to Assistant District and District Primary Education Officers. The Assistant Directors (ADs) and Deputy Directors (DDs), on the other hand, do not undergo any general training programme. They may receive training overseas on very rare occasions, but this is not always necessarily related to supervision. No management training is extended to the headteachers, who perform the tasks of school managers and internal supervisors, by NAPE or any other training body.

When the group of 65 ATEOs and two TEOs were asked their opinion on the quality and quantity of their training, about three-quarters claimed to be satisfied, and the remainder only partially satisfied. When asked if they have any training needs, almost four-fifths answered in the affirmative, and cited the following as examples:

- short training courses on new initiatives taken by the government in the field of primary education;
- training on school visit rules and regulations, and on financial rules;
- more general courses related to educational management and administration, orientation and population education;

- opportunities to undertake Bachelor of Education/Master of Education courses and training abroad.

### **(c) Professional organizations**

The three major groups of supervisors, i.e. ATEOs, TEOs and the DPEOs, each have a professional association. The membership is open to all the officers belonging to the service.

### **(d) Career prospects**

For the ATEOs, career prospects are very bleak. Only 20 per cent of the vacancies for TEOs – the next highest post – are filled by the promotion of ATEOs. The rest are filled by direct appointments. For the TEOs, however, the prospects are brighter, as a quota of 80 per cent of appointments to the next higher post is assigned to TEOs. The same is the case with the ADPEOs and DPEOs. But the fact still remains that, although promotion possibilities in principle exist, promotion takes place very rarely because of a lack of vacant posts.

### **(e) Monitoring and evaluation**

The monitoring and evaluation system of the supervisors is a reflection of the hierarchical set-up of the Directorate to which they belong, each category of staff being evaluated by their immediate superiors. The ATEOs are monitored and evaluated by the TEOs, the TEOs and the ADPEOs by the DPEOs, and so on. As part of this monitoring process, the next higher officer checks whether the total number of schools stipulated for inspection by his subordinate officer/supervisor has been inspected and inspected properly, and whether a report has been prepared and sent to them. These two elements form the basis for the evaluation of the supervisors. The major performance indicator, particularly for the ATEOs and TEOs, is the target number of school visits, and to what extent this number has been achieved. This is reflected in the Annual Confidential Report (ACR) on the supervisor, prepared by his controlling officer. The



ACR is the document on which promotions are based. As is evident from the survey findings, the different categories of supervisors are monitored routinely. The overall monitoring of the supervision system is the task of the Monitoring Division of the DPE.

### **(f) Support**

Very little professional support is available to supervisors. No other institutional support, over and above the training opportunities mentioned above, is extended to the field-level supervisors.

Two support tools do, however, exist. Firstly, a checklist is available to all supervisors, as a general supervision guideline, to be used when visiting schools. This checklist contains almost 150 items. Every supervisor, according to the norms set by the DPE, has to check all the items included in the checklist while undertaking a full supervision. The survey shows that 100 per cent of the supervisors use this checklist and attempt to conform to it. Secondly, reporting forms, devised by DPE, are available to the supervisors. The ATEOs, TEOs and other categories of supervisors fill out the forms on the basis of their inspection.

It was noted, however, that both these support instruments are flawed. The checklist lacks structure and contains too many items to be taken care of in one working day. So, in the majority of cases, supervisors cannot conform to the checklist. Moreover, the report forms are not consistent with the checklist. The forms present questions relating to number of schools inspected, time of inspection, the irregularities and good practices observed and experienced during the inspection and measures taken. In relation to the checklist, this format seems to be inadequate and inexhaustible. This inconsistency between the checklist and the report forms makes it difficult for the supervision activities to be truly reflected in the report.

---

### **III. ACTUAL FUNCTIONING OF SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT SERVICES**

As has already been mentioned, among the different categories of supervisors, the key role in the field of teacher supervision and school inspection is played by the ATEOs and TEOs. This section will therefore concentrate on these two groups.

#### **1. Working conditions**

##### **(a) Material working conditions and service staff**

The ATEOs have no office of their own, but they generally use the office room of the TEOs. Sometimes a separate room in the TEO's office is spared for their use. Regarding transport facilities, each ATEO has been provided with one bicycle. A conveyance allowance of Tk.125.00<sup>5</sup> per month is given to all the ATEOs irrespective of the number of schools they visit, but any ATEO fulfilling the inspection target receives Tk.200.00 per month. However, few ATEOs succeed in doing so, as the schools are often scattered over the area under their jurisdiction, and as the number of schools to be visited is, in general, significantly more than the official norm. Moreover, during the rainy season, some schools, particularly in rural areas, are simply inaccessible. The ATEOs are not provided with any support staff such as secretaries or clerks.

The picture is different for TEOs, who have offices of their own with the requisite number of service staff. Each TEO has also been provided with a motorcycle. Furthermore, their workload, expressed as the number of schools to be visited, is lower than that for ATEOs, which makes the completion of their official task easier.

---

<sup>5</sup> Tk.125.00 = "US\$3.00.

## **(b) Financial conditions**

The basic salaries of different categories of supervisors are very much comparable with those of other officers at the same levels within and outside the education service. There is, as in most other countries, a uniform government pay and salary structure that applies to officers and staff of all services. There is therefore little scope for discrepancy between services. Very recently, the posts of the ATEOs have been upgraded to second class gazetted officers while those of TEOs have been upgraded to first class gazetted officers. There is, however, no provision for incentives and allowances according to the level of responsibility or performances, with the exception of the conveyance allowance for the ATEOs. It is not possible to get precise information on the budget available to supervision services, either at national or lower levels.

## **2. Daily operation of supervisory and support services**

### **(a) Planning and workload**

According to their job description, the ATEOs and the TEOs have to prepare a yearly plan of school visits to submit to the relevant authority. As is evident from the interviews, these two categories of supervisors plan their monthly visits regularly.

Work is distributed between staff on the basis of both geographical area and administrative unit. For example, an ATEO is in charge of a cluster of schools comprising 15-20 government schools located in a particular area while a TEO is in charge of all the schools situated in a thana – the lowest administrative unit identified mainly on geographical consideration.

The relative time devoted to various activities by different categories of supervisors varies greatly. Particularly regarding the activity of school visits, time devoted by different categories of

officers varies inversely with their positions. As seen earlier, the higher the position of the officer, the less the time devoted to school visits and supervision, to the benefit of administrative activities. According to the ATEOs in our sample, slightly more than half of their time is devoted to visiting schools, about a third is spent on administration, with the remainder spent on training (see *Table 10*).

**Table 10. Distribution of time between different tasks performed by a sample of ATEOs in a month**

School visits	Imparting sub-cluster training	Others*
56 %	13 %	31 %

\* 'Others' includes desk work, supervising activities under the Food for Work programme, meeting with different agencies and authorities, maintaining public relations, and supplying information to different agencies.

Each ATEO, according to the job description, has to visit each of the 15-20 schools of his cluster at least once a month. In practice, however, each ATEO is given responsibility for an average of about 30 schools. This is not because of a problem of vacant posts, which accounts for only 2 per cent of the sanctioned posts, but because the official norms only take into account government primary schools, while ATEOs also look after two other categories of primary schools: registered non-government and non-government schools. The information received from the survey shows that more than four-fifths of the 65 ATEOs interviewed have responsibility for more than 20 schools, with 12 per cent having over 35 schools under their charge (*Table 11*).

The available sample data (see *Table 12*) show that about half of ATEOs interviewed visited the officially stipulated number of schools every month, i.e. between 15 to 20. This, however, does not mean that they visited all the schools under their jurisdiction since a fair proportion of them have responsibility for more than 20 schools. This suggests excessive workload on the ATEOs that, as will be examined in the following section, has a negative impact on the nature of these visits.

**Table 11. Distribution of a sample of ATEOs by number of schools under their jurisdiction (Total N = 65)**

Number of schools	% (N)
5-9	0
10-14	1.5 % (1)
15-19	15.4 % (10)
20-24	29.2 % (19)
25-29	26.1 % (17)
30-34	15.4 % (10)
35-39	6.2 % (4)
over 40	6.2 % (4)

**Table 12. Distribution of a sample of ATEOs by number of schools visited last month (Total N = 65)**

Number of schools	% (N)
5-9	3.1 % (2)
10-14	56.9 % (37)
15-19	35.4 % (23)
20-24	4.6 % (3)

TEOs officially have to visit 10 schools a month. While no information was collected on their performance in this regard, we know that most of them have a heavy workload because the number of filled posts is less than the sanctioned posts by 39 per cent. Consequently, TEOs have to take responsibility over a significantly greater number of schools than stipulated in the job chart.

### **(b) School visits**

All the ATEOs and TEOs indicated that they undertake some preparatory work before visiting schools. This includes: preparation of the tour programme and submitting it to the relevant authority;

collecting/reviewing the relevant papers relating to the school to be visited; studying the teachers' guide; and identifying a list of items to be supervised.

The interviews with supervisors did not reveal how much preparatory work actually takes place. To prepare visits and, in particular, to select schools in need of priority attention, the following criteria are used, according to the ATEOs:

- schools which have not been visited before or which have not been visited for a long time;
- schools with specific problems;
- schools from which special information needs to be collected;
- schools with complaints against them;
- schools with low rates of attendance;
- schools which are not well advanced in comparison to others;
- schools with inactive SMCs;
- schools with weak and inefficient management systems;
- schools which have to be visited according to specific directives from higher authorities;
- schools with a shortage of teachers;
- schools located in areas with a low literacy rate;
- schools with which communications are difficult.

All the visits made by all categories of supervisors are supposed to be regular full visits, i.e. visits during which all the items on the checklist are examined. These visits are generally undertaken by a single member of staff. However, in addition to such inspection visits, the ATEOs, TEOs and other officers also pay short visits to schools to satisfy certain specific queries. School visits – full or short – are not announced in advance.

The main problem encountered by the ATEOs and other categories of supervisors was that, due to excessive workload, school

visits could not be accomplished properly. The checklist can be followed only partially and items remain unchecked, rendering the supervision work incomplete and ineffective. *Tables 13 and 14* show the number of schools which received full and short visits during the month preceding the survey by the sample of 65 ATEOs, and the number of schools visited more than once by the same ATEO. Only about a quarter of ATEOs succeeded in undertaking a full inspection visit to more than 10 schools. About one in six ATEOs did not make any such visit. Not surprisingly, the number of short visits made is higher, with about one third of interviewed ATEOs having visited more than 10 schools. The tables do not allow us, however, to look at the total number of visits, full and short ones combined, by each ATEO. While some ATEOs do not succeed in making any full visits, *Table 13* indicates that about 40 per cent give a full inspection to the same schools more than once a month. Three ATEOs in the sample went twice or more, in the same month, to nine or ten schools.

**Table 13. Distribution of sample of supervisors by number of schools paid a full or short visit during the month preceding the survey (Total N = 65)**

Full visit		Short visit	
Number of schools	% (N)	Number of schools	% (N)
0	17 % (11)	0	8 % (5)
1-2	6 % (4)	1-5	32 % (21)
3-4	9 % (6)	6-10	25 % (16)
5-6	8 % (5)	11-15	25 % (16)
7-8	11 % (7)	16-20	9 % (6)
9-10	23 % (15)	21-25	1 % (1)
11-12	6 % (4)	—	—
13-14	—	—	—
15-16	20 % (13)	—	—

**Table 14. Distribution of sample of supervisors by number of schools undergoing more than one full visit in the month preceding the survey (Total N = 65)**

No. of schools	% (N)
0	60 % (39)
1-2	25 % (16)
3-4	6 % (4)
5-6	3 % (2)
7-8	1 % (1)
9-10	5 % (3)

Further information is available about the time used for school visits and the activities undertaken (see *Table 15*). Short visits are indeed short. The large majority of ATEOs spend less than two hours in the school and none stay for more than half a day. Even in the case of full visits, quite a number of ATEOs, about a third, do not spend more than half a day, which seems too short to be able to control all the items on the official checklist effectively. About 40 per cent will stay for five to eight hours, and another 30 per cent for one full day or more, in a few cases even three days. During a short visit, the ATEOs said they concentrate on the following items:

- checking teacher and student attendance;
- attending meetings;
- checking co-curriculum activities;
- inspecting Food for Work related activities;
- following up the previous report;
- supervising cleanliness in the campus;
- observing the school environment.



**Table 15. Distribution of sample of supervisors by time needed for visiting one school (Total N = 66)**

Full visit		Short visit	
Time hours/ days	Respondents	Time in hours	Respondents
0-4	29 % (19)	0-2	80 % (54)
5-8	40 % (27)	3-4	20 % (12)
1 day	17 % (11)	—	—
2 days	9 % (6)	—	—
3 days	5 % (3)	—	—

It is worth noting that the observation of actual classroom interaction does not figure on this list. A full visit, as the term implies, should cover all administrative and pedagogical matters. The distribution of time between the different aspects of these visits such as classroom visit, discussion with different groups, checking documents and records, is not known. The checklist does not provide any instructions in this respect either.

All supervisory personnel in our sample confirmed that they use the checklist during school visits, but about a fifth considered the list inappropriate. They criticized it for being vague, for containing an excessive number of items, and for overlapping between the different components.

### **(c) Reporting**

It is not surprising that all but one interviewed supervisor claimed to write a report after each school visit. The report proves indeed that the visit has taken place and we noted above that both the number of visits made and reports written form the basis of a supervisor's performance evaluation. Generally, the main objectives of preparing the report are to inform the higher authority of the state of affairs in

the schools, and to maintain a record that the school has been inspected. To inform the school on its own performance and how to improve on it, is only secondary.

Almost all (63 out of 67) supervisors indicated that they use the official report formats, but they supplement these formal reports by adding more information written on plain paper. The length of the full report thus varies from one to six pages (*Table 16*).

**Table 16. Distribution of sample of supervisors by length of the report** (Total N = 66)

Length (pages)	% (N)
1-2	59 % (39)
3-4	32 % (21)
5-6	9 % (6)

**Table 17. Distribution of sample of supervisors by the categories of persons with whom report was discussed** (Total N = 67)

Persons with whom report was discussed	Number
Teachers, headteachers and others*	52
Headteachers and teachers	9
Teachers and others	2
Headteacher and others	1
Others only	1
Teachers only	1
Nobody	1
Headteachers only	0

\* 'Others' include SMC, Ward Committee and members of the community.

Before writing the report, a large majority of the ATEOs and TEOs talk to teachers, headteachers and members of the community, including SMC or Ward Committee members. Only in a very few cases are either the headteacher or the teachers not involved in some form of discussion, while only one ATEO did not engage in any form of discussion whatsoever before writing the report. It is not clear what impact these discussions have on the report's content and nature.

The reports prepared by each category of supervisors are submitted to their immediate superior officer. The ATEOs therefore send their reports to TEOs. They are then collected, consolidated and presented in the monthly meeting of the PMED through DPE. Reports prepared by different categories of inspectors are not published.

#### **(d) Follow-up on visits and reports**

The sample of supervisors was also asked a few questions about the follow-up on their inspection visits and reports. About 10 per cent of the respondents stated that no follow-up is given on their report, the remainder claimed that follow-up takes place, but the precise nature of these activities and who implements them (schools or education administrators) were not explained. However, almost half of this latter group was dissatisfied with follow-up for the reasons cited below:

- indifference of the teachers;
- shortage of teachers;
- dependence of ATEOs on the TEOs and DPEOs for the execution of the suggestions and recommendations;
- authorities attaching more importance to the teachers and teachers' associations than to the ATEOs;
- political and social interference;
- delay in taking appropriate steps by the authority;

- lack of community involvement and co-operation;
- lack of educational equipment and physical facilities;
- lack of co-operation from and involvement of the SMCs.

ATEOs are also involved in delivering sub-cluster training to school heads. About two thirds considered their interventions in this regard to be 'satisfactory', one third only 'partially satisfactory'. None found them 'unsatisfactory'.

---

## **IV. OVERALL ASSESSMENT**

### **1. Impact on school functioning and quality**

The information presented above may give a relatively positive image of the functioning of supervision services. It can be concluded that a supervision structure manned by a sufficient number of officers at different levels is functioning in the primary education sub-sector. Supervision and inspection are being performed regularly on the basis of the supervision guidelines, reports are prepared by the ATEOs and submitted to the TEOs, follow-up action is being taken, there is a regular monitoring system of the supervision staff whose visits have been linked with their promotion. While no specific research was undertaken to examine the effects of supervision on school and classroom interactions, the views of supervisors and teachers on this issue were examined.

#### **(a) The views of the supervisors**

All interviewed ATEOs and TEOs believe that their work has some impact on schools, but the precise nature is not well appreciated. However, ATEOs also listed a number of factors that impede their work and make it difficult for them to have a lasting impact on schools. A first group relates to practical and financial matters, i.e. ‘transport problems’, ‘shortage of contingency funds’, ‘insufficient travel allowance and bad road connections’, and ‘lack of office facilities’. The second factor is related to workload. The ATEOs complain about the ‘impossibility of inspecting 15-20 schools a month in accordance with the checklist’; the ‘duty of attending the Thana Education Office every day’; and the ‘distance of schools and the excessive number of schools to control’.

Other problems mentioned were the ‘lack of co-operation from the higher authority’, and the ‘non-consideration of supervisors’

opinions by the higher authority when making decisions'. The ATEOs recognized, as a fourth factor, the fact that they deal with poorly developed and equipped schools: the 'lack of professional knowledge of the teachers', the 'shortage of textbooks', and the 'small number of staff in the schools' are characteristics of that situation, which renders ATEOs' work more demanding.

In order to assess their job satisfaction and commitment, the TEOs and ATEOs were asked if they would apply for the same job if they were given the opportunity to restart their careers: 61 per cent of the respondents said yes, and 39 per cent said no. The reasons for their liking or disliking are summarized below. Most ATEOs remain committed to their job because they gain a sense of pride from working in education. The factors that explain the disinterest of a sizeable proportion of ATEOs are linked to the lack of promotion and rewards, both in career and in financial terms, and the poor working conditions.

<i>Reasons for liking</i>	<i>Reasons for disliking</i>
Opportunity to contribute to primary education;	Lack of promotion prospects;
Sense of pride from contributing to the process of reducing illiteracy;	Lack of incentive/reward system;
Nobility of the profession;	Excessive responsibility;
Respect from the students and the society;	Poor pay;
Enjoy carrying out inspection and supervision;	Not a 'cadre' post;
Promotion prospects;	Lack of office facilities and poor working environment;
Better than the previous profession;	Performance is not properly evaluated;
Because of the prevailing socio-economic situation.	Not free from professional associations.

### **(b) The views of the teachers**

The picture that emerges from the interview with the teachers regarding supervision is less positive. All teachers and headteachers agree that supervision by the ATEOs is necessary, but they feel that the way supervision of teachers is being conducted adversely affects the efficiency of the system. Almost all the teachers interviewed said that the ATEOs, TEOs, and DPEOs display an attitude of being the controller and superior officer. In some cases, this was interpreted as exhibiting a lack of patience and respect for the teachers. At times, the supervisors reprimand the teachers for their alleged incompetence in the presence of the pupils. The teachers said they would like to see a much more supportive and co-operative attitude and approach from the ATEOs/TEOs. Almost all the teachers said that they feel a sense of panic when the ATEOs/TEOs visit the schools, and this sense of insecurity is also felt by the pupils. As a result, the teachers cannot point out their problems to the supervisors. All the teachers agreed that if teacher supervision is to be made effective, supervisors must act as facilitators rather than controllers.

Teachers also criticized the impact of training given by ATEOs. Sub-cluster training by the ATEOs is supposed to assist teachers in their task of classroom teaching, but 18 out of the 50 teachers interviewed said that the training is ‘completely meaningless’ and ‘a waste of time’. Ten out of 50 teachers thought that the training should be given by the Primary Training Institute (PTI) instructors, and the rest of the respondents either said that the training is useful or did not express an opinion. According to some interviewees, however, the effectiveness of sub-cluster training depends completely on the competence of the individual ATEO imparting the training. Training on curriculum dissemination has been imparted to headteachers and teachers, but in the majority of cases it has failed to achieve its objectives. All the teachers said they wanted more training and

orientation on the new curriculum in order to enhance their understanding and perform better in the classroom.

Teachers appreciate classroom supervision/inspection by headteachers more than that by the external supervisors in view of the headteachers' intimacy, cordiality and understanding of their own school, and absence of the element of control in their behaviour. Another factor may be the regularity and frequency of the internal supervision undertaken by the headteachers.

## **2. Synthesis of problems**

The information collected through the survey, interviews and interactions reveal a number of weaknesses, flaws and inconsistencies in the structure and functioning of the supervision system, the most important of which are summarized below.

The first issue deserving attention is the workload of the ATEOs and TEOs. According to the findings of the survey, the highest number of schools under the jurisdiction of one ATEO stands at 45 while, according to the norm, one ATEO is supposed to be in charge of only 15 to 20 schools. Over half the ATEOs have in excess of 25 schools to visit every month. The reason is that the registered non-government primary schools are also to be inspected by the same set of supervisors. The lack of office and transport facilities adds to this problem, and this excessive workload results in improper supervision of teachers and schools.

A second problem to be taken into consideration relates to the tools available to supervision staff, in particular the checklist, i.e. the supervision/inspection guidelines provided by the DPE, and the standard report forms. A careful examination of the checklist shows its lack of structure; in addition, it consists of too many items to be



taken care of in one working day. So, in a majority of visits, the checklist cannot be followed by the supervisors. At the same time, the reporting formats are not consistent with the checklist. This inconsistency hinders the proper reflection of the supervision activities in the report.

Follow-up to inspection visits and reports is the next issue to be addressed. This study pointed out that a majority of ATEOs either considers that no follow-up is given, or they are not satisfied with the follow-up activities. In such cases, supervision almost loses its significance. ATEOs explain that their dissatisfaction with the follow-up is linked to the fact that superior officers do not take into consideration their recommendations and suggestions.

Another finding which displays the weakness of the supervision system is that the supervisors, although they receive management training, do not receive any specific training on inspection and supervision. Seventy-eight per cent of the respondents expressed a need for such training. Among the other needs identified by them, training on financial rules and on teaching methodology are worth mentioning.

So, the picture developing from this analysis is less positive than expected. While many schools are indeed fairly regularly supervised, the checklist is not followed properly, the reporting format is not reflective of the checklist, and the follow-up process does not properly address the issues raised in the report. The result is that many visits are short, ritualistic and have little effect on the schools.

### **3. Suggestions for improvement**

In view of the dissatisfaction with supervision services as they presently function, teachers were asked to make a number of

suggestions on how to improve the performance of supervisors. Five points are highlighted, and examples are given of more detailed comments of teachers.

*Supervisors should focus more on the daily problems facing teachers in the classroom.*

- Non-attendance of pupils in the schools poses a serious problem for teachers, particularly in the context of the new curriculum that introduced the system of Continuous Pupil Assessment. To ensure the regular attendance of pupils, the supervisors should be more enterprising.
- The high student/teacher ratio impedes the successful introduction of the Continuous Pupil Assessment system. Teachers must assess every student on each competency. In many cases this is done very mechanically because of the great number of students. Support is needed in this area.
- Teachers face great problems regarding the preparation of lessons. They have to prepare the lessons themselves and bear the expenses of preparing teaching materials, but they have no training in this matter. Not all teachers are equally skilled for these tasks. Some teachers face a very specific problem regarding an instruction which says that they should draw pictures given in the textbooks on the blackboard when giving lessons. But most of the teachers feel they need support in these two areas: drawing and preparation of teaching equipment.

*The tasks of support and administration should be clearly separated, so that supervisors can have a more pedagogically focused approach.*

- The monthly salary bills of the teachers have to be countersigned by the ATEOs before the payment is made by the TEOs. This form of financial authority results in a superior/subordinate relationship between the ATEOs and the teachers. It also prevents the ATEOs

from becoming teacher-friendly and, consequently, the academic assistance provided by the ATEOs largely loses its efficacy.

- The ATEOs/TEOs should conduct, on occasions, demonstration or model classes rather than just giving suggestions.

*Supervision should be less bureaucratic to allow teachers more autonomy.*

- The teachers have to prepare lesson notes, and claimed that the ATEOs and TEOs exert excessive pressure on them to prepare these notes for every period. On an average, each teacher has to conduct 10 half-hour periods every day. Preparing notes for every class, i.e. 10 lesson notes every day (that have to be approved by the headteacher), is practically impossible. This affects the main task of teaching because preparing lesson notes occupies a considerable amount of teachers' time and energy. Teachers argued that this system should be abolished to enable them to devote more time to classroom teaching.
- The teachers are in great difficulties with the newly introduced competency-based curriculum. This has done more harm than good because of the rigid way in which it has been introduced: teaching a particular competency has to be completed in a particular period of a particular working day. The next day the following competency has to be taught. This means that absent pupils have to pursue the one competency without learning the previous one.

*All supervisors should have teaching experience.*

- A majority of the teachers interviewed said that the ATEOs without teaching experience could not create any impact on the teachers' performances through their supervision. Supervision by ATEOs/TEOs with teaching experience or B.Ed training was found to be much more fruitful.

*Supervision should be better organized to serve the needs of all schools.*

While conducting the survey and interview, it has been observed that schools near the thana or district headquarters are inspected far more than schools further away from the headquarters. Teachers recommended that this trend be reversed.

---

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Ahmed, M., 1996. Comments at the inaugural session of the conference on Universal Primary Education in Bangladesh. Dhaka: Ministry of Education.

Aziz, A. et al. 1993. Education and national development. Dhaka: Ahshania Mission.

Bangladesh, Ministry of Education. 1993. Bangladesh Country paper on Education for All presented at the Meeting of Ministers of the Nine Populous Developing Countries. Paris: UNESCO.

Chowdhury, M.; Haq, N.; Ahmed, Z. 1996. Quality of primary education in Bangladesh. Paper presented to the Conference on Universal Primary Education, Bangladesh.

National Academy for Educational Management (NAEM). 1995. Educational research in a policy perspective, a collection of papers with comments. Dhaka: NAEM.

---

## **Chapter II**

### **National diagnosis on Teacher supervision and support services for basic education in the Republic of Korea**

**Hyunsook Yu and Heungju Kim<sup>1</sup>**

---

<sup>1</sup> Team members from the Korea Educational Development Institute (KEDI), Seoul.

---

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

KEDI	Korean Educational Development Institute
MOE	Ministry of Education
NEEI	National Education Evaluation Institute
PCER	Presidential Commission for Educational Reform
SBAS	School Based Autonomous Supervision
SERI	Seoul Educational Research Institute

---

## **CONTENTS**

<b>List of abbreviations</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>65</b>
1. Korea's education system	65
2. The study	69
<b>I. General overview of supervision and support services</b>	<b>70</b>
1. Historical background	70
2. The overall structure of supervision and support	71
3. Official functions of the different services	72
4. Relations with other pedagogical services	74
5. Relation with school-site support and control structures	75
<b>II. The management of supervision and support services</b>	<b>77</b>
1. Basic facts and figures	77
(a) Total number of staff working in supervision services	77
(b) Distribution by gender	77
(c) Distribution by degree	78
(d) Distribution by age	79
(e) Distribution by length of service	80
(f) Average number of schools and teachers per supervisor	80
2. Critical issues	81
(a) Recruitment	81
(b) Training	83

(c) Professional organizations	84
(d) Career development	85
(e) Monitoring and evaluation	86
III. The daily functioning of supervision and support services	89
1. Working conditions	89
(a) Material working conditions and service staff	89
(b) Financial conditions	90
2. Actual operation of supervisory and support services	91
(a) Planning and workload	91
(b) School visits	93
(c) Reporting	93
(d) 'Follow-up' on visits and reports	94
IV. Overall assessment	95
1. Impact on school functioning and quality	95
2. Synthesis of main problems	96
3. Present trends and future directions	99
Appendix I.	
Organization of the metropolitan and provincial offices of education	103
Bibliography	104



---

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Korea's education system

The Republic of Korea has, in a remarkably short period of time, made the transition from a developing economy to a successful industrialized nation. Its impressive economic performance – a current GNP per capita of US\$9,700 which has grown at an annual average rate of almost 8 per cent over the last 10 years – has recently earned it membership of the OECD. In fact, it could be said that Korea has become the epitome of the Asian tiger economy. Its illiteracy rate, both for males and females, estimated at under 5 per cent of the 45 million-strong population, is equally impressive.

The education system in the Republic of Korea consists of six years of elementary school, three years of middle school, three years of high school and four years of higher education. The official age of admission into primary school is six years. Education law states that all citizens have the right to be educated according to their abilities. Elementary schools are free, as are middle schools, apart from those based in major cities which are fee-paying.

The Ministry of Education (MOE) is directly in charge of higher and lifelong education and administers other levels through regional offices: at metropolitan and provincial level on one hand, and city and county level on the other. There are six metropolitan areas (including Seoul) and nine provinces in Korea, and each of these has an office of education responsible for managing high schools. There are also 180 'city and county offices of education' which carry responsibility for managing and supervising kindergartens, primary schools and middle schools in their respective areas. Seoul Metropolitan Office of Education has, for example, 11 county offices of education.

Korea has experienced a significant expansion in enrolment rates since 1970, in line with its economic growth. *Table 1* shows the changes in the gross enrolment rate at each school level. Kindergarten, only available to a very restricted group of children in 1970, had a gross enrolment rate of 42 per cent in 1995. In contrast, the elementary school gross enrolment rate had already reached 100 per cent by the 1970s. The recent slight decrease recorded in 1995 is attributable to improvements in the internal efficiency of the system, in particular, lower repetition rates. Gross enrolment rates at both secondary and higher education establishments have increased significantly since 1970. The middle school rate has doubled in the last 25 years and now stands at a full 100 per cent. The high school rate increased from 27.9 per cent in 1970, to 87.6 per cent in 1990, to 89.9 per cent in 1995. There has also been a significant improvement in higher education: the enrolment rate has risen from 8.8 per cent in 1970, to 38.1 per cent in 1990, to 54.6 per cent in 1995.

*Tables 2a and 2b* show the growth in the number of students and teachers in each education level. It can be seen that the number of elementary-school students has been declining since 1970, while the number of middle-school students, which increased sharply between 1970 and 1980, has since remained steady. Academic

**Table 1. The changes in gross enrolment rate by school level**

Year	Kindergarten	Elementary school	Middle school	High school	Higher education
1970	1.3	100.7	50.9	27.9	8.8
1990	31.5	101.4	97.8	87.6	38.1
1995	42.0	98.7	100.6	89.9	54.6

*Note:* Higher education includes two-year colleges, colleges and universities.

*Source:* KEDI, 1995.

high-school students were increasing until 1990, but their numbers have declined more recently. In comparison, vocational high-school students continued to increase in the 1990s and reached over 900,000 by 1995. At the same time, the number of students in higher-education institutes has been increasing sharply: by 1995 the number of students in junior colleges had increased to over 570,000 and in universities to over 1.18 million.

**Table 2a. Changes in the number of students by school level**

Year	Elementary school	Middle school	Academic high school	Vocational high school	Junior college	College and university
1970	5,749,301	1,318,808	315,367	275,015	33,353	146,414
1980	5,658,002 (0.98)	2,471,997 (1.87)	932,605 (2.96)	764,187 (2.78)	165,051 (4.95)	403,989 (2.76)
1990	4,868,520 (0.85)	2,275,751 (1.73)	1,473,155 (4.67)	810,651 (2.95)	323,825 (9.71)	1,040,166 (7.10)
1995	3,905,163 (0.68)	2,481,848 (1.88)	1,246,427 (3.95)	911,453 (3.31)	569,820 (17.09)	1,187,735 (8.11)

**Table 2b. Changes in the number of teachers by school level**

Year	Elementary school	Middle school	Academic high school	Vocational high school	Junior college	College and university
1970	101,095	31,207	9,845	10,009	1,637	7,779
1980	119,064 (1.18)	54,858 (1.76)	27,480 (2.79)	23,468 (2.34)	5,488 (3.35)	14,458 (1.86)
1990	136,800 (1.35)	89,719 (2.87)	58,074 (5.90)	34,609 (3.46)	7,382 (4.51)	33,340 (4.29)
1995	138,369 (1.37)	99,931 (3.20)	56,411 (5.73)	42,656 (4.26)	10,384 (6.34)	45,087 (5.80)

*Note:* The figures in parentheses are the index numbers which take 1970 as the base year.

*Source:* KEDI, 1995.

The Korean Government has steadily increased the funding of education over the last two decades in line with the growth in enrolment. Public education expenditure was only 4.4 per cent of the GDP in 1975, but increased to 5.7 per cent by 1985, and fell slightly to 5.3 per cent in 1994 (see *Table 3*). Of the 5.3 per cent, 3.6 per cent is spent on elementary and secondary education and 1.7 per cent on higher education. In the case of private elementary and secondary schools, the government contributes 42 per cent of costs, compared to 85.8 per cent of costs for public schools. There is also a distinction between private and public institutions at the higher education level. National colleges and universities are subsidized for 73.1 per cent of their costs and private establishments for only 22.2 per cent.

The biggest problem that the Korean education system presently faces is that it is too examination-oriented. Teaching in elementary and secondary schools concentrates solely on preparing students for higher education. It does not, therefore, promote the creativity and individuality of students, but is instead very standardized and memory-based. As it revolves around entrance examinations, students are pressurized into being overly competitive and parents are induced to pay for private tutoring which, in the view of the government, is a waste. It also creates a very rigid administrative system for elementary and secondary schools.

**Table 3. Public educational expenditure as a share of GDP**

Year	Total share of GDP	Elementary/Secondary school	Higher education
1975	4.4	3.5	0.9
1980	5.3	3.9	1.4
1985	5.7	4.0	1.7
1990	5.7	4.1	1.6
1994	5.3	3.6	1.7

Source: KEDI, 1995.

The Korean Government recently set up the Presidential Commission for Educational Reform (PCER) to address these problems and, on the basis of the PCER's recommendations, it has presented a number of education reform bills. In order to change the entrance examination-based education in elementary and secondary schools, the higher education entrance examination system is being reformed, in favour of giving greater weight to school reports and interviews. The government has also founded the Lifelong Education Society, which aims to ensure education for all citizens whenever and wherever they so require. School autonomy is being promoted, by emphasizing self-regulation and self-accountability in school management. Consequently, all elementary and secondary schools are to establish school management committees to resolve management problems by themselves. These committees will comprise parents, teachers, school administrators and community representatives.

The PCER also made the following observations:

- to date, the education system has been provider based, and this needs to be changed to make it recipient (i.e. parent and student) based;
- many education regulations need to be mitigated;
- school curricula need to be varied and graded.

## **2. The study**

For the preparation of this study, the team relied to a great extent on a number of recent research reports, prepared by the Korean Educational Development Institute (KEDI).<sup>2</sup> In addition, to obtain more specific information on the daily operation of supervision services, a small survey of 34 supervisors, from three different regions, was undertaken.

---

<sup>2</sup> In particular: Yu, H.S.; Kim, H.J. and Yang, S.S. 1995.

---

# **I. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT SERVICES**

## **1. Historical background**

The contemporary Korean education system, which was developed after the Liberation of Korea in 1945, was designed on the American model and has therefore been influenced by the ideology and policies of the USA. The number of supervising organizations and administrators has increased, mainly due to the expansion of the education system, which has grown in line with advancing industrialization, and also as a result of the equalization policy of high schools in the 1970s.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the style of supervision gradually shifted from an authoritative and bureaucratic model to a more democratic one. Especially since the early 1980s, supervision policies have focused on revamping the quality of teaching by introducing specific methods, such as instructional and clinical supervision. This allowed for a clear return to the essential functions of supervision. By the early 1990s, efforts were being made to strengthen the expertise of supervisors and to enhance teachers' participation in their work.

Although the main transformations have been attitudinal, these have been accompanied by some changes in the structure of supervision services in the form of a trend towards decentralization. This trend resulted in the abolition of the separate supervision bureau in the Central Ministry of Education (MOE) in 1995. The MOE has retained the function of planning and administering supervision at the national level, but is no longer involved in school visits. There have been few changes in the structure of services at the regional level.

At the same time, emphasis is increasingly put on in-school supervision. ‘School-based autonomous supervision’ (SBAS), as this policy is called, allows schools to develop and run policies that are appropriate for their circumstances and demands. The education administration is merely intended to support the schools (Lee and Yu, 1989). In this regard, it has been suggested that a ‘Master Teacher system’ should be established in primary and secondary schools. These issues are returned to later.

An equally important change is the trend towards incorporating school evaluation into the supervision process. As schools gain more control over their own management, they also become more accountable in terms of the quality of the education they provide. Therefore, the supervision process must include reviewing school management and performance. At the higher education level, a university accreditation system is well established, but there is nothing comparable to officially evaluate elementary and secondary schools. However, a PCER policy proposal is being considered at the moment to include management and performance reviews (e.g. education goals and achievements, curriculum and personnel management, and management of school organizations) in school evaluations (Yu et al., 1996).

## **2. The overall structure of supervision and support**

As stated above, the responsibility for the supervision of elementary and secondary schools rests with the regional offices of education. The central-level supervision department has been replaced by only a handful of officers in charge of the overall planning of school supervision. In future, they will simply administer a guidance and advice service for decentralized education offices on how to supervise schools, and establish policies at the national level.

Metropolitan and provincial offices of education are responsible for guiding and supporting the high schools. Each has a supervision department and a number of specific-subject supervisors. City and county offices of education also have supervision departments and supervisors to guide and support kindergartens, elementary and middle schools. The functions of the different offices are as follows: the Central Ministry plans supervision and defines policies; six Metropolitan and nine Provincial Offices of Education supervise high schools; and a network of City and County Offices supervise kindergarten, elementary and middle schools.

### **3. Official functions of the different services**

The following is a more detailed look at the roles of each level of supervision. Since 1995, the Ministry of Education has not had a supervision division per se. Instead, responsibility has been split between several departments, such as the Elementary and Secondary Education, the Higher Education and the Education Policies Departments, whose main function is to establish and revamp comprehensive plans.

Metropolitan and provincial offices of education have two different roles. On one hand, they carry out the actual supervision of high schools and, on the other, they plan the inspections of elementary and middle schools. The latter is the task of the Elementary Education Bureau, which includes an elementary supervision division and an elementary teaching profession section, and the Secondary Education Bureau, which comprises separate sections for secondary supervision and the teaching profession, and science and technology. Supervisors are appointed to these sections as well as to the Superintendent's Office, Public Information Office and the Planning and Maintenance Office (see, for an example, *Appendix I: Organogram of the Seoul Metropolitan Office of Education*). Each metropolitan and provincial office of



education also has an educational research institute to which a number of supervisors are posted.

City and county offices of education have elementary and middle-school education divisions in charge of supervising elementary and middle schools. In cities with a population of more than 500,000, these functions are carried out by social and physical education divisions. The elementary and middle-school education division carries out the following important duties: guidance of curriculum management, management of educational resource materials, personnel management, and re-education. In addition, it guides supervision, research, experiments and experimental schools in the public school sector.

There are four categories of staff making up the supervision personnel in the Ministry and the different regional offices: Junior School Supervisors, School Supervisors, Junior Educational Researchers and Educational Researchers. Junior School and School Supervisors give guidance and advice to schools and manage school affairs. They also provide service to the Personnel Division and carry out and manage national education policies. While the junior staff generally carry out school visits, the senior supervisors are more involved in administration and management. Junior Educational and Educational Researchers carry out research on educational matters and develop school curricula, educational content and teaching methods.

Supervision is increasingly becoming an in-school process. In public and private schools, however, there is no special division for supervision. Principals, vice-principals and grade and subject senior teachers all function as supervisors. Principals have the following main duties: planning and organizing overall supervision work, encouraging staff to foster supervision work, using qualified external resource persons, and establishing overall management plans that

reflect national policy. Vice-principals are in charge of controlling supervision work and providing actual guidance and advice to staff.

#### **4. Relations with other pedagogical services**

There are not many direct links between supervisory services and the various other departments or units offering pedagogical support to school staff. Of course, direct links exist between supervision and educational research, as the staff in charge of these duties belong to the same category, and the transfer between the post of researcher and supervisor is easily made. The main research institutes are those run by the metropolitan and provincial offices of education and the Korean Education Development Institute (KEDI) run by the central government. Each metropolitan and provincial educational research institute is in charge of developing and replenishing educational resource materials suitable for their respective regions, and designing and implementing research for the operation of experimental schools. KEDI carries out research work in many areas, including supervision development.<sup>3</sup>

All teacher training institutes include courses on supervision in their curricula and all trainee teachers are expected to have studied a relevant course at their universities and colleges. The most important institutes are the metropolitan and provincial teacher training institutes, the National Institute for Training of Educational Administrators, and the Korean University for Teacher Education, which provides training for teachers who seek to be promoted, and in-service training courses for principals and vice-principals. In some cases, supervisors are also appointed to these institutes to operate and manage them.

---

<sup>3</sup> In this area see, among other titles: Ko et al., 1983; Oh and Im, 1987; Lee and Yu, 1989; Yu, Kim and Yang, 1995; Yu, Kim and Kim, 1996.

Supervision staff are not as such involved in curriculum development or evaluation. However, the management of school evaluation is undergoing change. Presently, such evaluation is carried out by the National Education Evaluation Institute, which reviews student achievement standards at elementary and middle schools. However, the government is now planning to establish another body, provisionally entitled the 'School Curriculum Evaluation Institute', to review students' achievement standards and the management of university entrance examinations, as well as to evaluate elementary and middle schools and administer graded school curricula. If this new institute is established, it is expected that supervision will become fairer and more accurate, and will be based on research findings so that many important functions of school evaluation, as referred to earlier, can be carried out by supervisors.

## **5. Relation with school-site support and control structures**

As pointed out earlier, school-based autonomous supervision, which emphasizes self-regulation of schools, is being more widely adopted. Although this is partly due to the trend towards decentralization, it is also designed to introduce flexibility into the system and an individualized approach towards school development. In principle, school-based autonomous supervision provides various supervisory options to schools: instructional supervision, a highly individualized process through face-to-face relations between the teacher and the principal, vice-principal or senior teacher; peer supervision in which teachers give guidance and advice to each other; self-supervision in which teachers make plans for their professional development and implement this plan themselves; ordinary supervision by which senior school staff make irregular brief classroom visits to observe teachers' instructional activities and classroom management, and to offer them advice; and school-based

in-service education, characterized by self-operated training programmes to develop school staff.

The number of regional supervision programmes (clustering schools in the same region for the development of their own research on supervision projects) is also increasing. Regional supervision programmes allow schools to undertake supervision that is difficult to be carried out by individual schools. In addition, various committees are being formed where teachers meet officially and unofficially to enhance their expertise. These meetings are supported by metropolitan and provincial offices of education in order to enhance their positive effects.

---

## **II. THE MANAGEMENT OF SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **1. Basic facts and figures**

#### **(a) Total number of staff working in supervision services**

A total of 4,299 staff was working in supervision offices as of August 1996: 295 in the Ministry of Education and affiliated departments; 4,004 in metropolitan and provincial offices of education and city and county offices of education (see *Table 4*). The vast majority, 58.4 per cent, of the four different categories of supervisors are junior school supervisors. There are three times more supervisors (3,247) than researchers (1,052). While about a quarter of all researchers work in the Ministry of Education and its affiliated departments, this is the case for only about 1 per cent of supervisors.

#### **(b) Distribution by gender**

The percentage of women supervisors is low. According to 1990 data, among Junior School Supervisors women make up 12 per cent, and among School Supervisors only 6 per cent. They are better represented among researchers: about 43 per cent of Junior Educational Researchers and 67 per cent of Educational Researchers are women. In total, only about 20 per cent of all supervisory staff is female. This is a very low rate compared to the rate of women teachers in schools. As of 1996, women teachers constituted 57.2 per cent of all elementary-school teachers, 50.9 per cent of all middle-school teachers, and about 24.6 per cent of all high-school teachers.

**Table 4. Number of supervisors, August 1996**

	Total	Supervisors	Educational researchers	Junior supervisors	Junior educational researchers
<i>Grand Total</i>	<i>4,299</i> <i>(100%)</i>	<i>738</i> <i>(17.2%)</i>	<i>256</i> <i>(5.9%)</i>	<i>2,509</i> <i>(58.4%)</i>	<i>796</i> <i>(18.5%)</i>
Ministry of Education and affiliated departments	295	9	95	28	163
Ministry of Education	109	8	45	—	56
Affiliated organizations	74	1	19	28	29
National universities	112	—	34	—	78
Metropolitan and Provincial and City and County Offices	4,004 (100%)	729 (18.2%)	161 (4.0%)	2,481 (62.0%)	633 (15.8%)
Seoul	453	72	14	300	67
Pusan	243	46	13	144	40
Taegu	164	33	11	83	37
Inchon	138	31	9	73	25
Kwangju	133	26	9	63	35
Taejeon	130	29	6	76	19
Kyunggi Province	416	77	12	269	58
Kangwon Province	305	52	13	188	52
Nth Chung Province	214	42	9	126	37
Sth Chung Province	277	48	10	178	41
Nth Chon Province	276	49	11	173	43
Sth Chun Province	370	67	11	247	45
Nth Kyung Province	389	67	11	249	62
Sth Kyung Province	391	65	12	268	46
Cheju	105	25	10	44	26

### **(c) Distribution by degree**

The majority, 88 per cent, of all supervisors are university graduates. This is the case for 82 per cent of supervisors and 95 per cent of researchers (see *Table 5*). Among them, a total of 42 per cent have masters degrees or more advanced qualifications. This is true for 28 per cent of Junior School Supervisors and 27 per cent of School Supervisors, and 58 per cent of Junior Educational Researchers and 56 per cent of Educational Researchers.

### (d) Distribution by age

The majority, 76.4 per cent, of all supervisors are over 50 years old and almost half of those are over 55 years (see *Table 6*), and about 5 per cent are over 60 years. The retirement age is 65. Less than 1 per cent are younger than 40. Elementary-school supervisors have a slightly younger profile than middle-school supervisors.

**Table 5. Percentage distribution of supervisors/researchers by educational qualifications, 1990**

	High School graduates	Diploma holders	Bachelors	Masters
Junior School Supervisors	18	15	39	28
Junior Educational Researchers	5	7	30	58
School Supervisors	18	14	41	27
Educational Researchers	5	10	29	56
Averages	12	11	35	42

Source: Shin et al., 1990, p. 11.

**Table 6. Distribution of supervisors by age group, February 1996<sup>4</sup>**

	Under 40 years	41-45 years	46-50 years	51-55 years	56-60 years	Over 60 years	Total
Elementary schools	22 (1.2%)	77 (4.3%)	330 (18.3%)	866 (47.9%)	421 (23.3%)	91 (5.0%)	1,807 (100%)
Middle and High schools	14 (0.6%)	108 (4.9%)	396 (18.0%)	806 (36.6%)	764 (34.7%)	116 (5.2%)	2,204 (100%)
Total	36 (0.9%)	185 (4.6%)	726 (18.1%)	1,672 (41.7%)	1,185 (29.5%)	207 (5.2%)	4,011 (100%)

<sup>4</sup> Concerns only supervisors in metropolitan and provincial offices of education and city and county offices of education.

### (e) Distribution by length of service

Although the average age of supervisors is relatively high, the majority have little experience in their present posts (see *Table 7*): 42.1 per cent have less than three years' experience, another 23 per cent have three to four years, and 81.6 per cent have less than six years' experience. Only 7.5 per cent have careers spanning 11 years or more as supervisors or researchers. There is little difference between elementary and middle-school supervisors.

### (f) Average number of schools and teachers per supervisor

The average number of schools and teachers per supervisor is as follows: there are 3.2 schools and 62.6 teachers per supervisor in elementary, and 2.5 schools and 91.4 teachers per supervisor (see *Table 8*) in middle and high schools. Elementary-school supervisors therefore have more schools but fewer teachers to look after than middle-school supervisors.

**Table 7. Distribution of supervisors by number of years of experience, February 1996<sup>5</sup>**

	Under 3 years	3-4 years	5-6 years	7-8 years	9-10 years	11-15 years	Over 16 years	Total
Elementary schools	725 (40.1%)	468 (25.9%)	327 (18.1%)	114 (6.3%)	54 (3.0%)	75 (4.2%)	44 (2.4%)	1,807 (100%)
Middle and High schools	963 (43.7%)	454 (20.6%)	335 (15.2%)	181 (8.2%)	85 (3.9%)	136 (6.2%)	50 (2.2%)	2,204 (100%)
Total	1,688 (42.1%)	922 (23.0%)	662 (16.5%)	295 (7.4%)	139 (3.5%)	211 (5.3%)	94 (2.2%)	4,011 (100%)

<sup>5</sup> Concerns only supervisors in metropolitan and provincial offices of education and city and county offices of education.



**Table 8. Number of schools and teachers per supervisor, 1996**

	Number of schools per supervisor	Number of teachers per supervisor
Elementary schools	3.2	62.6
Middle and High schools	2.5	91.4

*Source:* 1996 data provided by the Ministry of Education.

## **2. Critical issues**

### **(a) Recruitment**

The qualifications and experience required to occupy the different supervisory positions are clearly defined in Chapter 9 of the Education Law, which is summarized in *Table 9*. The requirements for candidates for supervision posts include a number of years' experience in teaching, educational research or educational administration. For a school supervisor post, the experience required varies from 11 years for those without a university degree, to four years for those who have passed the administration examination. A university degree is not necessary, but graduates require less experience and Ph.D. holders need no experience at all.

Supervisors are selected by each metropolitan and provincial office of education based on the above standards. Selection standards can vary slightly. Each office supplements its supply of supervisors for the following year by nominating candidates. The selection procedure includes multiple choice and essay writing tests and/or interviews. Whatever the selection procedure, all offices are endeavouring to be fair and objective.

**Table 9. Requirements for candidate supervisors**

	Qualifications and experience required
School Supervisor and Educational Researcher	<p>College or above graduate with over seven years of experience in teaching or seven years of experience either in educational administration or educational research, with two years' teaching experience;</p> <p>Junior college graduate with over nine years' experience in teaching or nine years' experience either in educational administration or educational research with two years' teaching experience;</p> <p>Person who has passed administration examination with over four years of experience in teaching, administration or educational research;</p> <p>Person with over two years' experience as a junior school supervisor or junior educational researcher;</p> <p>Person with over 11 years' experience in teaching or educational research with two years' teaching experience;</p> <p>Ph.D. holder.</p>
Junior School Supervisor and Junior Educational Researcher	<p>College or above graduate with over five years' experience in teaching or over five years of experience either in educational administration or educational research, with two years' teaching experience;</p> <p>Person with over nine years' experience in teaching or over nine years of experience either in educational administration or educational research, with two years' teaching experience.</p>

*Source:* Education Law Committee, 1996, p. 564.

The following is an example of the selection procedure of Seoul City Office of Education. To begin with, nominated candidates' applications are examined for their veracity and an assessment is made about whether or not they are qualified for the position. The first stage for suitably qualified candidates entails a comprehension test, an interview, an evaluation of expertise and the verification of the condition of the candidates' schools. The best candidates move on to the second stage which consists of further tests. At this stage there are about double the number of candidates as there are available jobs. New supervisors are selected from the highest-scoring candidates, who must have attained at least 40 per cent in each part of the test and whose average score must be over 60 per cent.

All School Supervisors and Educational Researchers are appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Minister of Education. Presently, there are some problems in appointing supervisors and suggestions are under consideration about how to reorganize the examination system to make it more fair and objective, and to attract younger and more qualified staff.

### **(b) Training**

There is no officially set amount and content of training that supervisors are required to undertake as this varies according to individual circumstances. There are, however, three main training programmes for supervisors: a four-week training course for new supervisors; a 60-hour training course for Junior School Supervisors and Junior Educational Researchers; and a 30-hour training course for School Supervisors and Educational Researchers. The National Institute for Training of Educational Administrators, metropolitan and provincial teacher training centres, and the Korean Teachers' College provide professional training, while many other institutes provide additional training programmes.

It is not necessary for all supervisors to take these training programmes every year. *Table 10* shows the percentage distribution of supervisors by hours of training received in an average year. Although some supervisors pursue formal and informal training initiatives, such as attending graduate schools or reading professional textbooks, the rate of self-initiated training by the supervisors is low. This is perhaps due to a lack of time owing to their busy workloads.

### **(c) Professional organizations**

Supervisors have no legal right to be a member of a trade union, and supervisors working in educational administration or educational research institutes do not have the benefit of organizations offering professional support. However, supervisors in metropolitan and provincial offices attend teachers' committees and some have organized small meetings for themselves to enhance their expertise.

**Table 10. Percentage distribution of supervisors by hours of training received in one year**

Training period (hours)	Percentage of supervisors
1-24	21.1
25-49	10.6
50-74	12.3
75-99	22.8
100-124	8.9
125-149	1.3
150-174	4.8
175-199	7.9
200-224	2.5
225-249	2.0
over 250	5.8
Total	100.0

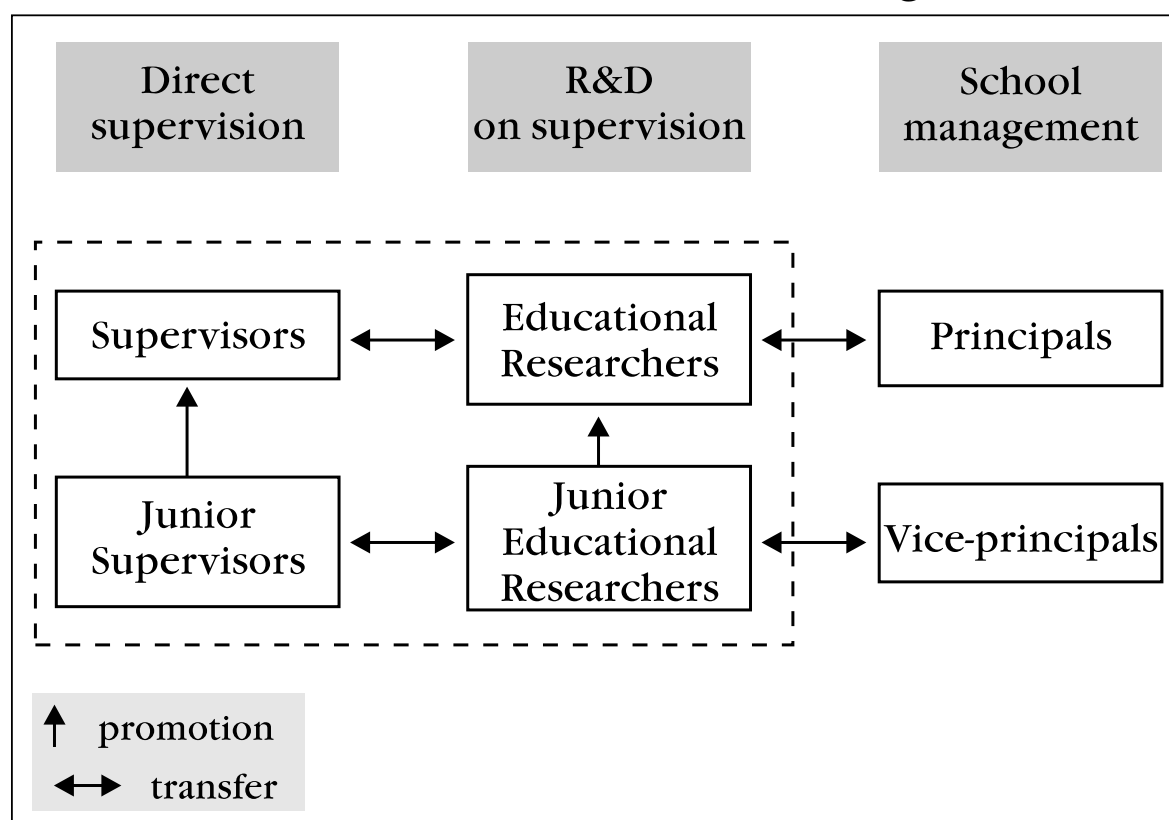
*Source:* Shin et al., 1990, p. 26.

### (d) Career development

Junior School Supervisors and Junior Educational Researchers can be promoted to School Supervisors and Educational Researchers, or be transferred to the positions of vice-principals of elementary and middle schools, while School Supervisors and Educational Researchers can be transferred to posts of principals (see *Diagram 1*). Many supervisors apply for the vice-principal or principal posts as a move in this direction is considered a promotion. The working conditions of supervisors are very hectic in comparison to those of principals and vice-principals and, moreover, the latter have more authority over the teachers.

When a teacher is to be transferred or promoted to become a supervisor, the Educational Regulations regarding personnel management apply. These regulations govern transfers along the

**Diagram 1. The career ladder of supervisors, researchers and school managers**



following lines: to transfer a principal to the position of Junior School Supervisor, the principal must be in agreement; only principals or vice-principals, or Ph.D. holders with 15 years of teaching experience can be transferred to a post of School Supervisor or Educational Researcher; teachers with over 15 years of experience and whose work assessment is satisfactory can be promoted to a post of Junior School Supervisor or Junior Educational Researcher; teachers require a recommendation from an educational institute, educational administration office or an educational research institute, and they have to go through the selection process to be promoted to a post of Junior School Supervisor or Junior Educational Researcher.

When a supervisor is to be transferred or promoted to a position at school, the same regulations apply. They state that: Junior School Supervisors, who have been in their present post for at least two years with over 22 years of experience in teaching, educational administration or educational research, can be promoted to the post of principal; Junior School Supervisors with a similar profile but only 17 years of experience in teaching, educational administration or educational research can be transferred to a post of vice-principal; for a person with over 10 years of experience in teaching and over 10 years of experience as a Junior School Supervisor, there are no restrictions on transfers.

### **(e) Monitoring and evaluation**

The evaluation of supervisors is carried out in two ways: with an annual, detailed work assessment; and via continuous assessment.

The yearly assessment takes place in December and supervisors are evaluated by the director of the office in which they work. As the evaluations are important for promotion, supervisors work very diligently over this period. The lower 50 per cent are assessed by their superior officers, and the upper 50 per cent by executive

officers. Assessment is based on two factors: ability and attitude, and work output. Character and work commitment are used to measure the former, while the measures for work output cover guidance and management of education, guidance and management of teachers and management of administration and educational research. *Table 11* shows, in detail, the various factors taken into account. In spite of the detailed nature of this procedure, problems with assessments still arise due to the fact that the process is not sufficiently specific and hinges on the subjective judgement of the assessors.

Metropolitan and provincial offices of education monitor the work of supervisors in a variety of ways. Most offices of education issue standard supervision report forms, which are analyzed each year and used to amend the method of supervision. Summaries of the supervision visits, examples of outstanding schools, supervisors' recommendations, and supervision of special classes are included in the supervision report form.

**Table 11. Work assessment criteria for supervisors and educational researchers**

Ability and attitude		Work output		
Character	Dedication to work	Guidance and management of education	Guidance and management of teachers	Management of administration and educational research
Philosophy on education; pride and awareness as an educator; commitment to education; self-education and dignity.	Ability to carry out orders, give directions and issue guidance; ability to abide by the law; co-operation; ability to solve problems; interactivity; creativity; ability to show positive attitude towards revamping; ability to maintain harmony between seniors and subordinates; ability to offer assistance.	National policy; ability to give operational guidance to schools and school curricula; ability to organize the conditions of teaching.	Ability to assess teachers and fairness in personnel matters; plans, methods and achievements of guiding educational research on schools.	Rationality, accuracy, and effectiveness of applying plans; researching theories and methods: educational research and work output (method and amount of contribution).

*Source: Regulations on promotion of teachers (Presidential Order No. 14920), Amendment.*



---

### **III. THE DAILY FUNCTIONING OF SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT SERVICES**

#### **1. Working conditions**

##### **(a) Material working conditions and service staff**

The physical working conditions of supervisors are far from satisfactory. For example, supervisors do not have offices of their own and share most facilities with their colleagues in the division.<sup>6</sup> They only receive the basic office equipment of a desk, chair, cabinet and stationery. Two to four computers, a direct telephone line and an administrative telephone line are provided to each division, while most also have a photocopier and a fax machine. However, supervisors are not provided with their own computers or direct telephone lines. According to a survey, about 40 per cent of the supervisors work in offices that are too small and noisy and many, especially those posted to offices of education in big cities, suffer from noise disturbances (Oh, J.S. and Im, Y.K., 1987).

On average, one to three assistants are assigned to each division to assist supervisors. However, in some regional offices of education, many supervisors, especially those appointed to carry out administrative work, require more assistants, as they often find themselves doing simple administrative chores. Some claim that one assistant is needed per supervisor.

On the whole, supervisors complain that their physical working conditions are not satisfactory, and the office equipment and welfare facilities inadequate.

---

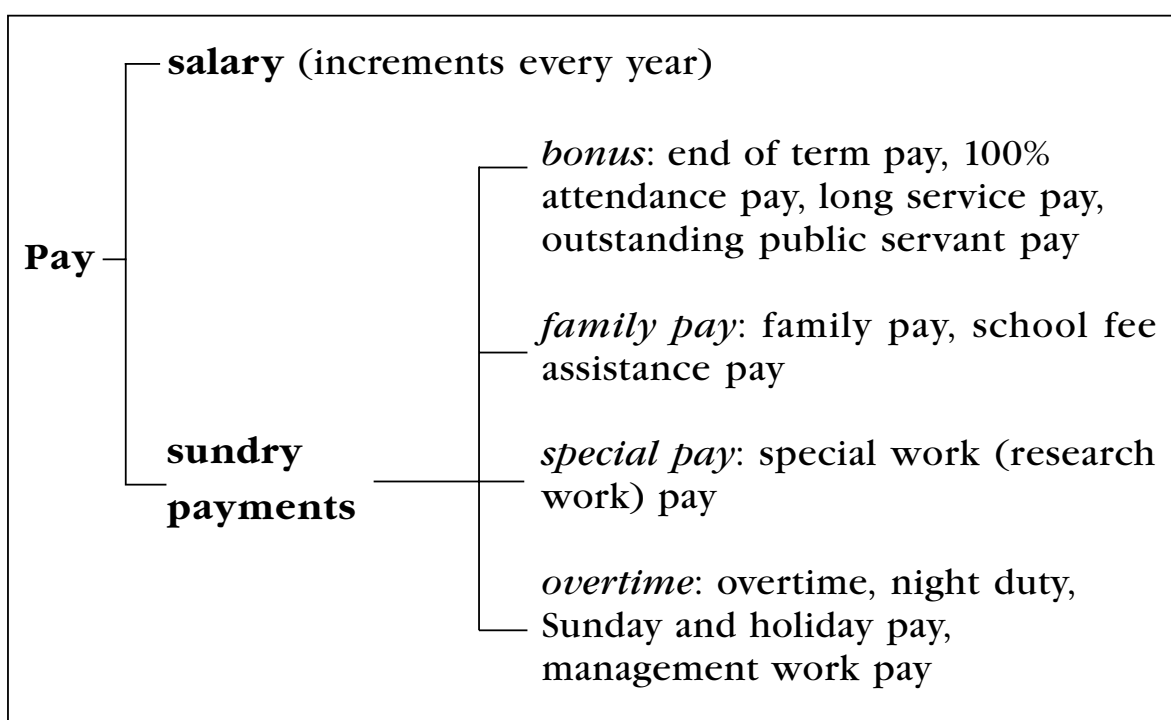
<sup>6</sup> A division is a section within the office of education.

## (b) Financial conditions

The pay system for supervisors is, in principle, the same as that for elementary and middle-school teachers and principals in Korea. The pay consists of the basic salary, to which an increment is added every year and a number of sundry payments (see *Diagram 2*). A set amount of travel expenses is given when supervisors use their own cars.

However, even though Junior School Supervisors and Junior Educational Researchers are at the same level as vice-principals and as such should receive the same salary, in fact, they receive less. Vice-principals receive an expediency fund and confidential expenses in addition to their sundry payments, which supervisors do not receive. The same is true for School Supervisors and Educational Researchers as compared to principals. Although the difference in pay between Supervisors and School Managers is fairly small, when compared with major companies, the supervisors' income is significantly lower. It is about 70-80 per cent of the salary of a worker with similar work experience in a major company (Korean Federation of Teachers'

**Diagram 2. Supervisors' pay system**



Associations, 1995). Hence, the findings of a 1995 survey by the Seoul Educational Research Institute showed that only 4 per cent of supervisors were satisfied, and 96 per cent unsatisfied, with their pay.

The reliance on various sundry payments to top up the basic salary has rendered the supervisors' pay system complex and difficult to adjust, a problem which is often neglected. Moreover, the fact that the supervisors' pay system is similar to that of teachers fails to take account of the differences between the two jobs, and discourages supervisors from enhancing their expertise or from having pride in their position.

## **2. Actual operation of supervisory and support services**

### **a) Planning and workload**

Supervisors, like other civil servants, work eight hours daily, not including lunch, from March to October, and seven hours from November to the end of February. However, as their workload is heavy, they frequently work longer hours. Supervisors, especially Junior School Supervisors, often finish work at nine or ten o'clock in the evening.

A small survey of 34 supervisors<sup>7</sup>, working in three different types of cities and regions (large, middle and small scale), was undertaken to gain a clearer picture of the allocation of working hours to different tasks (see *Table 12*). An average working week consisted of 67.1 hours, far in excess of the maximum 48 hours a week set by national labour regulations, and significantly more than teachers in elementary and middle schools work. According to this survey, supervisors spend more than half of their time, 54.5 per cent, on office work, only 7.5 per cent on school visits, 7.3 per cent in

---

<sup>7</sup> The sample consisted only of School Supervisors (31 Junior and three Senior), and did not include researchers.

meetings, 6.4 per cent on staff management, and 6.3 per cent on researching and developing supervision guidance techniques.

Supervisors, including Junior School Supervisors, have many administrative chores, which they believe interfere with their more important work, namely to guide and supervise schools. In reality, the main part of their day is spent on administrative work.

Supervisory plans in metropolitan and provincial offices of education are prepared on an annual basis. All supervisors take part in the planning procedure but the ultimate decisions rest with the heads of each office. The annual supervision plans are distributed to all supervisors and general administrators in the offices of education. Supervisors visit schools, write reports, analyze information, attend meetings, and so on. Usually, school visits are undertaken by Junior Supervisors. The managers, who review the reports, are the school supervisors and the directors of the relevant divisions in the offices of education.

**Table 12. Distribution of time spent on different tasks**

Duties	Time spent (percentage)
Administrative/office work	54.5
School visits	7.5
Meetings	7.3
Staff management	6.4
Researching and developing supervision guidance techniques	6.3
Guiding educational institutes and affiliated institutes	5.2
Managing research, trial and experimental schools	5.0
Report writing on school visits	4.4
Others	3.4
Total	100.0

## **(b) School visits**

Different types of school visits take place. Usually supervisors are invited for the purpose of instructional supervision when an experimental class is being undertaken in a school. This kind of supervision is called 'requested supervision'. Observing classes, and holding feedback meetings with teachers, principals and vice-principals after observation, are the main activities of supervisors in the case of requested supervision.

In addition, supervisors visit schools for other purposes, for example, to help in establishing the annual plan of each school and to implement the supervision policies of each office of education. In the case of the Seoul Metropolitan Office of Education, a new type of supervision, called 'comprehensive supervision', which is focused on the evaluation of the implementation of annual school education plans, is being introduced.

The character of school visits has changed in recent years. While previously supervisors randomly selected schools, many more visits now take place at the request of the schools. The advantage to schools is that the majority of visits, therefore, take place with prior notice, and the former authoritative style of visits has become more democratic, with the result that supervisors give guidance and advice to schools on request. Usually, supervisors devote one full day to visiting one school. On average, every school is visited once a month.

## **(c) Reporting**

No official report of the visit is left with the school. However, a feedback meeting is held at the end of the visit in order to discuss the results and give some advice on how to make positive changes. Supervisors submit standard written reports to their superiors after their visits. The format varies somewhat, but they generally consist

of 10 pages on the result of supervision and one to two pages on the results of experiments and meetings. Reports also include the purpose of the visit, dates, results of the visit, achievements, problems and policy adherence. They are reviewed periodically to highlight problems that need to be resolved, as well as to draw attention to outstanding examples of good practice, which may be circulated to other schools.

#### **(d) 'Follow-up' on visits and reports**

There is no specific department to monitor the follow-up of supervision reports but since all supervisors take part in writing these reports, it can be said that they are all responsible for their monitoring and follow-up.

School visit reports of Junior Supervisors are reviewed by the Supervisors, Directors of the respective bureaux, the Vice-Superintendent of Education and then, finally, the Superintendent of Education (see the organogram in *Appendix I*). Reports are used to identify outstanding schools and establish supervision plans for the following year. While they may not have any direct effect on the budget, promotion and training of teachers or the development of school curricula, they are used at the very least as a resource material in offices of education and in public schools. For example, some cities and provinces have selected excellent schools and distributed rewards to those that have achieved outstanding research work.

---

## **IV. OVERALL ASSESSMENT**

### **1. Impact on school functioning and quality**

Most supervisors in metropolitan and provincial offices of education are not satisfied with the supervision of the schools in their regions. The same is true for many teachers. The reasons differ between supervisors and teachers. Nevertheless, both agree that supervision should be viewed as an important support service.

Supervisors say their role is diminishing due to the fact that they cannot do any real supervision as a result of various limitations and conditions. Therefore, they claim that their expertise must be re-established by revamping their working conditions, expanding training programmes and the opportunities to benefit from them, increasing welfare, and assigning them more assistants. Teachers say that supervisors do not have enough professional knowledge and that their schools cannot be supervised properly due to various circumstances. They point out that they also have too many administrative duties and too many hours of teaching to be able to co-operate fully within the supervision process. In addition, teachers are unhappy because of the authoritative and bureaucratic attitude of the supervisory officers.

If supervision is to have any real positive effect in enhancing the quality of education in schools, then a system where guidance on teaching methods can be provided through instructional supervision is needed. It is because this type of supervision is not sufficiently developed that teachers are dissatisfied with the present situation. They view taking advice from fellow teachers and senior teachers as a better way to enhance their expertise.

## 2. Synthesis of main problems

To gain a clearer picture of the most serious problems impeding the efficiency of supervision, the available literature was studied and questionnaires were sent to a large sample of teachers and supervisors. The sample was made up of a total of 1,360 teachers (0.5 per cent of the whole body), and 570 supervisors (15 per cent of the whole body). Out of 1,930, 1,308 replies (895 from teachers and 413 from supervisors) were received. The results of this sample survey are shown in *Tables 13 and 14*. On the basis of these different sources, six main problems in the supervision system in Korea were identified.

Firstly, supervisors do not have enough time and peace of mind to carry out supervision work due to their heavy administrative workload.

**Table 13. Problems of supervision: point of view of supervisors**

Problems	Number and percentage of respondents	
Excess of non-supervision workload	250	(60.5%)
Negative attitude towards supervision	78	(18.9%)
Insufficient budget for supervision	24	(5.8%)
Lack of expertise of supervisors	24	(5.8%)
Supervision based on administrative regulations and insufficient room for self-supervision	19	(4.6%)
Too many classes and paper workload for teachers	15	(3.6%)
Ambiguity of supervisory roles	3	(0.7%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>(100%)</b>

Source: Yu, Kim and Yang, 1995.



Paperwork has to be completed, which does not leave time for research and study which would be of help to their supervision duties. However, teachers also have too much paperwork and too many classes to co-operate fully in, or undertake, supervision themselves.

Secondly, few steps are taken to attract more supervisors. Presently, supervisors can transfer to a position at school and some view their post as a stepping stone to the vice-principal or principal position at school after several years. As already discussed, even though supervisors are of the same age range and have experience which is similar to that of principals and vice-principals, their income is lower and their work is, apparently, less appreciated. In addition, little effort is made to attract young and qualified candidates for the job. The combination of these factors does not encourage outstanding supervisors to remain long in their jobs.

**Table 14. Problems of supervision: point of view of teachers**

Problems	Number and percentage of respondents	
Too many classes and paper workload for teachers	345	(38.5%)
Negative attitude towards supervision	134	(15.0%)
Lack of expertise of supervisors	123	(13.7%)
Supervision based on administrative regulations and insufficient room for self-supervision	123	(13.7%)
Excess of non-supervision workload	103	(11.5%)
Lack of budget for supervision	42	(4.7%)
Ambiguity of supervision roles	25	(2.8%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>895</b>	<b>(100%)</b>

Source: Yu, Kim and Yang, 1995.

Thirdly, supervision is not sufficiently flexible to meet the needs of schools and teachers. The standardized approach to supervision means it can quickly become a very perfunctory exercise. Teachers want to receive supervision which is relevant to their circumstances, backgrounds and experiences but, at present, they are not being provided with real and positive assistance.

Fourthly, there are few programmes to train supervisors to foster their expertise or to enable them to carry out research work. As pointed out earlier, their heavy workload makes it difficult for them to enrol in training programmes. There is also a lack of professional development programmes offering career development advice.

Fifthly, supervisory evaluations should be carried out fairly and outstanding schools should be better rewarded. At present, there is no system to support exemplary teachers and schools. The results of evaluations could be used to determine the amount of funds granted to schools, but this is not the case. This is related to the weakness of monitoring and follow-up of supervision and evaluation reports.

Sixthly, the over-concentration on the university entrance examination is a major factor in hindering in-school supervision in particular. There is currently a fair amount of internal supervision in elementary schools but less in middle schools and almost none in high schools. This is because middle and high schools are overly focused on ensuring that students advance to higher education, to the extent that other aspects of education, such as the management of school curricula and school-based autonomous supervision, are often neglected.

### **3. Present trends and future directions**

Present trends and future directions in supervision can be summarized as follows.

There is a clear trend to move supervisory duties, in particular school visits and classroom observation, away from the Ministry to the local offices and the schools. Accordingly, the Central Ministry's role has diminished, while the role of local offices of education has increased to allow for more flexibility and better adaptation to individual schools.

In this regard, many research reports have suggested the redistribution of supervisory tasks among the different partners. The supervision-related departments of the Ministry of Education should focus on nationwide planning and co-ordination; research and development to spread innovative models of supervision; screening excellent personnel in supervision; operating in-service training of the personnel; reorganizing and spreading exemplary cases of supervision; and provision of the latest information and theories on supervision. The decentralized offices of education should adapt their supervisory work to the local needs. Their tasks should include research and development to devise instructional models and teaching methods suitable to the local curriculum; screening and training of the local supervisory personnel; helping schools to exchange information on supervisory activities, and to collaborate; and motivating teachers to participate in various supervisory options by supporting 'subject-matter meetings'. Finally, individual schools should extend autonomous supervisory activities.

In addition, supervisors are increasingly becoming involved in the area of school evaluation, which is important at the national level to find out which schools are best at carrying out their responsibilities, implementing the school curriculum, and achieving educational standards. In the past, the evaluation of elementary and middle schools depended on the self-evaluation carried out by each school, and the management assessment, undertaken as part of the supervision, by the offices of education. However, these evaluations were not open to everyone and as they were done perfunctorily, they did not assist in actually overhauling the management of schools. Therefore, school evaluation is being reinforced to facilitate supervision at national level and to raise accountability in schools. Shortly, the evaluation of schools will be carried out through a system that has the support of the public (see Yu, Kim and Kim, 1996).

Policies are also being developed to enhance the expertise of supervisors. One such policy being implemented is the recruitment of supervisors via publicized examinations, instead of the old practice of transferring teachers. The process is considered to be fairer and more objective, and the quality of supervisors is believed to have improved. In addition, the following measures, some of which are being introduced, have been suggested to improve the expertise of supervisors:

- establish a unitary system of educational professionals who are currently divided into two groups – supervisors and researchers;
- enhance education and in-service training of supervisors;
- rationalize the system of promotion and transfers of supervisors;
- re-classify supervisors' job specifications into educational policy development, curriculum and instruction, educational research and development, school management, and general administration.

Various institutes are being developed to train and re-educate supervisors so that they can promote themselves, and the establishment of training institutes for future supervisors is also being discussed.

Furthermore, the policy of 'school-based autonomous supervision' (SBAS) is being reinforced. The advantage of SBAS is that it can look at each school individually, consider the specific needs of teachers, and so lead to differentiated supervision practice. Therefore, educational administrative offices should provide, at least, the minimum administrative support to schools, allow them to supervise themselves, and then evaluate them. This policy has the added advantage of fostering the spontaneity of teachers. Lee and Yu (1989) set out the characteristics of SBAS as follows:

- school-centredness: the individual school is regarded as the subject, rather than the object of supervision, and the organizational and operational conditions of the school are respected;
- self-governance: autonomous supervisory activities of staff members are promoted;
- co-operation: all staff members in the school co-operate;
- diversity: SBAS is conducted in various forms to address the particular needs of each teacher;
- continuity: SBAS is a continuous and long-term process rather than a one-off operation;
- self-improvement: both of the school as an organization and of the staff members.

An early evaluation of the implementation of SBAS has shown, among other things, that teachers still perceive the process as a top-down one. They feel that it is planned and implemented in a less democratic way than they expected. The participation of teachers in SBAS is not yet satisfactory, partly because of their heavy workload,

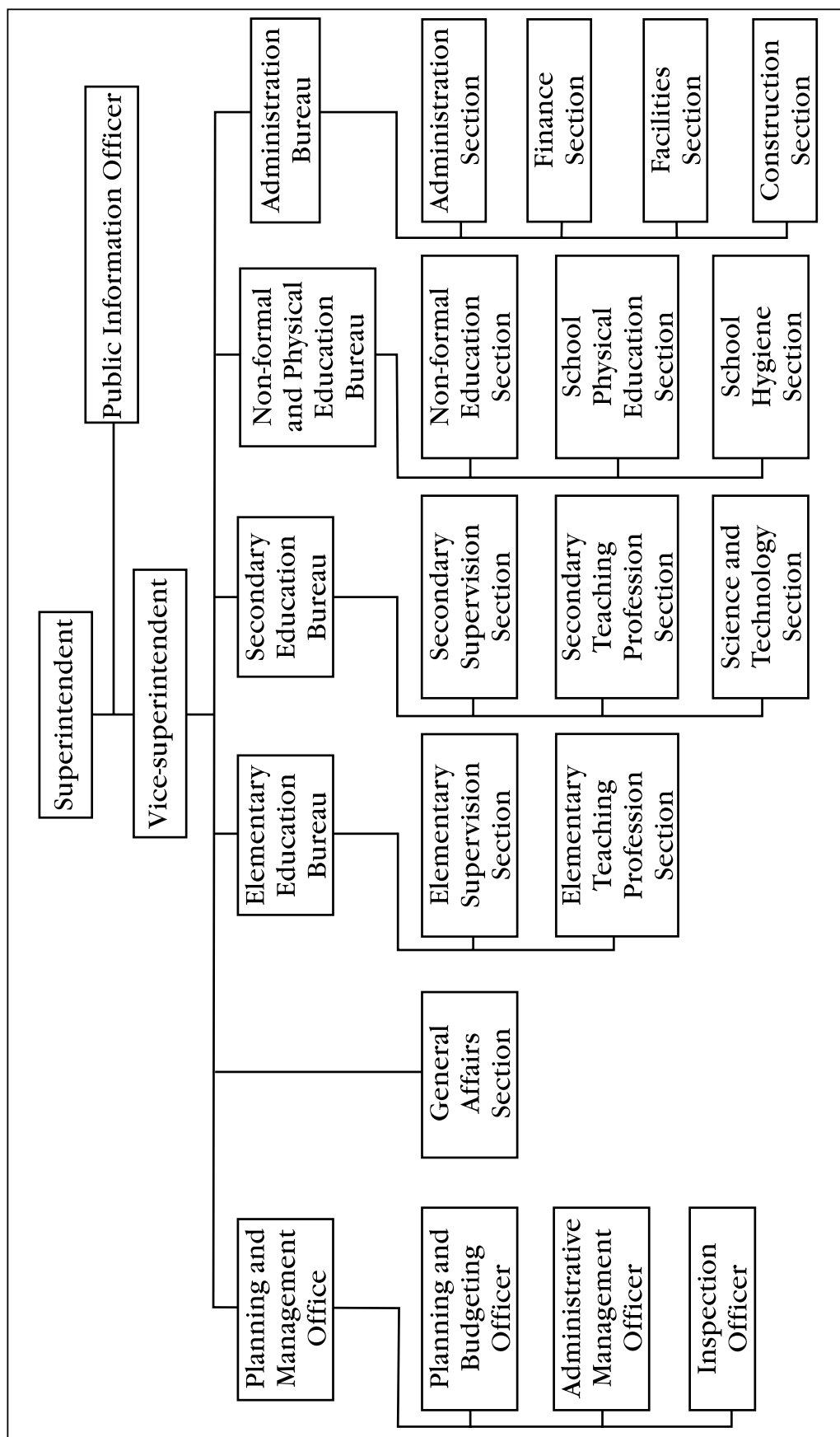
but also because the supervision process fails to respond to their needs and demands.

A number of recommendations were made to more fully and successfully develop SBAS:

- research on this policy should be further promoted and exemplary programmes should be identified and disseminated;
- training and raising awareness about this topic should be enhanced;
- the internal organization of the school should be rearranged so as to increase collegial interaction and to allow senior staff the time to exercise effective leadership;
- planning for SBAS should involve teachers more closely;
- the management of external supervision (supervisory practices, personnel, working conditions) should be improved;
- teachers' workload should be eased and those who take part in SBAS should be rewarded.

## APPENDIX I.

### Organization of the metropolitan and provincial offices of education (Example: Seoul Metropolitan Office of Education)



---

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Education Law Committee. 1996. *Education Law*.

Ko, Y.H. et al. 1983. *Development of classroom supervision model and research on its possible adaptation*. Seoul: KEDI.

Korean Educational Development Institute. 1995. *Korean educational indicators*. Seoul: KEDI.

Korean Federation of Teachers' Associations. 1995. *Comparative study on teachers' pay in major countries*. Seoul.

Lee, Y.S.; Yu, H.S. 1989. *A study for the improvement of school-based autonomous supervision in Korea*. Seoul: KEDI.

Oh, J.S.; Im, Y.K. 1987. *A job analysis of the school supervisor with respect to the improvement of the supervision system*. Seoul: KEDI.

Presidential Commission for Educational Reform. 1995. *Educational reform policies for the establishment of a new education system*. Seoul.

Seoul Educational Research Institute. 1995. *A study on the supervisors' role*. Seoul: SERI.

Shin et al. 1990. *Research on revamping supervisors' employment system*.

Yu, H.S.; Kim, H.S.; Kim, H.J. 1996. *A study on the establishment of an institutional evaluation system for the primary and secondary schools in Korea*. Seoul: KEDI.

Yu, H.S.; Kim, H.J.; Yang, S.S. 1995. *A study on the improvement of supervision in the Korean education system*. Seoul: KEDI.



---

## **Chapter III**

### **National diagnosis on Teacher supervision and support services for basic education in the State of Uttar Pradesh (India)**

**Dr Najma Akhtar, Dr K.N. Bhatt, Sri M.N. Gune,  
Sri Jagmohan Singh, Smt. Anuja Saluja<sup>1</sup>**

---

<sup>1</sup> Team members from the State Institute of Educational Management and Training (SIEMAT), Allahabad, with the support of the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA), New Delhi.

---

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABSA	Assistant Basic Education Officer
BEB	Basic Education Board
BRC	Block Resource Centre
BSA	District Basic Education Officer
BTC	Basic Teachers' Certificate
DBE	Directorate of Basic Education
DIET	District Institute of Educational Training
DPEP	District Primary Education Programme
EFA	Education for All
MLL	Minimum Levels of Learning
NCERT	National Council of Educational Research and Training
NIEPA	National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration
NPRC	Nyaya Panchayat Resource Centre
SCERT	State Council of Educational Research and Training
SIEMAT	State Institute of Educational Management and Training
UPBEP	Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Project
VEC	Village Education Committee

---

## **CONTENTS**

<b>List of abbreviations</b>	<b>106</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>I. General overview of supervision and support services</b>	<b>113</b>
<b>1. Historical background</b>	<b>113</b>
<b>(a) The overall structure of supervision and support services</b>	<b>114</b>
<b>(b) Official functions of the different categories of supervisors</b>	<b>118</b>
<b>(c) Relations with other pedagogical services</b>	<b>123</b>
<b>(d) Relation with school-site supervision</b>	<b>123</b>
<b>II. The management of supervision and support services</b>	<b>125</b>
<b>1. Basic facts</b>	<b>125</b>
<b>2. Critical issues</b>	<b>127</b>
<b>(a) Recruitment of supervisors</b>	<b>127</b>
<b>(b) Training of supervisors</b>	<b>127</b>
<b>(c) Professional organizations</b>	<b>129</b>
<b>(d) Career development</b>	<b>129</b>
<b>(e) Monitoring and evaluation</b>	<b>130</b>
<b>(f) Support</b>	<b>131</b>
<b>III. The daily functioning of supervision and support services</b>	<b>132</b>
<b>1. Working conditions</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>(a) Material working conditions and service staff</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>(b) Financial conditions</b>	<b>134</b>
<b>2. Daily operation of supervision and support services</b>	<b>135</b>

(a) Workload and planning	135
(b) School visits	139
(c) Reporting	140
(d) 'Follow-up' on visits and reports	142
IV. Overall assessment	144
1. Impact on school functioning and quality	144
2. Synthesis of problems	148
(a) Training	148
(b) Staffing	149
(c) Load of non-academic activities	149
(d) Physical facilities	150
(e) Monitoring of support systems	150
(f) Job satisfaction	151
3. Prospects for change	152
Appendix I:	
Format of an inspection report for schools	155
Bibliography	156

---

## INTRODUCTION

Uttar Pradesh occupies an important position among the Indian states. With a population of almost 140 million (according to the 1991 census), it is the most populous state and, in terms of area, the fourth largest. The official language is Hindi and the literacy rate was estimated, in 1991, to be approximately 42 per cent, but with a significant gap between males (56 per cent) and females (25 per cent). In comparison, India, with a total population of about 850 million, has a literacy rate of 53 per cent.

The state is divided into 14 Education Regions and 68 districts with a Directorate of Basic Education (DBE) and a Basic Education Board (BEB) at national level. The Director of Basic Education, with the Additional Director of Basic Education and supporting staff, maintains administrative control over basic education in the state. In charge of other levels are Assistant Directors of Basic Education at the regional level, Basic Education Officers in collaboration with Deputy Basic Education Officers at the district level, and Assistant Basic Education Officers (ABSAs)<sup>2</sup> at the block level (as shown in *Organogram 1*).

The Basic Education Board is headed by the Director of Education, its ex-officio chairman. The Board members are nominated from the presidents of district boards, heads of corporations, presidents of municipal boards, and others. The main functions of the Board include organizing basic education and teachers' training, co-ordinating them, controlling the system, and improving educational standards throughout the general system of education in the state. The BEB also lays down the rules and regulations which functionaries and institutions of district, block and municipal levels must adhere to when opening new basic schools, managing schools and conducting

---

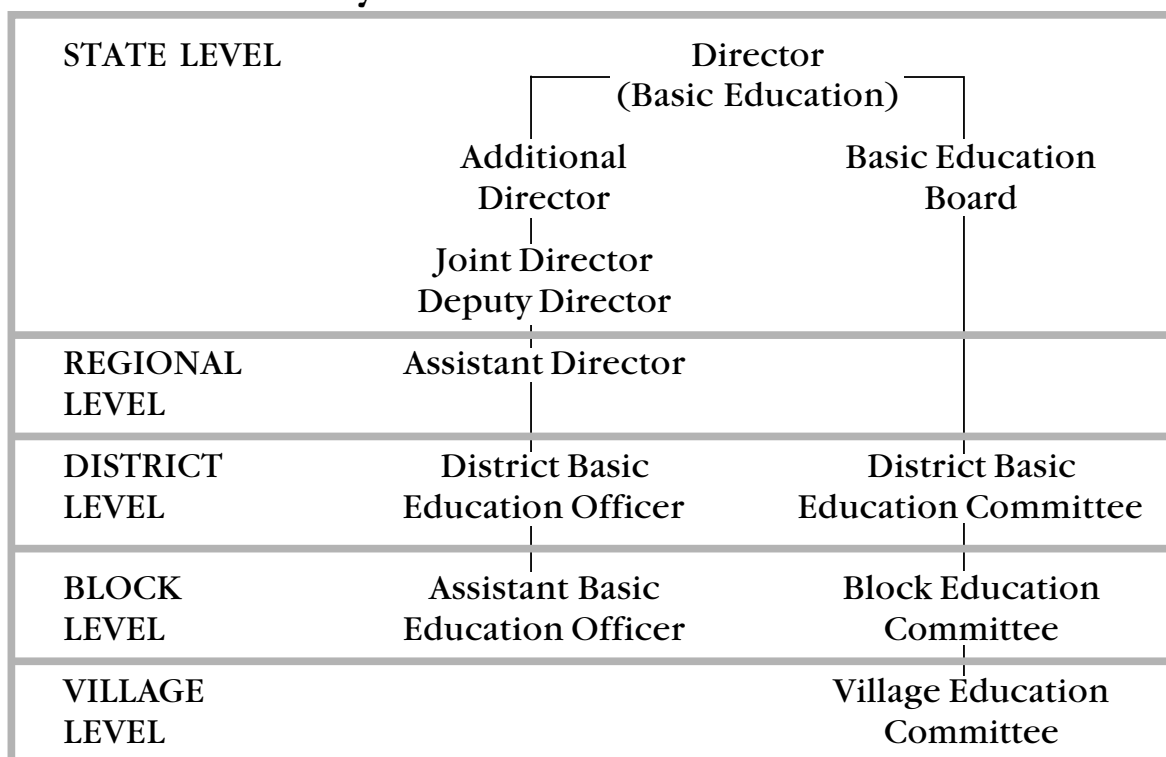
<sup>2</sup> The Assistant Basic Education Officer is called, in Hindi, Assistant Basic Shiksha Adhikari, which is abbreviated as ABSA. The text will therefore regularly make reference to ABSAs.

examinations. The BEB modifies and approves plans prepared by district or municipal Basic Education Committees in relation to the expansion and improvement of basic education.

Public school education consists of two levels that are both divided into two stages. Elementary education is divided into primary (classes I to V) and upper primary (classes VI to VIII). Secondary education consists of secondary or high-school level (classes IX and X) and senior secondary school certificate (classes XI and XII). Most of the primary and upper-primary schools of the rural, as well as urban, areas function under the BEB. Consequently, the teachers are employees of this Board. Some non-government institutions are recognized by the State Education Department and receive government aid while other schools are recognized but unaided.

When India gained its independence in 1947, a new Constitution was framed which enjoined the state to provide free and compulsory

**Organogram 1. Administrative set-up of basic education by level**



education for all children up to the age of 14 by 1960. There has indeed been an impressive increase in enrolment both at primary and upper-primary level (see *Diagrams 1 and 2*). As a result, the gross enrolment rate, which was approximately 70 per cent in 1986/87 increased to 101 per cent in 1995/96.

However, this quantitative expansion has not helped to overcome all disparities. Great differences remain in enrolment within the state, especially between rural and urban areas. The position of girls' education and that of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes is also far from satisfactory, particularly in rural areas.

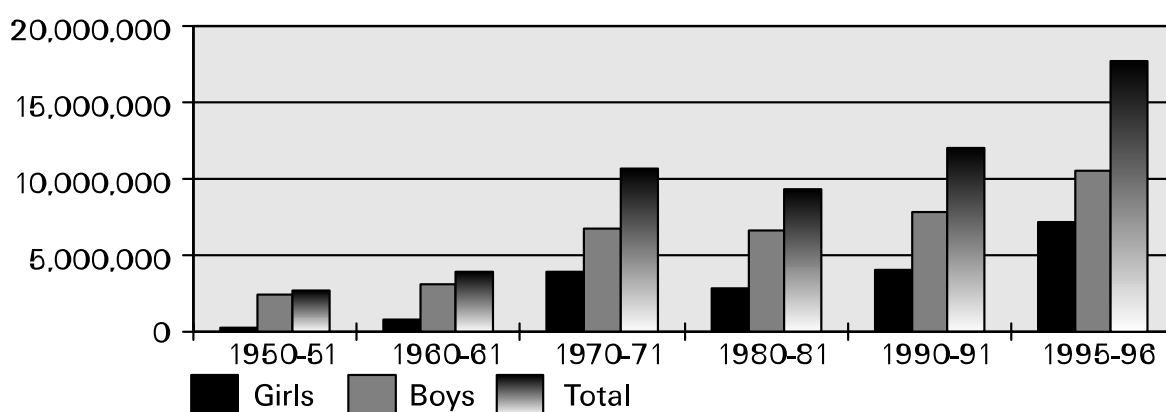
Quality problems are equally important. Various programmes such as 'Operation Blackboard', 'Programme of Massive Orientation of School Teachers' (PMOST) and 'Special Orientation for Primary Teachers' (SOPT) were launched, in conjunction with other initiatives to make schools more attractive and to acquaint the elementary teachers with the latest developments in pedagogy and school management. But the quality of education remains an issue to be addressed, as different indicators show. To quote one example: the 1991 census recorded a drop-out rate of 34 per cent between classes.

Many research studies have highlighted the fact that one of the important determinants of the declining standards of elementary education is an ineffective and weak system of management and supervision. Hence, a concerted effort is being made to revamp educational planning and management to stimulate change in the teaching-learning atmosphere in the schools, to promote community involvement in school activities and to improve the performance of teachers and supervisory staff. Keeping this objective in view, the Uttar Pradesh Government created an independent body, the 'Uttar Pradesh Education For All Project Board' (EFA), in 1993, with the responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation of the

‘Basic Education Project’ and the ‘District Primary Education Programme’ (DPEP). These projects include the following components:

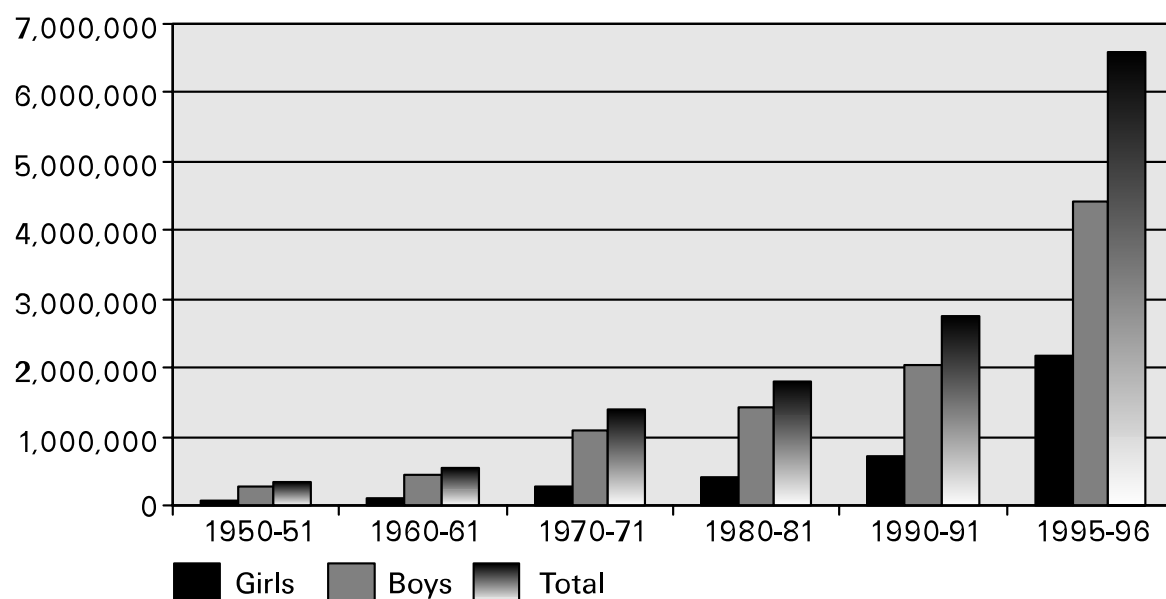
- building institutional capacity;
- improving teacher and staff performance;
- improving learning achievement;
- expanding access;
- revising curriculum according to minimum levels of learning (MLL).

**Diagram 1. Evolution of enrolment in Uttar Pradesh at primary level (6-10 years)**



Source: ‘Education for All’ U.P. Basic Education Project (1995-96)

**Diagram 2. Evolution of enrolment in Uttar Pradesh at upper-primary level (11-14 years)**



Source: ‘Education for All’ U.P. Basic Education Project (1995-96)



---

# **I. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT SERVICES**

## **1. Historical background**

Following independence in 1947, the Indian education department was completely reorganized and considerably expanded. The Director of Public Instruction was re-designated as Director of Education. The state was divided into eight regions, each under a regional Deputy Director of Education in respect of boys' schools generally, and a Regional Inspector for girls' schools. Each district was provided with a District Inspector of Schools. Until 1972, local government agencies such as the municipal corporations, the municipalities, the district board and the village 'panchayats' (elected village governing bodies) were responsible for providing elementary education in Uttar Pradesh. An important change occurred in 1972, when the State Basic Education Board (Basic Shiksha Parishad), an autonomous body, was assigned the responsibility of running schools which provide education up to Grade VIII. Consequently, the responsibility for primary and upper-primary schools was removed from the local bodies and elementary schools were transferred to the BEB, but the schools continue to belong to the local bodies. This implies that general supervision, control, inspection and audit of the primary schools are undertaken by the administrative staff of the education department at various levels.

This restructuring has had very little impact on what has been considered throughout as a core problem in supervision, namely the control-oriented attitude of the supervisors. As early as 1964, the Kothari Education Commission, while analyzing the reasons for the breakdown of supervision programmes in most states, stressed the need to introduce a new system focusing on teacher development. Such supervision should involve demonstration teaching,

observation lessons, organization of seminars, meetings and workshops, guidance in the preparation of institutional plans, etc. The recent change in nomenclature, whereby the posts of Deputy Inspector of Schools and Sub-Deputy Inspector of Schools were redesignated as Deputy Basic Education Officer and as Assistant Basic Education Officer, is a reflection of this desired, but difficult to achieve, change in attitudes.

On the whole, there have been relatively few reforms in school supervision since independence, although the expansion of the system has led to an increase in the number of actors involved.

### **(a) The overall structure of supervision and support services**

*Organogram 2* shows the actors officially involved in supervision at the different levels. At the state level, there are now a number of Directors of Education, among them the Director of Basic Education who has the responsibility over primary schools and who is assisted by Additional Directors. Assistant Directors are posted at regional level.<sup>3</sup> As mentioned in the introduction, District Basic Education Officers, called in Hindi Basic Shiksha Adhikari (BSA), are the main officers at district level, assisted by Deputy Basic Education Officers (Deputy BSA), and Assistant Basic Education Officer (ABSAs). The latter group is officially based at the block level. In addition, the Village Education Committees (VECs) have been assigned some school supervision duties.

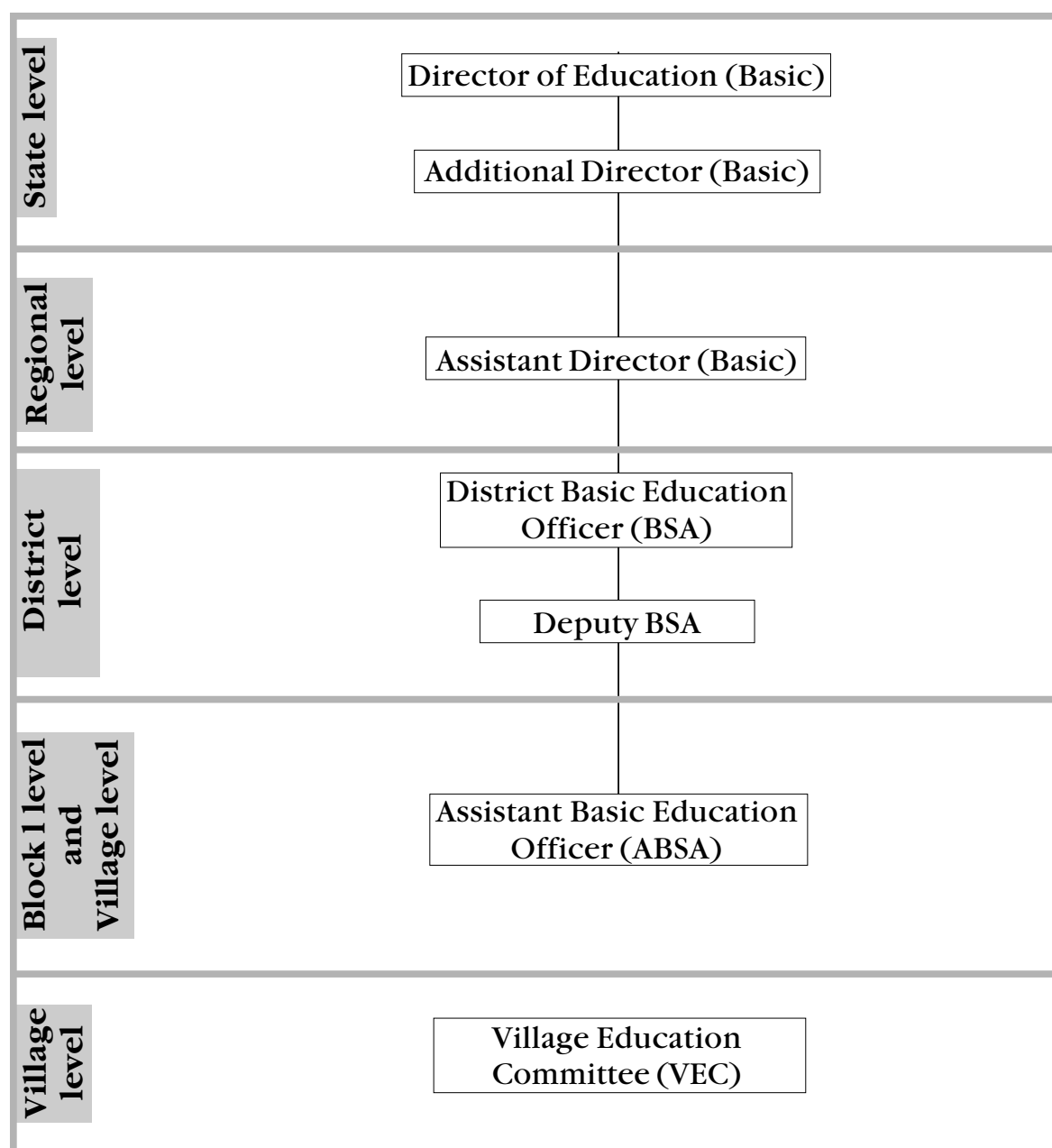
Supervision in urban areas is somewhat differently organized. At the municipal level, which is comparable to the block/village level, Educational Superintendents and Assistant Educational

---

<sup>3</sup> In the case of secondary education, they are called Joint Directors.

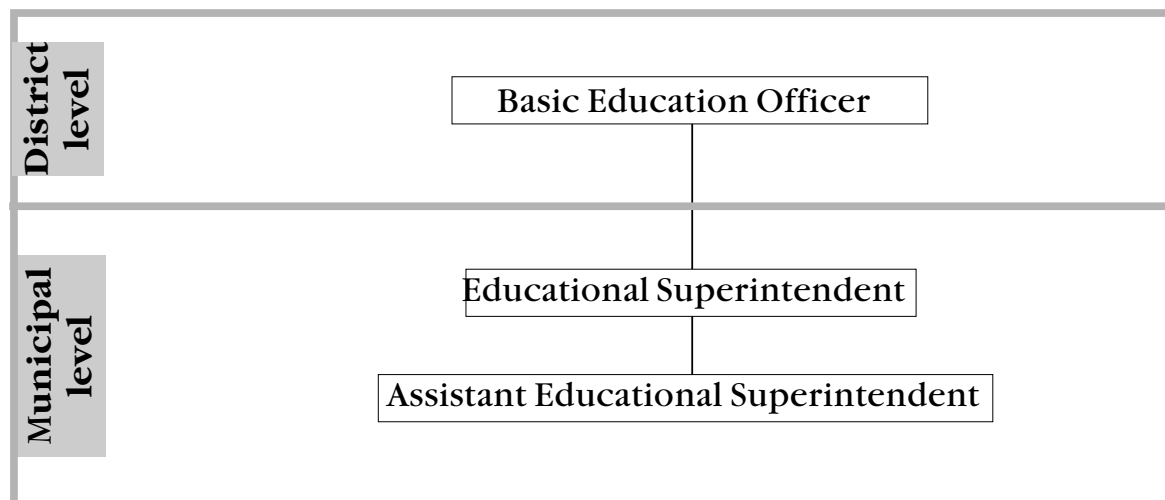
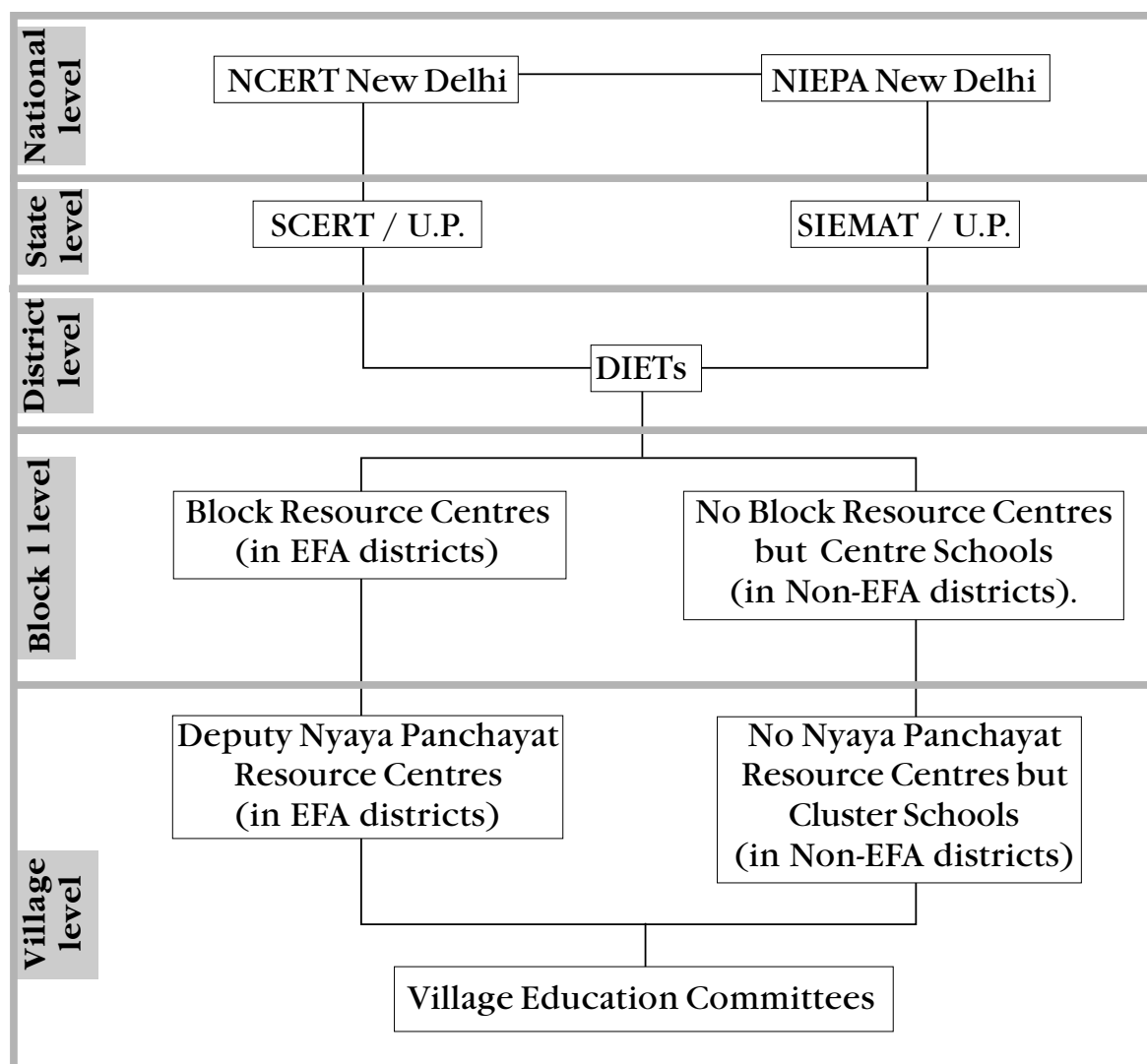
Superintendents are in charge (*Organogram 3*). They are employees of the BEB, while District Basic Education Officers, Deputy Basic Education Officers and Assistant Basic Education Officers are the employees of the State Education Department.

**Organogram 2. Structure of supervision services**



In regard to other support services it may be pointed out that various types of academic and management support, including different pre-service and in-service training programmes for education officers, are available through a range of institutions extending from national to village level, as can be seen from *Organogram 4*. There is some form of distribution of tasks between the two apex institutions operating at state level: the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) is responsible for development and modification of curriculum, production of textbooks, and orientation of key persons and master trainers for massive in-service training programmes. The State Institute of Educational Management and Training (SIEMAT) provides academic guidance and support to the educational administrators in the field and conducts research in the area of educational planning and management.

The institutes at national and state level provide support to the managers of the education system, including the supervisors, while at lower levels District Institutes of Educational Training (DIETs), Block Resource Centres (BRCs), Nyaya Panchayat Resource Centres (NPRCs) and Village Education Committees (VECs) are supposed to give direct assistance to schools taking local conditions into account. However, as can be seen from *Table 1*, the whole range of support institutions is only operating in the 'Education for All Project' districts. This project was launched in Uttar Pradesh in 1993 and now covers 12 districts. In the BRCs, academic guidance and training is provided to the primary-school teachers at block level, while in the NPRCs monthly one-day workshops are conducted and academic guidance is provided to the teachers in the classroom situation. In the non-EFA districts, only DIETs are available for support purposes. There are block centre schools and cluster schools that only play a role in data collection and dissemination of information at block and village cluster level respectively, but do not provide any academic support. In both kinds of districts, VECs have been created as grass-roots-level support agencies.

**Organogram 3. Structure of supervision system in urban area****Organogram 4. Structure of academic support services**

**Table 1. Comparison of support services in EFA and non-EFA districts**

EFA DISTRICT		NON-EFA DISTRICT	
Support structures	Functions	Support structures	Functions
DIET	Academic support Educational management and planning (district level)	DIET	Academic support Educational management and planning (district level)
BRC	Academic support (block level) Educational management and planning (block level)	NO BRC but BLOCK CENTRE SCHOOL	No academic support Only collection and dissemination of information (block level)
NPRC	Academic support (cluster level) Educational management and planning (cluster level)	NO NPRC but CLUSTER SCHOOLS	No academic support Only collection and dissemination of information (cluster level)
VEC	Academic and semi-academic support (school level)	VEC	Academic and semi-academic support (school level)

**(b) Official functions of the different categories of supervisors**

The overall supervision of educational activities of primary and upper-primary schools in the district is, in principle, the task of the District Basic Education Officer. His duties include the appointment and transfer of teachers of elementary schools of the BEB, disbursement of salaries to the teachers and other workers. He also visits and inspects selected basic schools and examines the inspection reports of his subordinate supervisory staff.

The Deputy Basic Education Officer looks after the overall work of basic schools (Grade I to VIII) in rural areas of the district, working under the guidance of the District Basic Education Officer. He keeps administrative control over all the Assistant Basic Education Officers of the district and, according to the Education code, his functions are as follows:

- to inspect and supervise the basic schools (primary and upper primary);
- to submit information regularly to the President of the district 'panchayat' (elected body) about the areas where more schools are needed, and to open new schools if authorized to do so by the BEB;
- to maintain administrative control, to work in co-operation with and under the general guidance of the district 'panchayat', to ensure the compliance of orders and instructions received from the Directorate and to submit reports when so required;
- to oversee the conduct of junior high school and junior high school scholarship examinations.

Generally, every Deputy Basic Education Officer is supposed to spend 150 days on visits but he can increase or decrease this period with the consent of the President of the district 'panchayat'. He can inspect the schools personally or delegate this duty to his Assistant Basic Education Officers, twice a year. The Deputy Basic Education officer is also supposed to contact the members of Education Committees as much as possible, scrupulously check the academic programme of schools, and write inspection reports and distribute these to the schools concerned and to the president of the district 'panchayat'.

While the above-mentioned personnel officially have supervision duties, including school visits, in most cases their work will be more administrative and they will leave the real supervision tasks to the

Assistant Basic Education Officers (ABSAs). They officially assist the Deputy Basic Education Officers in their duties, namely: inspecting schools, conducting examinations, selecting teachers, selecting the Basic Teachers' Certificate (BTC), and overseeing the construction of school buildings through the public and the Block Development Officers<sup>4</sup>, the distribution of teaching materials, and the observation of departmental programmes in the block such as the mid-day meal scheme, balganana (child census), examinations, games, sports and rallies.

The official job description of the ABSAs is a most demanding one, combining both administrative and academic tasks. According to the latest regulations, their functions include the following.

#### *Administrative*

- To submit the transfer and promotion proposals of teachers and employees under the BEB and issue the transfer orders within the block/panchayat area and ensure that they are executed;
- to submit proposals for disciplinary proceedings within the block panchayat area to the District Basic Education Officer and, following his approval, execute them;
- to send the transfer proposals of Grade IV employees and part-time workers of Parishad within the block/panchayat area to the District Basic Education Officer, subject to the powers specified under appointment, punishment and such issues;
- to recommend the transfer of subordinate inspecting staff, personnel and Grade IV employees outside the Kshetra Panchayat area and the district;
- to approve the visits of subordinate staff and ensure the performance of their duties;

---

<sup>4</sup> For the convenience of administration and control, each revenue district is divided into many Tehsils (revenue units). For the all-round development of each Tehsil, it is divided into many blocks and each block has an officer under the planning department who is responsible for the development of the whole block area. Hence this officer has been designated as Block Development Officer.



- to prepare the seniority list of teachers of the block/kshetra panchayat and help the District Basic Education Officer prepare the combined seniority list at the district level;
- to send the records of life insurance of retired teachers and other employees to the district Basic Education Officer and Accounts Officers;
- to organize and ensure the payment of salaries to the teachers and other employees of Parishad in co-operation with the Accounts Officers;
- to inspect the applications from private government-aided schools for various grants before sending to the higher officer;
- to ensure materials paid for by grants from 'Operation Blackboard' reach the schools;
- to deal with the pension arrangements for retired teachers in co-operation with the Accounts Officers;
- to send the applications of teachers and Grade IV employees of Parishad for General Provident Fund loans to the District Basic Education Officer after necessary action;
- to make entries in the General Provident Fund pass-books of all the teachers and employees of Parishad and get them verified by the Accounts Officers.

### *Academic*

- To inspect all the schools of block/kshetra panchayat, maintain main administration and send the inspection reports to the district Basic Education Officer;
- to send the proposals for opening and transferring schools on the basis of survey norms, and proposals for the posting of teachers based on enrolment figures, to the district Basic Education Officer and ensure action is taken upon approval;
- to ensure the proper management of students' funds and maintain records of property, equipment and endowment of all the schools;

- to send reports, with recommendations, to the District Basic Education Officer for the recognition of schools;
- to manage the annual educational survey of block/kshetra panchayat and, after assessing the availability of educational facilities and needs, make arrangements for the adjustment of available facilities;
- to prepare educational planning for providing the facility of education to all in the block/kshetra panchayat;
- to seek the participation of the community in education-related issues and ensure that the Village Education Committee runs effectively;
- to collect and analyze all the educational statistics of the block/kshetra panchayat;
- to make arrangements for all types of examinations according to rules;
- to plan sporting competitions and other co-curricular activities at the block/kshetra panchayat level and co-operate with the District Basic Education Officer at the district level;
- to arrange panel inspection for Senior Basic Schools within the area;
- to oversee the village education libraries;
- to answer questions about the block/kshetra panchayat legislative assembly and legislative council;
- to ensure the settlement of matters related to the block/kshetra panchayat.

Interviews, group discussions, and the field survey have revealed that since the ABSA is the link between the decision-makers and the grass-roots level, his services are often used for disseminating information to lower levels. In addition to the duties listed above, the Assistant Basic Education Officers have to perform a number of other duties which are not directly related to their assigned duties such as census work, family work and tree plantation. This leads to an increase in their workload and, consequently, a neglect of their academic duties (see *Part III*).

### **(c) Relations with other pedagogical services**

There are few relations between the ABSAs and other services in charge of pedagogical support, such as examination boards, curriculum development departments or textbook production units. Supervisors have a role to play in following the conduct of examinations, but not in their design. Even their role in relation to the supervision of examinations has changed recently. Previously, the Grade V examination was public and conducted under the direct supervision of Sub-deputy Inspectors of Schools (now called Assistant Basic Education Officers). However, headteachers of primary schools have now been authorized to conduct this and the Grade VIII examination under their own supervision (Grades VI and VII were already the responsibility of the headteacher concerned). This change was influenced by the concept of continuous and comprehensive evaluation, according to which the monthly, six-monthly and annual examinations are organized in the elementary schools and final results are drawn up on the basis of scores in all the tests.

### **(d) Relation with school-site supervision**

In addition to the external support provided to teachers by the inspecting officers and several agencies, headteachers and senior teachers are expected to regularly check the attendance of pupils, to observe classroom instruction and to correct work by teachers. As such, the headteacher plays the role of an internal supervisor who guides the teachers and helps them in improving their performance.

In the present set-up, the president of the village panchayat (elected governing body of the village) is the *ex-officio* head of the Village Education Committee and is required to play a very important role in ensuring the full-time attendance of teachers in schools and improving the overall functioning of the schools. The village pradhan (elected village head) is supposed to visit the school and identify the areas where physical facilities and other types of help are needed. In

addition, guardians of pupils may be invited to attend the parent-teacher association meetings and are regularly kept informed of the progress of their wards. Regular co-operation of guardians may provide help in ensuring the attendance of pupils and step-by-step progress in the learning process.

---

## II. THE MANAGEMENT OF SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT SERVICES

### 1. Basic facts

The total number of primary and upper-primary schools in the state is 103,077. According to the norms, every Assistant Basic Education Officer (ABSA) should be responsible for about 50 to 60 schools. The ideal number of posts of ABSAs would therefore be about 1,900 but the number of posts actually sanctioned for ABSAs by the State of Uttar Pradesh is only 1,569. Out of these, 330 posts remain vacant which implies that only 1,239 posts are filled and therefore only about two thirds of the required ABSAs are working in the state. In other words, an additional 50 per cent of the existing number of ABSAs would be needed for effective supervision.

**Table 2. Gap between required, sanctioned and actual number of posts of supervisors (1996)**

Total number of primary and upper-primary schools	103,077
Required number of ABSAs as per the norm of 50 to 60 schools per ABSA	1,900
Number of sanctioned posts	1,569
Number of working ABSAs	1,239
Posts lying vacant	330

The distribution of sanctioned posts, compared to the number of primary and upper-primary schools as well as teachers per region of the state, is given in *Table 3*. The regional distribution of occupied posts is not known. However, the figures for sanctioned posts show important differences between regions: the average number of schools per ABSA varies from 51 to 76, and the number of teachers per ABSA from 116 to 259.

There is no further information available on the precise profile of working ABSAs. We only know that the large majority are male, but their background and experience is not known, as no database on ABSAs exists.

**Table 3. Region-wise distribution of ASBA posts, primary and upper-primary schools and teachers in Uttar Pradesh (1996)**

	ASBA	Schools	Teachers	Schools/ ASBA	Teachers/ ASBA
Pauri	120	6,166	13,881	51	116
Meerut	146	7,758	23,566	53	161
Nainital	89	5,146	12,335	58	139
Faizabad	160	9,581	27,220	60	170
Azamgarh	100	6,096	21,667	61	217
Gorakhpur	133	8,756	23,158	66	174
<b>UTTAR PRADESH</b>	<b>1,569</b>	<b>103,077</b>	<b>276,777</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>176</b>
Agra	135	9,362	24,479	69	181
Moradabad	69	4,889	11,835	71	172
Jhansi	87	6,299	14,840	72	171
Allahabad	90	6,556	16,990	73	189
Kanpur	91	6,820	23,602	75	259
Varanasi	96	7,295	17,669	76	184
Lucknow	156	11,923	30,393	76	195

## 2. Critical issues

### (a) Recruitment of supervisors<sup>5</sup>

At present 80 per cent of ABSA posts are filled through direct recruitment by the Public Service Commission via a competitive examination. Very soon, this quota will increase to 90 per cent. Indeed, 10 per cent of the vacant posts are currently filled by teachers who previously worked as extension guides and craft teachers and who have been appointed under the re-orientation scheme.<sup>6</sup> This provision is valid until the number of these teachers is exhausted. Afterwards, these vacancies will also be filled through direct selection by the Public Service Commission. A candidate for direct recruitment must possess a bachelor's degree and a degree in education or a 'Licentiate' diploma. The remaining 10 per cent of the posts is filled by candidates selected from the cadre of headteachers who have at least 10 years' service. They must be matriculate and must have a CT (Certificate of Teachers) or BTC (Basic Teachers' Certificate). There is a two-year probationary period.

### (b) Training of supervisors

No induction or pre-service training exists for the Assistant Basic Education Officers. They are simply asked to work with senior Assistant Basic Education Officers in order to gain first-hand knowledge of the job assigned to them.

With regard to in-service training, two state-level institutions are involved in training the supervisory staff, namely the State Institute

---

<sup>5</sup> Source: 'Sangrah', a collection of service rules and Government Orders (in Hindi), a publication of the Directorate of Education, Uttar Pradesh.

<sup>6</sup> In the context of extension teachers and craft teachers, it should be clarified that a scheme known as the 'extension scheme' was introduced in the upper-primary schools of the state under which teachers were appointed for teaching agriculture, woodcraft, spinning, weaving, etc. Supervisors of this scheme were called Extension Guides, who were attached to the office of the District Inspector of Schools. Eventually this scheme was wound up and the extension guides and extension teachers of the scheme were absorbed in the cadre of Sub-Deputy Basic Education Officer of Schools (now Assistant Basic Education Officers).

of Education, a unit of the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), and the State Institute of Educational Management and Training (SIEMAT).

The in-service training imparted by the State Institute of Education is generally of three to six days' duration for different categories of inspecting officers. It deals with academic-related issues such as the universalization of elementary education, the problem of wastage and stagnation, school improvement programmes and local community support, concepts of MLL (minimum levels of learning), continuous and comprehensive evaluation, and institutional plans for improvement of effective teaching-learning practices.

SIEMAT's in-service training for educational supervisors focuses on issues related to educational planning, management and administration such as educational planning at the district, block and school levels, planning re-orientation courses for teachers, school mapping, institutional management, micro-planning, mobilization of local resources for school improvement, leadership training, links between schools and different supporting institutions, management information systems, and academic inspection and effective supervision. Moreover, field visits form an essential part of this in-service training programme. The programme for the Assistant Basic Education Officers is generally of six days' duration, one day of which is devoted to a field visit, preferably to nearby rural basic schools. During the field visit trainees are required to identify the needs of schools and pupils, collect relevant information, discuss the current issues, and suggest appropriate solutions to the problems faced by the schools.

As mentioned earlier, at the district level there are District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) with several departments, including the faculty of planning and management and the department of action research. The DIETs also organize in-service training programmes for



educational supervisors to acquaint them with educational planning at the district, block and school levels, school management and other locally relevant topics related to bringing about qualitative improvement in education. In addition, in those districts where the 'Education for All Project' is in operation, additional support is provided by the Block Resource Centres (BRCs) and the Nyaya Panchayat Resource Centres (NPRC). In the BRCs, academic guidance and training are provided to the primary-school teachers at the block level, while in the NPRCs monthly one-day workshops are conducted and academic guidance is provided to the teachers in a classroom situation.

### **(c) Professional organizations**

Different associations within the State Education Department, such as the Educational Officers' Association, Inspectors' Association and the Teachers' Association strive for the improvement of service conditions for their respective members, together with better avenues of promotion. The Inspectors' Association brings out a magazine 'Nirikshak Sangh' in which articles dealing with professional matters and activities of educational interest are published. Copies of this magazine are circulated all over the state among the members of the School Inspectors' Association as well as other functionaries interested in the area of educational supervision. All the Deputy Basic Education Officers and the Assistant Basic Education Officers of the state are members of this Association, through which they voice their problems and make them known to the higher authorities. The Association has voiced grave concern about excessive workloads in particular, because of the many non-academic and semi-academic activities members are required to perform.

### **(d) Career development**

The opportunities for promotion and career development of the supervisory officers depend to a large extent on their position in

the hierarchy: the higher they are placed, the better their chances for promotion. As such, the officers belonging to the cadre of District Basic Education Officers and Deputy Basic Education Officers who are directly recruited by the Public Service Commission have achieved many promotions during their career. But the situation of Assistant Basic Education Officers (ABSAs), who are doing the real supervision work, is far from satisfactory in this regard. They have to wait as long as 18 to 20 years, or more, for their promotions and a large number are fated to retire from their post of first appointment. They are not provided with sufficient opportunities for the enrichment or advancement of their academic career either. However, in an even worse position are the Assistant Educational Superintendents who work in the urban areas. While officially they can be promoted to the post of Educational Superintendents, there are, in reality, no avenues for further promotion, whereas their counterparts in the rural areas, the Deputy Basic Education Officers, have better chances of promotion.

Some of the ABSAs were given a chance to be promoted to Assistant Project Officers in the Subordinate Educational Service (gazetted scale). These posts were in the Department of Adult Education for a number of years before the scheme was wound up and the occupants of the posts were reverted to their posts of ABSAs.

### **(e) Monitoring and evaluation**

The ABSAs work under the direct administrative control of the Deputy Basic Education Officer who, by virtue of being their immediate higher authority, monitors their work, visits their educational circles, inspects the primary and upper-primary schools, checks the inspection reports submitted by them and suggests ways and means to improve their efficiency. The ABSA is also accountable to the District Basic Education Officer (BSA) who is responsible for

the proper functioning of the basic education system in the whole district. He visits selected schools of the educational circles of the ABSAs, evaluates their work from time to time and takes measures to ensure improvement, where necessary.

The performance of ABSAs is monitored and evaluated on the basis of the work allotted to them. Every ABSA is assigned a certain number of schools for inspection and supervision. An important aspect of the evaluation is to ensure that the required schools have been visited. Annual confidential reports are written by the different superiors, including the BSA, the Assistant Director (Basic) and the Additional Director of Education (Basic). Positive reports help the functionaries obtain promotion, while negative reports jeopardize their prospects of promotion. Just like the government employees of other departments, the ABSAs are required to work on probation before achieving confirmed employee status. Only serious charges of misconduct lead to suspension and even though disciplinary proceedings may be started against ABSAs, they rarely result in dismissal.

### **(f) Support**

In order to ensure the effective functioning of the basic education system, essential guidelines and instructions are provided to the ABSAs, in the form of Government Orders or official letters, circulars and other forms of correspondence. Also, guidelines are provided by the authorities of the state education department. In addition, various short-term training and orientation activities take place, which have been described above.

---

### **III. THE DAILY FUNCTIONING OF SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT SERVICES**

Most of what is presented in Parts III and IV is based on an original data collection exercise which involved individual questionnaires with a sample of supervisors and headteachers, focused group discussions with various actors involved in supervision, and informal interactions with informed experts.

A sample of about 10 per cent of all ABSAs from all the districts of the state was selected for the questionnaires. This comprised a total of 133 ABSAs, of which 112 were male. A group of 119 headteachers (87 primary and 32 upper primary) was also selected randomly from three districts: Varanasi, Allahabad and Meerut.

Field trips were undertaken to these same three districts, in two of which, Varanasi and Allahabad, an EFA project is being implemented. On these trips, besides school visits, focused group discussions were held with the Assistant Basic Education Officer, headteachers, co-ordinators of block and village resource centres and also with the Gram Pradhans (heads of the elected bodies).

Two questionnaires containing multiple-choice and open-ended questions were constructed for the study: one for the ABSAs and another for the headteachers.

Finally, informal interviews were held with the General Secretary and Secretary of Nirikshak Sangh (ABSAs' association) and other senior Assistant Basic Education Officers, who had been identified as informed experts.

**Table 4. Profile of the districts chosen for field trips**

Sample districts	Varanasi	Allahabad	Meerut
Number of blocks	17	28	18
Number of Assistant Basic Education Officers (ABSAs)	38	45	31
Number of primary schools	2,112	2,405	1,610
Number of primary-school teachers	6,134	6,796	4,227
Number of upper-primary schools	456	470	276
Number of upper-primary-school teachers	1,606	937	697

## 1. Working conditions

### (a) Material working conditions and service staff

Inspecting officers at the district level, such as the District Basic Education Officer (BSA), are provided with office facilities and equipment, but the Assistant Basic Education Officers at the block level have not been provided with any such facilities, or even with an office. They also lack residential facilities at the block, and thus feel that they have no reason to stay there. As a result, there is a lack of involvement on the part of the ABSAs, which probably also accounts for their rushed visits to the schools. They have no assistants or clerks to help with their paper work and spend most of their time going from place to place collecting and disseminating information. They have no transport facilities either and have to perform their visits on their own, for which they are paid a travelling allowance/daily allowance according to the Regulations of the education department.

As far as the institutions who also offer support services are concerned, they are housed in well constructed and spacious buildings and the DIETs in all the districts of the state have the necessary office equipment and infrastructure. The BRCs and the NPRCs operating in the district where the 'Education for All' project has been launched have good buildings with modern amenities for training purposes. However, the BRC and the NPRC co-ordinators also claimed to need clerks for doing the clerical work and service staff to take care of the general maintenance of the building. As a result of the lack of such staff, much time is lost in carrying out their tasks.

### **(b) Financial conditions**

The budget available for supervision and support services at the state level is inadequate. This poses particular problems in relation to travelling. Although a certain budget is allotted for the travelling and daily allowances of ABSAs, this is insufficient in view of the escalating inflation and is seldom available in time.

As far as salaries are concerned, the pay scales of the ABSAs have been similar to those of the teachers of trained graduate scale teaching high-school classes. But in this regard, the ABSAs expressed two specific complaints: firstly, that their seniority is not taken into account and hence they are not accorded due importance by the teachers in the schools, who pay no heed to their suggestions or advice; secondly, there is no provision to reward ABSAs for exemplary work, although such a system exists for teachers. A further protest relates to their travel allowance. The arrangements for the timely payment/reimbursement of their travel allowance bills are inadequate. ABSAs therefore proposed that these be added to their monthly salary rather than be made available to them at the end of the year.

## 2. Daily operation of supervision and support services

### (a) Workload and planning

The workload of ABSAs is heavy, from two points of view. Firstly, the number of schools and teachers they have to supervise is above the norm. It is laid down in the Education Code that all schools should be supervised at least twice in an academic session and the norm of the number of schools per ABSA is 50 to 60. However, as we saw above, even if all ABSA posts were to be filled, the number of schools per ABSA would still be above the norm, namely about 66. In reality, as about a fifth of these posts are vacant, an ABSA has to supervise more than 80 schools with more than 10,000 students, and from 200 to 250 teachers.

The second aspect of this heavy workload relates to the demanding job description. The official list of duties is already wide and ambitious, but it was learned from interviews with informed experts and from focus group discussions with ABSAs, as well as from the analysis of data, that in addition to supervision work, an ABSA has to perform a number of other duties. These duties include monitoring construction work of school buildings, collection, compilation and dissemination of numerous types of statistical data, distribution and supervision of mid-day meals, health check-ups, census work, small savings schemes, Basic Teachers Certificate (BTC examination) work,

**Table 5. Number of schools and teachers per supervisor**

	Per sanctioned ABSA post	Per working ABSA
Number of schools	65.7	83.2
Number of teachers	176.4	223.4

tree plantation drives, family planning, examination work of high school and intermediate board, scholarship distribution, animal census, total literacy campaign, and help and support with the implementation of other programmes of various departments in the block concerned.

A sample of 133 ABSAs were asked to list their major activities and the time spent on them in an average week. The answers in *Table 6* show that academic supervision is far from their most time-consuming activity. Most of their time, 30 and 29 per cent respectively, is spent on supervising the construction of buildings and collecting information, while the time spent on academic supervision and co-curricular activities are 9 and 2 per cent respectively.

**Table 6. Time spent on different activities by ABSAs**

Types of works	% of time spent in an average week
Supervising buildings and construction	30
Collection of information	29
Meetings	10
Academic supervision	9
Departmental work	7
Mid-day meal distribution	3
Distribution of scholarships	2
Social work	2
Co-curricular activities	2
Plan preparation	2
Election duties	2
VEC meeting	1
Census operation	1



Headteachers were asked a similar question and their answers largely confirm the opinions of the ABSAs. For their question, supervisors' activities were divided into four groups: academic, administrative, community participation, and non-academic aspects. The academic aspect comprised classroom observation, methods of teaching and co-curricular activities. The administrative aspect covered school construction, disciplinary action and school records. Community participation consisted of mobilizing community support. The non-academic areas were election duties, census work, tree plantation, family planning work etc. From the headteachers' point of view, shown in *Table 7*, more than half of ABSAs' time is spent on the last type of activity.

The same group of ABSAs were also asked to list, in order of importance, the four activities they consider to be their priorities. *Table 8* lists the activities identified as priorities one and two. This clearly indicates that ABSAs view academic supervision as their most important task, with collection of information and supervision of construction in second place. The data therefore reveal a disparity between the actual activities of ABSAs and what they would prefer to do. What is maybe more striking, however, is the wide variety of tasks which occupy ABSAs during an average week and which, at the same time, are considered by some to be priorities, notwithstanding their very non-academic character.

**Table 7. Headteachers' opinion on the type of work performed by ABSAs**

Nature of work performed	Percentage of headteachers
Academic	16%
Administrative	13%
Community participation	19%
Non-academic	52%

**Table 8. Tasks considered priorities by ABSAs**

Type of work	First priority	Second priority
Academic supervision	38	20
Construction of buildings	23	25
Collection of information	15	27
Mid-day meal distribution	13	16
Meetings	9	8
Plan preparation	8	3
Co-curricular activities	6	5
Distribution of scholarships	4	5
VEC meeting	4	5
Election duties	4	3
Departmental work	3	8
Census operation	3	4
Social work	3	4

In view of such a heavy workload they can hardly be expected to pay due attention to academic supervision. Consequently, the Assistant Basic Education Officer mostly devotes his time to collecting and disseminating information and looking into the administrative aspects of the schools.

These diverse activities, including visits, are generally planned in advance in consultation with the Deputy Basic Education Officer under the general guidance of the District Basic Education Officer. Assistant Basic Education Officers visit and supervise the schools of their educational circles in accordance with the tour programme approved by the Deputy BSA. According to the guidelines, the ABSAs have to plan their tour programmes every month. The first round of supervision is generally completed by the end of December and the second round comes to a close by March. Generally the ABSAs are supposed to make some individual advance preparations for their tour programme. Due to the excessive workload, it was found that most of the Assistant Basic Education Officers (40 per cent) were not able to make any preparations prior to their tours and only about

a quarter of them could undertake preparation, specifically relevant to their academic work, in the schools.

### **(b) School visits**

A distinction can be made between two types of supervision visits, on the one hand a 'full inspection or comprehensive inspection' and, on the other hand, a 'casual inspection', 'visit' or 'surprise visit', which are some of the terms figuring in the reports. The full or comprehensive inspection of a school means that all the important aspects of the functioning of a school such as the provision of physical facilities, educational materials and teaching aids, the presence of teachers, class-wise enrolment and attendance of pupils, class and subject teaching, organization of co-curricular activities, and the level of community support, are to be thoroughly checked and assessed and commented upon. As mentioned earlier, every school has to be visited and supervised twice in an academic session, in addition to surprise visits. The academic supervision of a primary school generally requires an entire day while two days should be devoted to the supervision of an upper-primary school. Surprise visits are paid to the schools for casual checking of the attendance of teachers as well as pupils, and in some cases for certain enquiries.

Generally two or three primary schools are supervised in one day because of the huge number of schools in an educational circle, while one full day or two days may be devoted to the supervision of an upper-primary school. When the 119 sampled headteachers were asked how many school visits they had received during the last year, the total came to 244: on average two per school. However, about 60 per cent of these visits were casual visits that, according to the headteachers, did not help them at all in improving their schools.

Generally the headteachers of cluster schools are informed of the proposed supervision of nearby schools, and the ABSA may supervise

them on the dates within the scheduled period according to his choice and convenience. Private recognized schools are supervised both in accordance with the planned programme of the ABSA and the invitation of the management or headteachers of those schools.

One particular criterion for choosing the schools for supervision is that generally there should be a gap of three months between the first and the second supervision. When the sample of ABSAs were asked the main reason for going on a school inspection, seven out of 10 mentioned departmental instructions, two out of 10 mentioned specific enquiries and the remaining 10 per cent claimed to go for academic supervision. In other words, most inspections by ABSAs are undertaken on orders from the higher authorities.

Before ending the visit, quite a number of supervisors will give certain oral instructions to the school staff. Almost 90 per cent of headteachers confirm that they receive such instructions from visiting supervisors: they mainly take the form of casual remarks regarding quality improvement in the schools. Headteachers revealed their dissatisfaction with this kind of supervision, which they felt was inadequate since verbal instructions were given by the supervisors in an arbitrary manner.

The data collected indicate that only about one third of supervisors follow any definite inspection guidelines while inspecting. Sixty-five per cent reported that they follow no such guidelines whatsoever.

### **(c) Reporting**

After the supervision of schools, the ABSAs write the inspection reports and send copies to the school concerned, the Deputy Inspector of Schools and the District Basic Education Officer. Sometimes they write the reports during their visit and submit these on the spot to the

headteacher of the school, but this is rare. These reports are expected to indicate to the headteacher and the teachers the positive and other aspects of their teaching and the conditions of the school, so that they can adopt appropriate measures to improve the quality of education. The inspection report forms have three broad sections: the first part deals with the information and data regarding enrolment figures, including data by gender and on enrolment of pupils from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes; the second part throws light on the type and quality of infrastructure, equipment and classroom instruction; and the third part contains the suggestions for improvement and needs of the school (see *Appendix I*).

The evidence on the prevalence of report writing is mixed. In responding to the questionnaires, practically all ABSAs (90 per cent), but far fewer headteachers (70 per cent), claimed that inspection reports are regularly prepared. There is thus already a difference of opinion between these two groups, but the difference with the information obtained from the group discussions with ABSAs is much more striking. In those discussions during the field visits, only a small minority of the ABSAs present responded that they were making regular inspection reports. Perhaps, in responding to the questionnaire items, both ABSAs and headteachers were reluctant to put in writing that reports were not prepared, while during discussions they could be more open in revealing the actual situation.

It was observed during the field trips that whatever inspection reports were being made, they were mostly cursory in nature, looking into the superficial aspects of the school only and with very few, if any, comments on the teaching-learning process. No detailed reports were found in the schools themselves during these field trips. During the group discussions, it was observed that most reports concentrate on finding faults, with emphasis on school records and cleanliness of the school complex.

#### **(d) 'Follow-up' on visits and reports**

The inspection reports are not published as there is no provision for doing so. As mentioned above, copies have to be sent to the school concerned, the Deputy Inspector of Schools and the District Basic Education Officer. The reports are generally filed in the office of the Deputy Inspector of Schools. After having distributed the reports, ABSAs discuss the general problems of the schools under their control with their colleagues and with the Deputy Basic Education Officer, as and when necessary. If some demand has been made for providing the schools with any materials, or if the attention of the District Basic Education Officer has been drawn towards any serious problem, matters are discussed in meetings with district-level authorities and necessary steps are taken.

When the ABSAs pay a surprise visit to the schools already supervised, they normally check how the instructions given in the previous supervision are being followed. If surprise visits have not been made, during the second yearly supervision they pay attention to those aspects that had to be improved.

On the whole, judging by the answers to the questionnaire and on the basis of group discussions, supervisors are ambivalent about the impact of their school visits. On one hand, the majority (about 60 per cent of the sample) is dissatisfied with the administrative action taken as a follow-up to their visits, while only about 40 per cent was really satisfied (*Table 9*). Perhaps, it is for this reason that they ended up attaching very little importance to the writing of the inspection reports. On the other hand, about three-quarters of the sample believe that their inspection visits and reports have a positive impact on the quality of teaching, while about a quarter discern only little or no impact at all (*Table 10*). This rather positive picture is confirmed by the headteachers, about 90 per cent of whom consider the inspection process to be either very useful or useful (*Table 11*).

**Table 9. ABSAs' satisfaction with administrative action taken on reports**

Options	No. and percentages of responses	
Satisfied	52	(39%)
Dissatisfied	81	(61%)

**Table 10. ABSAs' responses on impact of inspection on the quality of teaching**

Options	No. and percentage of responses	
Positive effects	101	(76%)
Some effect	14	(10%)
No effect	18	(14%)
Total	133	(100%)

**Table 11. Headteachers' responses on the usefulness of inspection in the teaching-learning process**

Options	No. and percentage of responses	
Very useful	92	(77%)
Useful	16	(14%)
Less useful	4	(3%)
Not at all useful	2	(2%)
No response made	5	(4%)
Total	119	(100%)

---

## IV. OVERALL ASSESSMENT

### 1. Impact on school functioning and quality

The job chart of the Assistant Basic Education Officer (ABSA) emphasizes the fact that educational supervision must aim at bringing about a definite improvement in the quality of classroom instruction. In fact, it says that a supervisor should act as a friend and guide to teachers.

If attitudes, reactions and observations of the members of supervisory staff and the teachers are viewed in this context, the findings and experiences of the research team make it abundantly clear that the prevailing conditions are far from satisfactory. The members of the supervisory staff feel that their efforts should be mainly directed towards providing academic support and on-the-spot guidance to the schoolteachers, and ensuring the improvement of the quality of basic education. They have the feeling that their most useful contribution is the academic guidance and improvement of classroom instruction for which, however, they do not have requisite time. Activities of a semi-academic and non-academic nature indeed take away most of their valuable time and energy. Among the tasks which are regarded least useful by the ABSAs are non-educational activities, health check-ups, census work, small savings schemes, and other such work.

In light of their comments the 133 ABSAs in the sample were asked to make two or three suggestions to improve the supervision system. *Table 12* lists, in order of importance, their proposals, which reveal a clear dissatisfaction with their working conditions: 57 ABSAs noted the need to improve conditions such as salaries and allowances and workload. They want more time for academic supervision (50 answers), with a clearer focus on improving the teaching-learning



situation (48 answers), and fewer administrative tasks (12 answers). However, the single most recurring suggestion relates to the need for more accountability among supervision staff. Obviously quite a number of ABSAs feel that their poor performance is related to the lack of support and supervision that they receive. In a similar vein, some propose a more performance-related reward system.

Two further points can be highlighted. The ABSAs realize that their impact on schools can only be heightened if school facilities and staff are improved upon: in this regard, 34 demand a sufficient provision of teachers. Finally, different suggestions are made to ameliorate the follow-up process on supervision visits.

**Table 12. Suggestions given by ABSAs for improving inspection and supervision services**

Suggestions	Number of responses
Make the supervisory staff more responsible and accountable to their superiors	71
Improve service conditions (better pay-scales, timely travel allowance/daily allowance, provision of a vehicle and clerks, etc.)	57
More time for academic supervision	50
Focus on improving the teaching-learning situation	48
No political and bureaucratic interference	46
Provision of teachers in schools as per existing norms	34
Quick implementation of inspection report recommendations	19
Rewards for exemplary work	18
Provision of a computerized supervision performance record	17
Checks by ABSAs on examination and evaluation processes in the schools	13
Need for reduction in non-academic work	12
Provision of an administrative office for ABSAs at block level	9
Quick administrative solutions of teachers' problems	5

From discussions with headteachers and teachers and from their answers to the questionnaire, it can be concluded that their major worry is that members of the supervisory staff are not able to devote enough time to the task of academic supervision due to their workload of non-academic activities. The ABSAs themselves feel that supervision should be devoted to the functioning of schools. The aspects which they appreciate the least are related to non-academic activities such as buildings, small savings schemes, tree plantation drives, family planning, animal census and ration card inspection.

The suggestions they make to strengthen supervision are not very different from those made by supervisors. *Table 13* shows that the headteachers feel that in order to improve the supervisory system, more stress should be laid on frequent comprehensive supervision where maximum attention is paid to improving the teaching-learning process. Also knowledge about innovations and new policies of education should be imparted to the ABSAs at the time of their training. They also expressed a need for appointing sufficient numbers of teachers to the basic schools. They recognize the importance of good working conditions for ABSAs but, understandably, stress this factor less than the ABSAs.

The fact that supervisors pay little attention to academic support in order to devote most of their time to administrative and control matters would not be a major problem if other actors could offer this type of development support. However, specific support institutions seem unable to play that role at present. As noted earlier, District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs), Block Resource Centres (BRCs), Nyaya Panchayat Resource Centres (NPRCs) and Village Education Committees (VECs) are supposed to provide

**Table 13. Suggestions given by the headteachers for improving schools through inspection/supervision**

Suggestions	Number of responses
Comprehensive inspection and supervision	55
Better support for the teaching-learning process (joyful learning, interactive teaching, moral and cultural education, etc.)	49
Frequent inspection	49
Support for updating traditional concepts of education	44
Imparting knowledge of innovations and new policies of education	40
Appointment of sufficient numbers of teachers	31
Provision of an office building	25
Better financial incentives	8

academic support to schools. However, findings and on-the-spot conditions observed during the field visits of the research team to the sample districts of Varanasi and Meerut revealed that DIETs are yet to be properly staffed, managed and equipped. The BRCs and NPRCs and their co-ordinators in the EFA districts are acting in a routine way and it was reported that they are performing their duties ritually, as laid down and communicated to them by their superiors at the district and block levels. They should show initiative by taking into account the actual problems of specific schools and by suggesting specific remedial measures for them. The Village Education Committees have been constituted, but their functioning needs to be made effective and meaningful, as they were found to be more of a hindrance than a help to the teachers and the supervisors.

## **2. Synthesis of problems**

The interviews with informed experts and the group discussions with members of supervisory staff of rural and urban areas, and headteachers and co-ordinators of BRCs and NPRCs of the sample districts of Varanasi, Allahabad and Meerut, helped the research team to identify the main problems faced by the supervision and support staff. The analysis of questionnaire data also illustrated a number of problem areas identified by the ABSAs in their work.

### **(a) Training**

It is true that the personnel recruited as ABSAs are supposed to be trained graduates with a background in education. But they still lack specific pre-service training in the field of supervision. The provision of in-service training dealing with the nature and functions of their job has also been somewhat disappointing due to its irregularity and short duration. Training is needed on matters related to planning and management, use of resources and provision of academic leadership to schoolteachers. But these dimensions have been missing in the in-service training programmes casually organized by such institutions as the State Institute of Education.

In this context, it may be pointed out that the headteachers are arguably somewhat better served, as about three-quarters of our sample received some in-service training over the last year. Most of the programmes however, organized at the block and village level, are of short duration and their frequency could be increased. This relatively favourable situation could be due to the inclusion of two EFA districts in the sample, where concerted efforts are being made to give training at the block and cluster level.

The situation in the municipalities is even more deplorable. Members of the supervisory staff, i.e. Superintendents of Education

and Assistant Superintendents of Education and the teachers working in urban basic schools, have not been given any form of in-service training so far. These employees have not benefited either from the supporting agencies created for the basic schools in the state. Moreover, they have fewer promotion avenues than the Deputy Basic Education Officers and Assistant Basic Education Officers working under the rural basic education system.

### **(b) Staffing**

This report noted that the total number of sanctioned ABSA posts is not commensurate with the total number of primary and upper-primary schools, a point confirmed by the informed experts. In addition, it may be pointed out that about one fifth of the sanctioned posts remain vacant. As a result, one ABSA has to supervise more than 100 schools in an academic session, far beyond the norm of 50 to 60 schools. It is therefore clear that the supervisory system is highly under-staffed and over-worked. The result is twofold: firstly, many visits are kept as short as possible and attention is only given to easily controlled administrative issues; secondly, the more remote and more difficult to reach schools receive fewer visits.

### **(c) Load of non-academic activities**

Assistant Basic Education Officers have to perform a number of non-academic and non-educational activities that consume the time and energy which should be devoted to academic tasks during supervision. These activities include checking on the building construction, distribution and supervision of mid-day meals, health check-ups, census work, tree plantation drives, family planning, animal census and ration card inspection. The pressure and urgent nature of these activities means that very little time is left for the academic support and qualitative improvement of education which is the main job of the supervisory staff.

### **(d) Physical facilities**

Members of the supervisory staff at the block level, such as the ABSAs, are required to look after the primary and upper-primary schools of their educational circles and render their functioning more effective. Their headquarters are supposed to be at the block but no office or office equipment and assistants have been provided. Nor have they been provided with any vehicle for visiting the schools. They spend a lot of their time travelling from the district headquarters, where they are staying, to the block where they are working, and vice-versa. Thus, it is clear that if arrangements were made for them to stay at the block they would find more time for discharging their duties effectively in supervising the school system.

The situation of urban supervisors is equally deplorable. Before 1972, the Municipal Boards were fully responsible for equipping and maintaining the offices and schools under their control, but after the introduction of the Basic Education Act (1972) the Boards have ceased to provide any type of facilities and maintenance. The facilities provided by the State Basic Education Board are almost negligible, as all the facilities are diverted to rural areas. Under these circumstances most of the school and office buildings visited by the research team were found to be in a dilapidated condition.

### **(e) Monitoring of support systems**

In addition to the guidance and support provided by the ABSAs, there are different institutes at various levels aimed at giving pedagogical support to school staff, in particular in those districts where the EFA project is being implemented.

During the field visits it was found, however, that some institutes, the DIETs for instance, are still in the process of achieving proper staff levels and some staff members are not yet acquainted with their

job and functions. The BRCs and NPRCs are strictly following the instructions received from the higher authorities and they lack initiative to plan their activities and interventions to make them relevant to the local needs and problems. The block centre schools and cluster schools, which are supposed to function in non-EFA districts, are simply performing routine duties of collecting information and disseminating instructions.

Village education committees need to be activated and involved in the school improvement programmes. Appropriate techniques will have to be adopted for seeking community participation and ensuring better and more effective functioning of schools.

### **(f) Job satisfaction**

The ABSA, in the initial stages after his appointment, is eager to work and enthusiastic about his job. He is still young and has the stamina to undertake more tours. However, as the years of his service increase, a lack of interest creeps into his job and he feels less motivated because of the difficult working conditions, but also due to the bleak promotion prospects and the scarce opportunities for career development. It has been found that members of the supervision staff have been stagnating in their jobs for periods of more than two decades. A large number of ABSAs retire from their original post of appointment and even for the few others, delayed promotion leads to disillusionment and lack of job satisfaction. Thus when the ABSAs were asked to indicate their willingness to opt for the same job if given the choice, only about half (71 out of 133) expressed a willingness to continue in the same job, while the remainder replied negatively. There is therefore a serious problem of job satisfaction which influences, in a detrimental way, supervisors' motivation and performance.

### **3. Prospects for change**

In view of the new trends in education and innovative practices, the syllabus of teachers' education needs to be modified after an interval of five to seven years. More stress should be laid on practical and activity-based work, such as group activity, academic excursions, seminars, debates, multi-grade teaching and MLL-based teaching and evaluation. To keep in touch with these continuing reforms, theme-based and technique/activity-based in-service training should be given to the members of the supervisory staff in a large set of areas:

- MLL-based teaching-learning and evaluation techniques;
- multi-grade and large-class teaching;
- micro-teaching;
- joyful learning;
- activity-based teacher/learning process;
- preparation and use of teaching aids;
- analysis of textbooks;
- educational planning and management, including school mapping;
- resource mobilization;
- leadership learning;
- planning of training programmes;
- programme evaluation;
- management of information systems;
- co-ordination with other support agencies etc.

In this regard, the various support agencies should be made more functional. The staff and the organizational set-up should be strengthened and well equipped, so that the functionaries of these institutions may be acquainted with their duties to ensure the implementation of improvement programmes, with the guidance and support of the different agencies. Staff members of support institutions should receive orientation in appropriate techniques to



develop abilities such as initiatives in taking educational leadership, planning and management and the co-operative study of problems faced by the schools, and finding suitable solutions to them.

Supervisors' attitudes need to undergo radical change. The existing system of school supervision generally neglects the aspects of support and pedagogical development and more importance is attached to administrative control. Now members of the supervisory staff are expected to act as agents of change. They have to play the role of pedagogical advisers, guides and supporters of the functioning of schools. The new concept of supervision lays stress on the need for the replacement of an individual teacher evaluation by teacher support and assistance. This change should enable the supervisors to devote enough time to provide advice and play a crucial role in promoting innovation. Now, disseminating new ideas, innovative practices and reforms and providing in-service training to teachers are regarded as the main tasks of supervisors.

The increasing emphasis on more openness and transparency in relationships between the headteacher and teachers, among teachers, between teachers and pupils and between school staff and supervisors highlights the new role of supervisory staff. Under the existing pattern, a mutual relationship of trust between the supervisory staff and teacher community has been lacking, with little scope for frank and direct exchange of views and sharing of experiences. Inspecting officers have been issuing orders, teachers have been abiding by them without any reflection. More importance has to be attached to the mode of openly discussing and formally spelling out standardized inspection guidelines and supervision strategies. It is being widely accepted that controlling individual teachers and providing them with advice and support will not automatically lead to better results. Qualitative improvement of

school education involves a global approach to the school as a whole. The focus of supervision should be on the school as a whole and all the aspects affecting the school functioning should be covered.

A new trend of supervision stresses the development of monitoring at the school level covering three complementary phenomena – a shift in responsibility of supervision to the headteacher, a greater reliance on self-monitoring by the school staff and the increased involvement of the community. Several strategies have been developed which allow for teacher co-operation. Teacher resource centres may be established or school clusters may be set up, particularly in the rural areas. In these school clusters, Master Teachers may be placed to assist and guide other less qualified and less experienced teachers. This should complement the role of the headteacher, who may look after the overall supervision and management aspects of the school.

However, attitudinal transformations may be difficult to achieve without changes in the material working conditions of supervisors. In this context, if each block is provided with a Block Education Officer with an independent office for controlling the educational, financial and administrative matters of schools, a better situation will be created. The supervising officer and the schoolteachers will have closer, more easily available and more direct contact for solving the problems of schools. The supervisors will be in a better position to organize in-service training programmes for teachers at the block and the cluster levels. Assistant Basic Education Officers should ensure the participation of the teachers in the in-service training programmes and, during supervision, they should see that the techniques dealt with during in-service training are adopted in actual classroom situations.

---

## APPENDIX I.

### Format of the inspection report for schools (translated from Hindi)

#### State Basic Education Board (Basic Shiksha Parishad), Uttar Pradesh

##### Inspection proforma for primary/junior high schools

1. Name of school ..... block .....
2. Number of teachers working ..... No. of teachers present .....
3. No. of students ..... enrolled. ....  
Present .....
- (Class-wise, by gender; by scheduled castes and scheduled tribes)
4. Condition of school building: satisfactory/dilapidated/borrowed/  
without building
5. Cleanliness of school building/surroundings
6. Details of available teaching materials:  
(37 Items supplied/purchased under 'Operation Blackboard')
7. Balance amount according to school records .....
8. Maintenance of school records .....
9. Present state of curriculum taught .....
10. Educational level:  
(Class-wise: good — satisfactory — poor)
11. Teaching-learning environment and discipline of school .....
12. Date and decisions taken in the last Village Education Committee meeting  
.....
13. Suggestions given by local residents at the time of inspection .....
14. Recommendations/suggestions .....

Dated ..... Signature of Inspection Officer

Designation :

---

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Publications

Department of Education of Uttar Pradesh. 1996. *Programmes of basic education* (in Hindi). Allahabad: Government of Uttar Pradesh.

Directorate of Basic Education of Uttar Pradesh. 1996. *Important data of basic education* (in Hindi). Allahabad: Government of Uttar Pradesh.

Directorate of Education of Uttar Pradesh. 1996. *Perspective paper on the change of designation of Sub-Deputy Basic Education Officer/ Assistant Basic Education Officer*. Allahabad: Government of Uttar Pradesh.

James, H.R.; Mathew, A. 1995. *Development of education system in India*. New Delhi: Rishabh Publishers and Distributors.

National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). 1964. *Indian Year Book (Part 1)*. New Delhi: NCERT.

National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA). 1976. *Educational administration in Uttar Pradesh – A Survey Report*. New Delhi: NIEPA.

National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA). 1979. *Administration of elementary education in Uttar Pradesh – A study in relation to universalization of elementary education*. New Delhi: NIEPA.

School Inspectors' Association of Uttar Pradesh. 1993. *Inspection Magazine* (Vol. 1, July). Allahabad: School Inspectors' Association of Uttar Pradesh.

School Inspectors' Association of Uttar Pradesh. 1996. *Report of 43rd Annual General Meeting*. (March 11-12). Allahabad: School Inspectors' Association of Uttar Pradesh.

State Institute of Education. 1995-96. *Educational statistics of Uttar Pradesh – A comparative progress indicator*. Allahabad: State Institute of Education.

Uttar Pradesh State Basic Education Board. 1989. *Collection of Service Rules*. Allahabad: Uttar Pradesh State Basic Education Board.

Uttar Pradesh State Basic Education Board (Basic Shiksha Parishad). 1993. *Adhaar*. (Part 1 and 2). Allahabad: Uttar Pradesh State Basic Education Board.

Uttar Pradesh State Basic Education Board. 1996. *Collection of Rules 1945-1996*. Allahabad: Directorate of Education.

Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Project Board. 1997. *Collection of information*. Allahabad: Uttar Pradesh State Basic Education Board.

## **Official documents**

Basic Education Board of Uttar Pradesh. 1994/95. *Executive Orders*. Allahabad: Directorate of Education of Uttar Pradesh.

Directorate of Education of Uttar Pradesh. 1961. *U.P. Regional Committee and District Board Act*. Allahabad : Directorate of Education of Uttar Pradesh.

Directorate of Education of Uttar Pradesh. 1972. *Government Order No. 6377/15(5) / 148 / 72* (in Hindi), 30 August 1972. Allahabad : Directorate of Education of Uttar Pradesh.

Directorate of Education of Uttar Pradesh (Executive Section 1). 1979. *Regularization of SDI's* Government Order No. 19 / 8-75 (2), 14 May 1979. Allahabad : Directorate of Education of Uttar Pradesh.

Directorate of Education of Uttar Pradesh. 1980. *Promotions of Certificate of Teaching (CT) Grade - Headteachers as SDIs*. Government Order No. 6412 / 15-2-27 (1) / 80, 14 January 1980. Allahabad : Directorate of Education of Uttar Pradesh.

Directorate of Education of Uttar Pradesh. 1983. *District Board of Education Rules* (in Hindi). Allahabad : Directorate of Education of Uttar Pradesh.

Directorate of Education of Uttar Pradesh. 1983. *Rules and Regulations for L.T. Grade Teachers* (in Hindi). Allahabad : Directorate of Education of Uttar Pradesh.

Directorate of Education of Uttar Pradesh. 1991. *Departmental Order for determining seniority of SDIs*. Executive Section Order No. 3/4/90 - Executive - 2-91, 5 September 1991. Allahabad : Directorate of Education of Uttar Pradesh.

Directorate of Education of Uttar Pradesh. 1992. *Government Order No. 4506/15-2-92-27 (37)-79 T.C.*, 17 November 1992. Allahabad: Directorate of Education of Uttar Pradesh.

Directorate of Education of Uttar Pradesh. 1994. *Government Order for the Absorption of Government Girls' College Teachers as SDIs* (in Hindi). Order No. 1664 / 15493-24 (4) / 93, 24 May 1994. Allahabad: Directorate of Education of Uttar Pradesh.

Directorate of Education of Uttar Pradesh. 1994. *Absorption Order of Instructors*. Order No. 3639 / 154-94-35 (4) 1993, 18 November 1994. Allahabad : Directorate of Education of Uttar Pradesh.

Directorate of Education of Uttar Pradesh. 1995. *Sangrah*. Allahabad: Directorate of Education of Uttar Pradesh.

---

## **Chapter IV**

### **National diagnosis on Teacher supervision and support services for basic education in Nepal**

**Bajra Raj Shakya, Hridaya R. Bajracharya, Bijaya K. Thapa,  
Roshan Chitrkar and Sumon K. Tuladhar<sup>1</sup>**

---

<sup>1</sup> Team members from the Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development, Kathmandu, Nepal.

---

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BPEP	Basic and Primary Education Project
CERID	Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development
DEC	District Education Committee
DEO	District Education Office/Officer
ERD	Education for Rural Development
MOE	Ministry of Education
NEC	National Education Commission
NESP	National Education System Plan
PEDP	Primary Education Development Project
PEP	Primary Education Project
RC	Resource Centre
RCMC	Resource Centre Management Committee
RP	Resource Person
SMC	School Management Committee



---

## CONTENTS

<b>List of abbreviations</b>	<b>160</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>163</b>
1. Primary education in Nepal	163
2. Methodology	165
<b>I. School supervision in Nepal: an overview</b>	<b>167</b>
1. Historical development	167
2. The structure of supervision and support	170
3. Official functions of the different services	172
4. Supervision at the school site	176
<b>II. The management of supervision services</b>	<b>179</b>
1. Basic facts	179
2. Critical issues	183
(a) Recruitment	183
(b) Training	184
(c) Career development	185
<b>III. The daily functioning of supervision and support services</b>	<b>186</b>
1. Daily functioning of supervision in Chitawan	186
(a) Perception of supervisors and Resource Persons	187
(b) Perception of headteachers	188
(c) Perception of teachers	189
2. Daily functioning of supervision in Banke	190
(a) Perception of supervisors and Resource Persons	191

(b) Perception of headteachers	193
(c) Perception of teachers	194
3. Daily functioning of supervision in Jumla	194
(a) Perception of supervisors	195
(b) Perception of headteachers	196
(c) Perception of teachers	197
4. Perception of District Education Officers	198
IV. Overall assessment	200
1. Issues and problems in supervision in Nepal	200
2. Recommendations	206
Bibliography	212

---

# INTRODUCTION

## 1. Primary education in Nepal

Nepal is a landlocked, developing country in Southern Asia which is heavily reliant on agriculture: 95 per cent of the labour force is engaged in this sector. It has a population of 21.5 million, growing at an average annual rate of 2.5 per cent, and a GNP per capita of approximately US\$200.

Modern education, in an organized manner, only started in Nepal after the advent of democracy in 1951. Since then several efforts have been made to develop the education sector. These have generally taken the form of major donor-funded projects, the most well-known being the Seti-Education for Rural Development (ERD) Project and the Primary Education Project (PEP). Implemented during the 1980s, both explicitly emphasized primary education as one of the basic needs of the country.

After the political change of 1990, when a parliamentary democratic system with a constitutional monarchy was installed, the government initiated two major activities in the field of education. They were the formulation of the Basic and Primary Education Master Plan and the setting up of the National Education Commission (NEC). Consequently, the government implemented the Basic and Primary Education Project (BPEP) with multilateral assistance, including an International Development Agency credit, and the Primary Education Development Project (PEDP) with Asian Development Bank credit funding in 1992.

The following policies and strategies have been adopted recently by the Ministry of Education in the field of primary education (MOE, 1996):

- access will be expanded by increasing the number of primary schools;
- new initiatives will be taken to make primary education compulsory, in a phased manner. Accordingly, necessary arrangements will be made to empower local bodies to enforce free and compulsory primary education; and,
- the BPEP will be implemented gradually in all districts of the country in order to improve physical facilities and quality in primary education.

In Nepal primary education comprises Grades 1 to 5. Most schools teach primary grades only, but some also teach higher grades (up to 10 or 12), or higher grades exclusively.

Nepal is divided into 75 local government districts, each of which has a District Education Office headed by a District Education Officer (DEO) who holds administrative jurisdiction over the schools. The numbers of primary schools, teachers and students have increased relatively steeply in recent years. In 1995, it was estimated that there are 21,686 schools in Nepal, 99 per cent (21,473) of which have primary grades, and 82,645 teachers for approximately 3,260,000 pupils. Although 93 per cent of primary schools are in rural areas, many children in these areas still do not attend school, or they enter the system very late and for only a short period of time. The comparison between the net and gross enrolment rates is instructive in this regard. The net enrolment ratio of 67.5 per cent indicates that one-third of the primary-school-age population does not attend

**Table 1. Primary education in Nepal**

Year	Enrolment	Gross enrolment rate	Number of teachers	Percentage of girls
1980	1,067,912	84	27,805	28
1990	2,788,644	103	71,213	37
1995	3,260,000	114	82,645	39

school. The goal of universal primary education therefore appears far from becoming a reality. At the same time, the fact that the gross enrolment ratio (114.1 per cent) is over 100 and much higher than the net rate, indicates that there are some anomalies in the system, such as the enrolment of under and over-age children in primary classes, and that the internal efficiency is weak. In addition, Nepalese education struggles with problems of gender disparity and teaching quality. In primary education, only two-fifths of pupils are girls and their net enrolment rate of 55.6 per cent is 20 percentage points less than that of boys. The average pupil/teacher ratio is about 40, and only 42.4 per cent of primary-school teachers are trained. Furthermore, only 19.2 per cent of all teachers are female.

## 2. Methodology

The study relied on three sources of information:

### *(i) Analysis of secondary information*

Several research papers and studies on the supervision system in Nepal were reviewed and analyzed (see the Bibliography).

### *(ii) Extensive interactions*

A working committee consisting of five researchers at the Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development (CERID) was established to undertake the study. An Advisory Committee was formed under the chairmanship of the Secretary, with representation from the Basic and Primary Education Project and the National Centre for Educational Development (both of the MOE), UNICEF, CERID, schools and the District Education Officers (DEOs). A series of discussion sessions were convened at CERID during which headteachers and DEOs raised issues and problems relating to the supervision system. These sessions were followed up with in-house discussions by the team of researchers at CERID.

*(iii) Case studies of selected districts*

Three districts with different profiles and different levels of educational development (Chitawan, Banke and Jumla) were selected for more detailed case studies of the supervision system in practice. The District Education Offices were visited several times to conduct focused discussions on the issues of supervision. Further information was obtained from individual sessions with relevant staff and schoolteachers. Similarly, several schools were visited and some local people, who are actively involved in educational development work, were also interviewed.

---

# **I. SCHOOL SUPERVISION IN NEPAL: AN OVERVIEW**

## **1. Historical development**

Prior to 1951, school inspectors were appointed to monitor schools, basically to keep an eye on school activities and avoid the emergence of political problems for the ruling regime. In those days the number of schools was insignificant and the inspectorate was used to some extent to discourage the growth of schools (NEC, 1992).

The social and political events of 1951, when the hereditary prime ministership was challenged for the first time, made this an important political landmark year in Nepal. The role of the inspection system drastically changed after this point in time. As opposed to tightly controlling schools, its task became the promotion of incentives to local communities to open new schools, and the provision of financial assistance. A system of inspection was developed with the post of Chief Inspector of Schools at the centre and, in 1962, when the administration of the country was divided into 14 zones and 75 districts, each zone and district was appointed a Zonal Education Officer and a District Education Inspector. Zones have since been replaced by regions.

In 1971, the National Education System Plan (NESP) was introduced which radically restructured the school supervision system. Separate supervision posts were created for primary and secondary schools in the District Education Office, in proportion to the number of schools and taking into account the accessibility in terms of geographical location. Efforts were made to develop the supervision system as more of a facilitating and support system, leaning less towards monitoring and evaluation. The role of supervisors was expanded to facilitate implementation of the school

curriculum, to help develop instructional materials and to help the teachers improve classroom instruction.

After three years, a mid-term review of the NESP was held which indicated that the supervision system was not operating satisfactorily. The following recommendations were made (National Education Committee, 1974):

- appoint experienced teachers as Inspectors and District Education Officers to bring in the teaching perspective;
- involve Inspectors as technical assistants to assist the District Education Officers;
- encourage Inspectors to join the B.Ed. course;
- strengthen the Inspection Section of the Ministry of Education and make it responsible for conducting training programmes for the Inspectors.

These recommendations were partially implemented but failed to produce the expected results. In 1980, a study on the supervision system was conducted. It revealed that the system had failed to make any positive impact. One reason was that many supervisors had been appointed quickly and without due selection because of the need to expand their numbers. They therefore lacked experience and training, and could not command a decent level of respect from the teachers owing to the fact that their exposure to teaching was almost nil. The 1980 study made the following recommendations:

- primary and secondary school supervision should be carried out by the same person;
- vehicles, sleeping bags and a substantial allowance should be provided to the supervisors;
- periodic in-service training should be organized to improve supervisors' job performance.



Although some attempts were made to address the recommendations, they failed to bring about significant improvements in school education. This led, in the late 1980s, to an amendment in the education regulations confining the supervision role of the District Education and Regional Education Directorate offices to school inspection only. The concept of teacher support disappeared from their job-description and, because of the environment, the focus shifted more towards the need to control and discipline the teachers. However, it was quickly realized that this perception was too narrow and had been conceived as a quick fix. Not surprisingly, the idea of pure school inspection did not last and before long the concept of supervision in its broader sense was reverted to.

In 1991, a National Education Commission (NEC) was formed to review the situation and make recommendations on school supervision, some of which are given below.

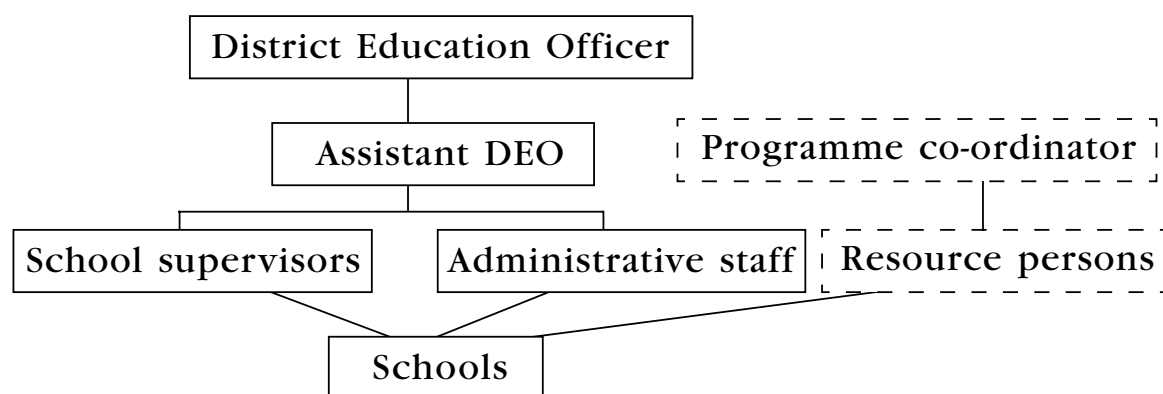
- There is a need to perceive supervision, the school curriculum and teacher training in totality. A Supervision Co-ordination Committee should be established at the centre of the system for this purpose.
- A National Centre for Educational Development should be created to prepare training for teachers, school administrators and supervisors.
- To improve supervision, schools should be grouped into clusters and one supervisor should be made responsible for two clusters.
- Supervisors should be required to reside in their work stations, and a district-level supervision system should be developed to generate co-operation in the supervision of school clusters in the respective districts.

Some of these recommendations were adopted by the ‘eighth development plan’ (National Planning Commission, 1992). Most importantly, the proposal on forming school clusters and establishing a resource centre for each cluster was implemented. As part of a comprehensive project, the BPEP resource centres were created and resource persons were appointed in 40 districts. This innovation is changing the whole supervision landscape in Nepal.

## 2. The structure of supervision and support

The supervision system is organized, in practice, around the District Education Offices. Not all 75 districts have the same supervision arrangements. A distinction must be made between those 40 districts that take part in the BPEP and the remaining ones. All District Education Offices are headed by a DEO and have several administrative and professional staff. This professional staff includes school supervisors, who have the main responsibility for supervision. Their numbers vary between three and 15, depending on the size of the district, but on average there are six to seven supervisors per office. They are joined by two to three technical Section Officers who also undertake some school supervision as and when necessary. Both

**Diagram 1. Organizational structure of education system at district level**



*Note:* Dotted boxes indicate additional structures in districts with BPEP.

they and the supervisors are responsible for all schools, irrespective of their level. The schools in each district are divided into a certain number of locations (or areas) and each location is assigned to an individual supervisor. In addition to DEOs and school supervisors, headteachers and school management committees are also entrusted to carry out supervision and teacher-support activities.

Furthermore, in the 40 districts where the BPEP is being implemented, primary schools are formed into several clusters, one Resource Centre (RC) is built for each cluster and Resource Persons (RPs) are employed to provide support to the schools in one or two clusters, depending upon the number of schools. There is one Programme Co-ordinator in each BPEP district, under the DEO, who looks after the project activities. Resource Persons are based in Resource Centres, whereas regular school supervisors are based at District Education Offices (i.e. district headquarters).

Recently, in the districts covered by the project, regular school supervisors have been converted into RPs assigned to specific RCs. Both regular school supervisors and Resource Persons now have to supervise primary as well as secondary schools in their cluster.

In this way, two parallel systems of school supervision are currently in operation in Nepal: the 'traditional' one, presented in *Diagram 2*, and an innovative system, as developed in the BPEP districts, shown in *Diagram 3*.

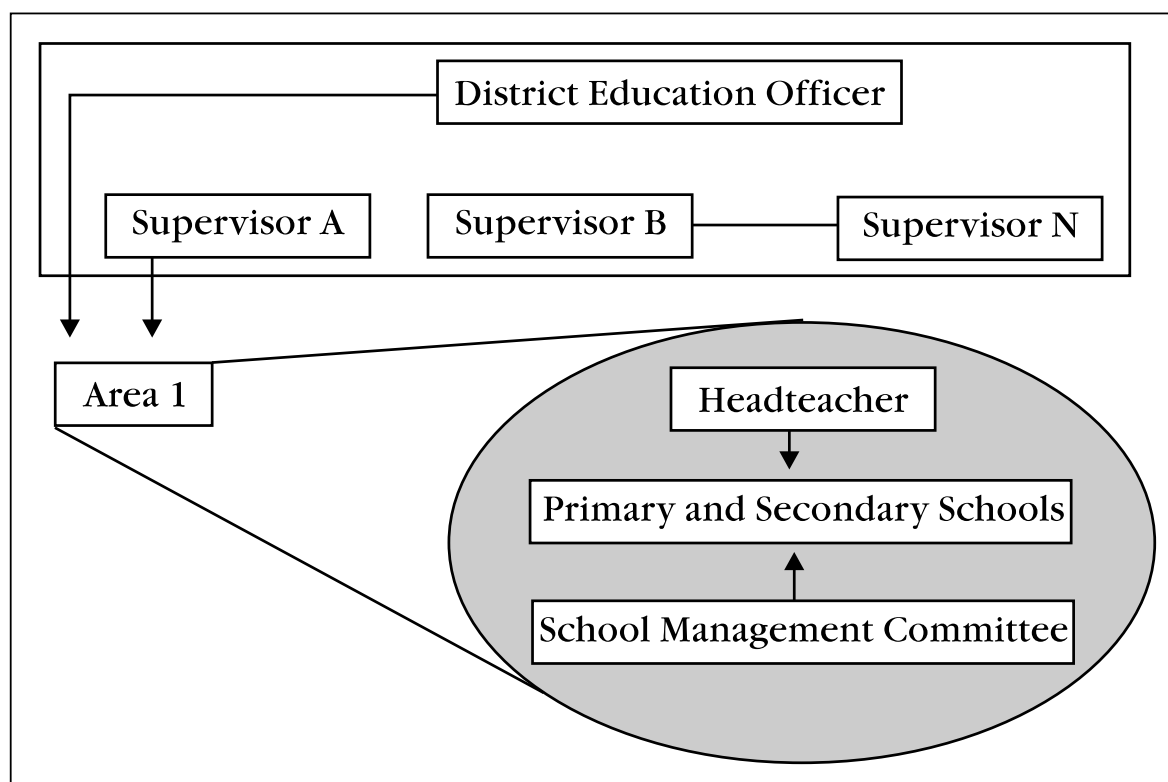
In BPEP the schools in the districts are clustered in an average number of 17. One of the schools is designated as the Resource Centre and is staffed by a Resource Person. Unlike the supervisors in the regular system, who operate mainly as inspectors, a Resource Person is expected to perform the role of facilitator.

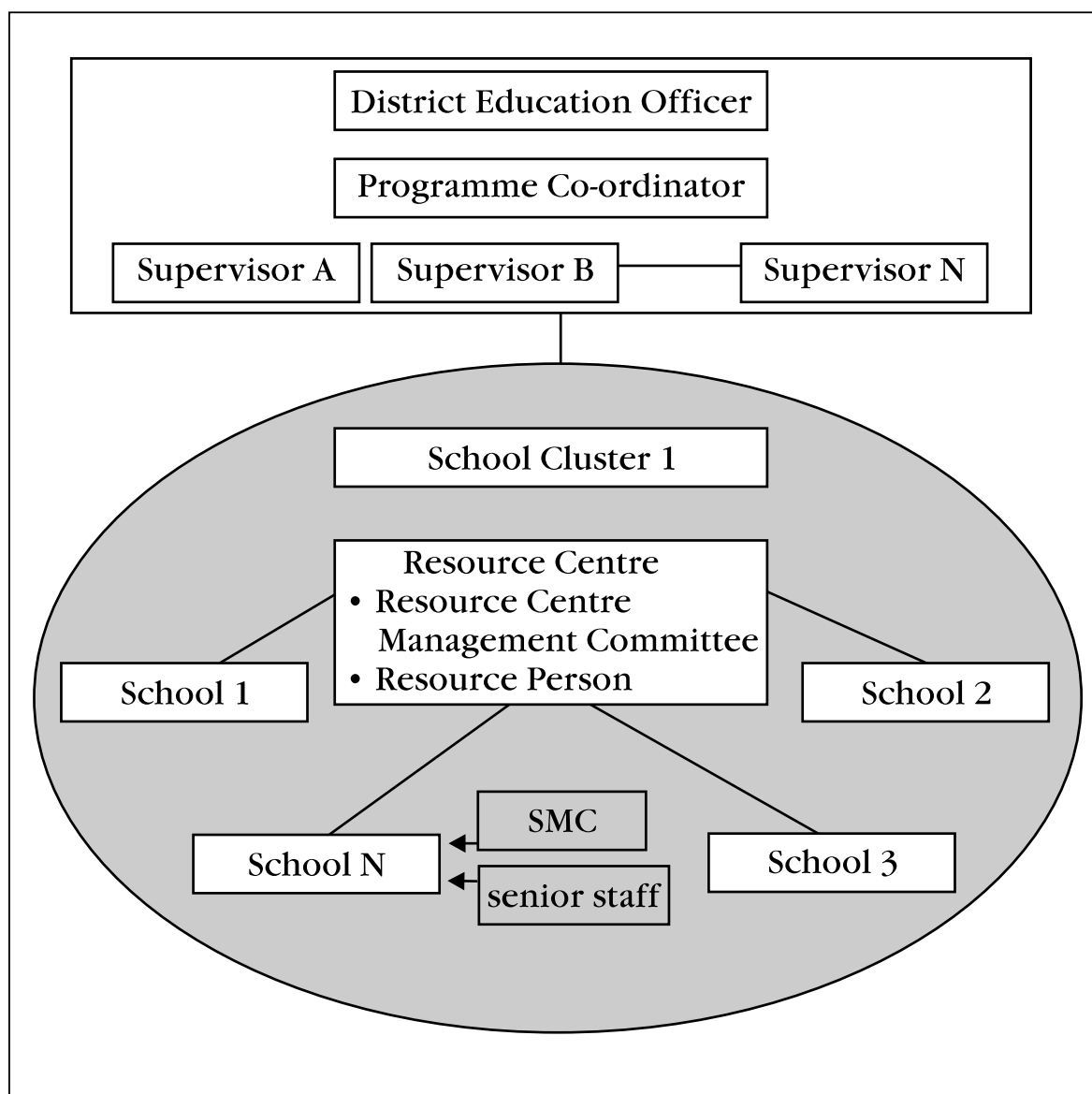
Recently, the role of the Resource Centre has been widened to become an administration and support office, intermediate between the schools and the district education offices. BPEP has thus adopted a cascading system of administration and management. In this system, the Resource Centre acts as a central venue for implementing dissemination activities such as curriculum and textbook improvements, in-service training, supervision, monitoring, and the development of physical facilities in schools.

### 3. Official functions of the different services

The *Education Regulations 1992* identified the tasks, listed below, of staff involved in supervision at different levels (Ministry of Education, Culture and Social Welfare, 1992).

**Diagram 2. Existing mechanism of school supervision at the district level (non-BPEP district)**



**Diagram 3. Supervision mechanism in BPEP districts**

*Headteacher:*

- evaluates and/or undergoes an evaluation of the quarterly, half-yearly and annual progress of the school;
- ensures that the school is running smoothly and according to the annual calendar of operation;
- if the student cohorts of any grade fail for three years to attain the minimum marks as set by the MOE in any particular subject, the headteacher is empowered to penalize the relevant subject teacher by stopping his grade increment or deducting the grade for up to two years;
- evaluates the job performance of the teachers and makes recommendations to the School Management Committee and the DEO for promotions, awards or teacher transfers.

*School Management Committee:*

- is responsible for the overall operation, administration and control of the school;
- makes periodic visits (by Chairperson and the members) and gives reports on what action needs to be taken without delay.

*Supervisor:*

- supervises schools regularly as directed by DEO;
- submits monthly reports of supervision to the DEO and tackles problems in consultation with the DEO;
- evaluates the job performance of each schoolteacher and keeps these evaluations on record;
- checks the academic and financial records of schools to make sure they are correct;
- checks whether the SMC meetings are held regularly and, if not, gives directions to hold meetings;
- checks whether the school is running well in conformity with existing laws and, if not, discusses how to resolve this with the headteacher.

*District Education Officer:*

- scrutinizes the operation of school examinations, records the quality of teaching in each school and takes steps, where necessary;
- ensures the availability of government-prescribed textbooks one month before the beginning of the new academic session;
- checks whether other supplementary textbooks used in schools are consistent with the prescribed curriculum;
- keeps vigilance over the functioning of each school and takes steps for upgrading, improving, or closing down a school, as necessary;
- reprimands supervisors and other personnel who submit false reports.

*District Education Committee:*

- reviews the quarterly and annual progress of the education programmes in the district and compiles reports with comments.

*Regional Education Directorate:*

- monitors and evaluates performance of DEOs in the region and takes disciplinary action, if necessary;
- oversees the availability of government-prescribed textbooks one month ahead of a new academic year;
- checks whether other supplementary textbooks used in schools are in line with the prescribed curriculum;
- organizes the operation of training programmes in the region.

In those districts where Resource Centres operate, Resource Persons have the following core tasks to carry out:

- meet monthly with all other RPs at the District Education Office;
- make regular visits to schools;
- bring the teachers together for a monthly meeting at the Resource Centre;
- organize recurrent training programmes; and
- assess the school activities on a monthly basis through a monitoring and evaluation system.

#### **4. Supervision at the school site**

Both the headteacher and the community are expected to be engaged in teacher and school supervision, as shown by the duties assigned to them in the education regulations. Various projects were implemented in order to experiment with different approaches to in-school supervision and community participation.

In the Education for Rural Development (ERD) project, initiated at the beginning of the 1980s in the Seti Zone, the idea of community participation in school activities, especially in school supervision and management, was well received by the schools as well as the communities. The former school supervisors involved in the project, personnel in the Regional Education Office of the far-west region, the DEO and the supervisors in the region gave the reasons quoted below for the success of the Seti-ERD project in general, and the effectiveness and efficiency of the supervision and monitoring system in particular.

- The Seti region was very backward in terms of social development, including education, and positive intervention was bound to bring about tangible improvements.
- The project started with a big bang and almost all the policy-level people and several representatives of international organizations visited the region to work for concerted development.
- The involvement of high-level people at the programme implementation level made the development activities run promptly.
- There was no lack of funds, and resources were mobilized in the field quickly and efficiently without many bureaucratic obstacles.
- The dynamic supervision and monitoring system in the project triggered off prompt and effective actions. For example, school buildings were constructed or repaired and provisions for the seating of students and teachers were made immediately wherever



needed, and simple provisions were made locally, such as the provision of mats, and the construction of desks and benches using local resources.

- On-the-spot demonstrations and hands-on training were provided for the teachers where necessary, in addition to the regular intensive short-term training for the primary-school teachers and the teachers running the *Chelibeti* (out-of-school girls' classes).

The success of the Seti model has led to the introduction of projects on a wider scale. The Primary Education Project (PEP) was implemented by the Ministry of Education in a further six districts of the country. The weaknesses of the 'traditional' system and the experiences of these two relatively successful projects have helped in formulating and putting in place, at the beginning of the 1990s, a new concept of supervision which has been adapted and further developed in the Basic and Primary Education Project (BPEP). This includes the following features:

- community participation in school management including supervision;
- the involvement of parents in school education committees;
- emphasizing internal supervision and developing school supervision by senior teachers and the headteacher.

In the BPEP districts, community members are involved not only in the School Management Committee, but also in the Resource Centre Management Committee. Such a committee is established for each of the Resource Centres, with the involvement of the Resource Centre Headteacher, teacher representatives and community members.

An evaluation of the BPEP project arrived at a number of conclusions relevant to the issue of community participation in school management.

- Community support and co-operation were reported to be forthcoming on a high scale in the form of (a) the donation of land as well as the provision of free labour, material, furniture and money, and (b) the mobilization of people for the provision of drinking water.
- The RC buildings are, however, used in limited form only by the school and the community.
- As the community supported the RC by helping it to build its physical infrastructure, the people felt that the government should cover the regular operational costs as well as the development costs.

While communities assisted in the process of establishing Resource Centres in a variety of ways, it was beyond their capacity to sustain the RCs on their own. This has restricted the communities to one-off involvements rather than continuous engagement.

---

## II. THE MANAGEMENT OF SUPERVISION SERVICES

### 1. Basic facts

*Tables 2a, b and c* show the numbers and the distribution of supervisors and Resource Persons by district. In the whole of Nepal, there are 659 supervisors and section officers and 368 Resource Persons. In this way, all 1,027 school supervisors are available for 21,686 schools, resulting in an average of 21 schools and 111 teachers per supervisor (*Table 2a*). There is no provision for a separate supervisor for primary schools alone. A distinction is made between the 35 non-BPEP and the 40 BPEP districts (*Tables 2a and 2c* respectively). In the first group of districts, a total of 310 supervisors and technical officers are posted. On average they have responsibility over 32 schools and 171 teachers in both the primary and secondary sectors.

The number of teachers per supervisor ranges between 71 and 538. This last figure, however, is for Kathmandu, where schools are bigger and distances are less of a problem. In BPEP districts, the workload of supervision and support staff is considerably lower as the 349 supervisors and section officers are joined by 368 Resource Persons. Taking total staff into account, the number of schools and teachers per supervisor is 16 and 85 respectively. When RPs are not considered, the difference between BPEP and other districts is scarcely noticeable.

No detailed information on the profile of supervisors and RPs is available at a national level. However, some data on a group of 22 supervisors working in three districts where field visits were undertaken has been collected. All 22 supervisors surveyed hold B.Ed. degrees, and nine hold additional degrees, five of which are masters. Their experience in supervision ranges from two months

to 22 years, but a large majority have little experience: almost 90 per cent have up to three years' experience, while a quarter has less than one year. All possess some experience in teaching, ranging from two to over 14 years. The data also showed that females are poorly represented: in a group of 30 supervisors, only three were women.

**Table 2a. Numbers and distribution of supervisory personnel – Nepal**

Number of schools	21,686
Number of teachers	114,051
Number of RPs	368
Number of supervisors and section officers	659
Number of supervisors, section officers and RPs	1,027
Schools/ Supervisor	21
Teachers/ Supervisor	111

**Table 2b. Numbers and distribution of supervisory personnel by district – non-BPEP districts**

District	Number of schools	Number of teachers	Number of supervisors and section officers	Schools/ Supervisor	Teachers/ Supervisor
Manang	27	143	3	9	48
Humla	92	356	5	18	71
Rasuwa	88	362	5	18	72
Jajarkot	218	660	8	27	83
Sindhuli	390	1,062	11	35	97
Jumla	111	494	5	22	99
Dolpa	104	401	4	26	100
Rolpa	266	864	8	33	108
Sindhupalchok	419	1,391	12	35	116
Myagdi	195	835	7	28	119
Ramechhap	342	1,131	9	38	126
Makawanpur	399	1,525	12	33	127
Dhading	448	1,534	12	37	128
Gorakha	440	1,824	14	31	130
Okhaldhunga	252	1,049	8	32	131
Shankhuwasabha	286	1,259	9	32	140
Dolakha	306	1,282	9	34	142
Khotang	349	1,439	10	35	144
Tehrathum	202	1,025	7	29	146
Parbat	268	1489	10	27	149
Bhojpur	322	1,362	9	36	151
Solukhumbu	238	903	6	40	151
Panchthar	287	1,379	9	32	153
Taplejung	232	1,229	8	29	154
Palpa	391	2,124	13	30	163
Bara	273	1,476	9	30	164
Baglung	422	1991	12	35	166
Arghakhanchi	327	1,506	9	36	167
Bardiya	177	1,081	6	30	180
Kavre Palanchok	442	2,204	12	37	184
Saptari	271	1,694	8	34	212
Rupandehi	272	2,002	9	30	222
Bhaktapur	166	1,594	6	28	266
Lalitpur	277	3134	9	31	348
Kathmandu	690	9151	17	41	538
<b>TOTAL</b>					
Non-BPEP	9,989	52,955	310	32	171

**Table 2c. Numbers and distribution of supervisory personnel by district – BPEP districts**

District	Nber of schools	Nber of teachers	Nber of RPs	Nber of supervisors and section officers and RPs	Nber of supervisors and section officers	Schools/ Supervisor	Teachers/ Supervisor
Mugu	100	350	8	5	13	8	27
Darchula	235	919	16	8	24	10	38
Mustang	64	315	4	4	8	8	39
Bajura	177	669	8	6	14	13	48
Baitadi	309	1,077	14	8	22	14	49
Dadeldhura	171	755	9	6	15	11	50
Doti	231	915	10	8	18	13	51
Rukum	226	883	9	8	17	13	52
Pyuthan	246	1,016	11	8	19	13	53
Nuwakot	400	1,362	10	12	22	18	62
Salyan	291	963	7	8	15	19	64
Achham	239	983	8	7	15	16	66
Dhankuta	262	1,279	10	9	19	14	67
Kailali	370	1,276	10	9	19	19	67
Kalikot	132	532	3	5	8	17	67
Dailekh	265	1,025	7	8	15	18	68
Gulmi	433	1,786	12	13	25	17	71
Surkhet	381	1,488	11	10	21	18	71
Lamjung	344	1,609	12	10	22	16	73
Udayapur	285	1,239	8	9	17	17	73
Bajhang	226	1,035	7	7	14	16	74
Kaski	462	2,475	18	14	32	14	77
Ilam	342	1,748	12	10	22	16	79
Syangja	501	2,741	17	16	33	15	83
Rautahat	226	1,260	7	7	14	16	90
Kapilvastu	230	1,259	6	7	13	18	97
Tanahun	494	2,717	13	15	28	18	97
Dhanusha	277	1,687	9	8	17	16	99
Dang	301	1,836	10	8	18	17	102
Sarlahi	303	1,531	6	9	15	20	102
Banke	220	1,248	5	7	12	18	104
Nawalparasi	350	1,774	9	8	17	21	104
Siraha	320	1,607	7	8	15	21	107
Mahottari	224	1,417	6	7	13	17	109
Parsa	264	1,317	4	8	12	22	110
Kanchanpur	192	1,370	5	7	12	16	114
Sunsari	309	2,234	9	8	17	18	131
Chitawan	346	2,741	8	11	19	18	144
Jhapa	400	3,887	11	11	22	18	177
Morang	549	4,771	12	12	24	23	199
<b>TOTAL</b>							
<b>BPEP</b>	<b>11,697</b>	<b>61,096</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>717</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>85</b>

## 2. Critical issues

### (a) Recruitment

Supervisors and section officers in the District Education Offices are recruited by the government through the Public Service Commission. Graduates, with a bachelor's degree, are eligible to compete in a written examination. Those who pass the examination are interviewed and a certain number of them are selected to fill the vacancies. They thus become regular civil service employees and can be transferred to any post within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education or even to other ministries.

The number of supervisors has generally been insufficient when compared to the expansion in the number of schools. On different occasions, recruitment drives have been undertaken without adequate time and without making the necessary provisions for dealing with their probable consequences. Many supervisors were indeed employed without much consideration of their background. In fact, many recruits were fresh graduates with little teaching background or supervision training. This is largely responsible for the loss of credibility of supervisors among the schoolteachers and headteachers. On the other hand, when headteachers were recruited as supervisors, they also lacked conceptual clarity about their role and were not able to undertake supervision effectively. The problems they encountered included a lack of ability to present themselves as subject experts and/or to provide instructional guidance in the development and use of educational materials.

Although the nature of this problem is well understood, the ad-hoc recruitment still continues. Political instability in the country and poor socio-economic conditions are often blamed for this. Regarding the recruitment of Resource Persons, most (about 60 per cent) are on secondment, mainly from school teaching, some are on contract and the remainder are recruited on a temporary basis.

## (b) Training

The Faculty of Education of Tribhuvan University offers a B.Ed. programme in part intended for prospective supervisors. Almost all supervisors have attended this programme which, however, has been criticized for giving insufficient attention to its practical component.

A number of in-service programmes exist, not necessarily addressed to supervisors alone. Their duration varies from a few days to two months. *Table 3* presents the type and duration of training programmes followed by 22 supervisors working in the three districts where field visits were undertaken. It clearly shows that specific in-service supervision training is rarely available. Moreover, inappropriate training has often perpetuated the conceptual problems of supervision. Recently, the National Centre for Educational Development has revised its training curriculum and started a regular training programme of supervisors. It has also been initiating training for other personnel involved in the supervision system – DEOs, headteachers and SMC members – on aspects relevant to school monitoring and support, an activity which was practically non-existent. However, the BPEP has regularly organized programmes for Resource Persons in different aspects of their responsibilities.

**Table 3. Training status of supervisors (N= 22)**

Type	Duration	Number of supervisors
Supervision-related	6 days	4
Resource Person/Programme Co-ordinator	1 month	8
Curriculum dissemination	3 to 12 days	11
Non-formal education	3 to 12 days	3
Other education training	2 to 12 days	11
Non-education-sector training	2 to 12 days	8



**(c) Career development**

Supervisors are permanent Class III staff of His Majesty's Government. As such, they can be promoted to higher levels: Class II (Under Secretary), Class I (Joint Secretary) and Special Class (Secretary). Such promotions and transfers, however, imply that they leave the job of supervisor. At present, no career path has been defined for Resource Persons, most of whom are teachers on secondment.

---

### **III. THE DAILY FUNCTIONING OF SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT SERVICES**

The following section summarizes the information collected during field trips to three districts: Chitawan, Banke and Jumla. The opinions and perceptions of supervisors/Resource Persons, DEOs, headteachers and teachers of the school supervision system are presented after a short introduction about the district.

#### **1. Daily functioning of supervision in Chitawan**

Chitawan is a fast-developing district. Its rapid development is attributable to the composition of the district's population, a conglomerate of migrants from all 74 districts of the country. The migration rate from the rest of the country is so considerable that Chitawan has been dubbed the '76th district of Nepal'. The original inhabitants of the region, such as the Tharu and the Chepang community, are now small minorities. In terms of educational achievement, Chitawan is one of the leading districts in Nepal. Literacy, school enrolment and school completion rates are all above average. The only underdeveloped parts of the region are the remote areas where native communities are in the majority.

Chitawan is a dune valley between the Mahabharat mountain range and the Siwalik hills. The terrain is mostly flat and basic needs such as roads, electricity, and water supply are adequate. Travel and transportation are easier here than in the rest of Nepal.

The following are basic statistics relevant to the supervision system in the district:

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| • Total number of schools                    | 346 |
| • Schools with primary section only          | 287 |
| • Schools with primary and secondary section | 57  |

• Schools with secondary section only	2
• Total teachers	2,741
• Primary teachers	1,898
• Private schools	60
• Number of school clusters (RCs)	18
• Current number of RPs	8
• RC buildings	18
• Current number of supervisors and section officers	11

### **(a) Perception of supervisors and Resource Persons**

The supervisors as well as the RPs were often present in the District Education Office. In the absence of the District Education Officer, the senior supervisor worked as the acting DEO. The other supervisors were also involved in the administrative and other routine work of the office such as conducting district-level examinations, assessing applications for establishing new schools, and requests to open new classes. However, the supervisors expressed dissatisfaction with the situation, as they did not feel able to carry out 'good supervision and monitoring of the schools'.

By 'good supervision' they meant the following:

- paying regular visits to schools in order to check, for example, teachers' presence, the condition of the school buildings, teacher quotas vis-à-vis student numbers;
- assessing the local situation including checking whether or not textbooks and other instructional materials are available;
- making the school administration and teachers aware of the rules and regulations of the school education system;
- assessing whether or not quality education is being delivered by evaluating students' learning progress and by talking to people in the community;
- observing classroom teaching and evaluating the teachers based on their classroom practices, lesson planning and use of instructional materials;

- supervising and monitoring the school administration.

Supervisors were concerned that the administrative workload of the district education office, and the need for all decisions about school development activities to be vetted by this office, were reducing their efficiency. The supervisors and the RPs said they did not have the resources or budget for programmes and activities necessary for effective school supervision. Therefore, they were restricted to providing suggestions to help schools. The Resource Persons face a slightly different situation as they have regular activities to conduct: calling cluster meetings of affiliated schools, visiting schools to collect data, and organizing short-term training programmes for the teachers.

Supervision work was also hindered by the lack of transportation facilities such as motorbikes. Currently, the supervisors are provided with a bicycle each. In-transit facilities are also in short supply. In the past, local school communities provided facilities for supervisors on school visits. Now, they have to make their own arrangements regarding accommodation and food. This is difficult in rural villages where lodging and food services are not available. The supervisors called for the provision of sleeping bags, torches and comfortable backpacks to reduce these problems. They also suggested they receive a field visit allowance, as at present they have to cover these expenses themselves.

### **(b) Perception of headteachers**

The headteachers were of the view that the supervisors were not available to support school management or teaching-learning activities. They blamed the prevailing conditions, namely a lack of well-trained and able supervisors and a lack of co-operation among all the stakeholders concerned.

There is, however, no negative attitude amongst the headteachers and teachers towards the idea of being supervised. But they pointed out their concerns regarding the need for supervision to solve their problems. For example, one headteacher felt that supervision should help foster good order in the school. He said supervisors should observe the actual classes in order to assess their quality and identify poor teaching, thereby enabling the DEO to reward good teaching or take corrective measures. He claimed that the absence of a proper reward system means that teachers are punished by being sent to places that are inconvenient for them to reach.

### **(c) Perception of teachers**

The teachers also emphasized the need for supervising and monitoring the school in operation in order to determine who is, and who is not, contributing to its development. They pointed out the need to protect the teachers from harassment by the administration, at times for political reasons.

This shows that there are differing perceptions regarding school supervision. The community and the School Management Committee (SMC) members want supervisors to ensure that schools are run in strict order, in a product-oriented manner and believe that they should help impose strict regulations in the schools. For most of the local people, supervisors are just like the ‘daudaha’ – roving representatives of the rulers who were vested with full authority from a system that was very much in vogue in the past political system.

Nevertheless, some perceptions are common to all the teachers and the headteachers, SMC members and even the lay people. They all want supervision to serve the following purposes:

- classroom observation to help improve classroom teaching;

- to play a catalytic role in the social and political situation of the school to help solve the school's problems;
- to be instrumental in ensuring good administration at the school level, and to employ effective reward and punishment measures.

There is also a general perception, however, that the current supervisors are less capable of delivering such results for the following reasons:

- supervisors have inadequate experience;
- there is a lack of regular training programmes to help the supervisors update their knowledge and enhance their professional skills;
- they do not have a stable and motivating work situation;
- there is no supervision and monitoring of the supervisors, and an absence of self-confidence and commitment among the supervisors themselves.

## **2. Daily functioning of supervision in Banke**

Banke is a Terai district in the mid-western region of Nepal. Nepalgunj, its administrative centre, is one of the major cities of Nepal and the regional centre of the mid-western development region of Nepal.

The basic educational statistics of Banke are as follows:

• Total number of schools	220
• Schools with primary section only	183
• Schools with primary and secondary section	35
• Schools with secondary section only	2
• Total teachers	1,248
• Primary teachers	908
• Private schools	19
• Number of school clusters (RCs)	10
• RC buildings	10
• Current number of RPs	5
• Current number of supervisors and section officers	7

### **(a) Perception of supervisors and Resource Persons**

The perception of the supervisors and the RPs regarding school supervision here is similar to that in Chitawan. One difference in this district, however, is that there are somewhat more schools per cluster, but the number of RPs and supervisors combined is significantly more in proportion to the teachers. On average there are over 20 schools per cluster. Two supervisors are responsible for two clusters each in and around the Nepalgunj area. Two supervisors in Banke are new appointees (less than a year), as are some of the RPs who recently joined the DEO office in Banke on the recommendation of the Ministry of Education.

One of the supervisors, a graduate in economics who has worked as a teacher for several years, commented on the state of the education system in Nepal. Talking frankly, he said that he had completed his B.Ed. without being present for even one single day in the B.Ed. class. He made this point to stress how difficult it is to make rules and regulations in education in Nepal binding unless the situation is first improved at the central level, i.e. in the training centres, the central office and the higher-level decision-making bodies.

The supervisor further pointed out that the basic problems of supervision are connected with the fact that the system does not help address the identified areas of need. For example, at the moment there is no follow-up. Also, the supervisors have no authority to act, and teachers often openly challenge them and, in some cases, even taunt them. There is no respect for the supervisors and therefore the feedback from schools is not good. The same supervisor added: "Because teachers are undisciplined, classroom monitoring and supervision does not have any sense."

Another supervisor commented: "Teachers are not regular in class; they are inclined to be openly defiant of the basic rules and regulations.

The teachers indulge in political activities and they miss classes to attend to their personal activities without the consent of the authorities. Moreover, in most schools, the administration works along the same lines: adding classes to get higher teacher quotas by devising fake student numbers. The classes are there but there are no students, and the teachers contribute nothing towards educational development.”

There is a difference between the Resource Persons in the BPEP and the school supervisors: Resource Persons have explicitly stated that they collect data and fill in several forms as part of their regular work. They are well trained in this aspect, but the supervisors are not. Now that the concept of Resource Centres is being extended to the school system as a whole, there is a need to train the other supervisors too. The RPs, many of whom are former schoolteachers, feel that if the BPEP is extended to all districts and supervisors are also considered to be RPs, this will create confusion about what type of work to deliver, e.g. whether to work more as RPs or as supervisors? The work of RPs requires them to be stationed in the RCs, whereas the supervisors are currently obliged to work at the District Education Office. In addition, the concept of the RP was developed for the primary schools and the recruits to this position have experience and abilities in the primary-school sector. In contrast, the supervisors are conditioned to work at all levels of school education.

The other difference between the concept of regular supervision and that of the Resource Persons, is that RPs are provided with basic facilities such as a sleeping bag, torch and backpack, and a reasonable field allowance. Presently, the supervisors are provided with Rs.900 per month as a field allowance in order to undertake field visits to the schools.

In Banke, only one Resource Person was a former supervisor. Most of the RPs are teachers on secondment and only a few are new recruits. One supervisor, a former teacher, considered his current



position better than that of a teacher for the following reasons:

- as a teacher there is little scope for further personal development;
- a teacher's responsibility is limited to the school area/students, whereas a supervisor can look at school education from a broader perspective;
- supervisors have the opportunity of promotion and further development, e.g. they can become District Education Officers, and are even eligible to become a Secretary in the Ministry of Education in due course.

He, however, felt frustrated because of the heavy control by the government over the school system.

### **(b) Perception of headteachers**

The headteachers criticized the role played by the District Education Office and the supervisors. One remarked: "They create problems by sending us teachers who were creating problems in other schools, and if a long-standing teacher in this school is doing a good job but not toeing the line of the authority in power, they can transfer the teacher to another place. How can we improve our school in such a situation?" The headteachers were of the opinion that supervision and monitoring, if done in a sincere way, could contribute greatly towards the development of schools. They said they wanted the following from supervisors:

- to come to a school to provide information beneficial to its development;
- to bring the problems of schools to the attention of the authorities in order to help resolve them;
- to help run classes effectively by providing exemplary instruction techniques and by helping to develop or acquire instructional materials;
- to help the school administration sort out the problems of teacher evaluation in a sincere way.

The headteachers were not confident about the ability of supervisors to help under existing conditions.

### **(c) Perception of teachers**

Like the headteachers, the teachers were apprehensive about the current role played by the supervisors. They claimed supervisors do not visit schools to provide support for teaching and learning but to check which teacher is linked with which political party. Many teachers perceived supervisors as a threat as they felt they could transfer them without good reason. Teachers also claimed supervisors do not have the ability to provide support for subject teaching and for instructional improvement. The teachers suggested that senior teachers should be appointed as supervisors and that those who become supervisors must have a good subject knowledge as well as good instructional skills.

## **3. Daily functioning of supervision in Jumla**

Jumla is a rural region, so remote that it can only be reached by aeroplane from Nepalgunj.<sup>2</sup> Otherwise the only alternative is a six-hour drive from Nepalgunj to Surkhet and then a three-day walk through mountains and valleys.

The basic educational statistics of Jumla are as follows:

• Total number of schools	111
• Total number with primary section only	102
• Total number with primary and secondary section	8
• Total number with secondary section only	1
• Total teachers	494
• Primary teachers	375
• Private schools	2
• Number of supervisors and section officers	5

---

<sup>2</sup> It is not always easy to get a seat on a flight. The study team met the DEO for Jumla in Nepalgunj where both groups were to get government seats in the Nepalgunj-Jumla flight. For ordinary Nepalese citizens it was almost impossible to get air tickets to Jumla in a normal way. The problem was exacerbated by weather conditions and several flights were cancelled due to poor visibility in the mountains. Consequently, lots of people had to stay on the waiting list. The DEO had already been in Nepalgunj for several days waiting for government seats on the flight to Jumla.

Jumla is a non-BPEP district, therefore there are no resource centres. There were two supervisors present in the office, both were new recruits (one for less than six months and the other for just over a year) with some teaching experience.

### **(a) Perception of supervisors**

The supervisors were aware of the BPEP and were anticipating its implementation in Jumla. However, they were not sure when it would take place. They thought that school clustering would be effective for school supervision in Jumla, where the distances between schools have made it almost impossible to schedule supervision visits regularly.

The supervisors did not know much about the BPEP scheme of supervision. Based on their experiences, they suggested that:

- there should be a regular training programme on subject-based supervision;
- the supervisors should be supported for field visits with field allowances and basic amenities such as sleeping bag, torch, etc.;
- the number of supervisors must be increased in proportion to the number of schools.

At present, school supervision takes place on an ad-hoc basis: supervisors visit schools in accordance with the instructions of the DEO or at the request of the local SMC and the headteacher. Such instructions or demands are mostly prompted by particular problems in schools. Supervisors tend, as a matter of routine, to look at the school records, talk to headteachers, teachers, students and people in the community, and observe classes.

After the supervision visits, the supervisors give the schools several verbal suggestions. They provide a written report to the DEO office if necessary. Such reports are often connected with assessing

the school property, solving the disputes within the school community, recommending a higher teacher quota, and/or promoting the school from lower to higher levels. Such written reports are generally not required for instructional support activities.

The supervisors said that there was little they could do in terms of instructional improvement because of the very low motivation among teachers, students and headteachers. Local festivals and socio-economic activities still dominate the daily lives of the people, but the school calendar does not give due consideration to this fact. Consequently, schools can be closed without prior notice during local events, e.g. harvesting, plantations and festivals.

Schools are located in remote places and long distances make school visits difficult in Jumla. Food and lodging are scarcely available en route and in the villages. The supervisors are compelled to stay as guests of the headteacher, teachers or the SMC members, depending on who initiated the requested visit. Such a situation restricts the supervisors from being objective in accomplishing their tasks.

### **(b) Perception of headteachers**

In Jumla, two schools were contacted for the study. In both cases the local people and teachers claimed that the headteachers did not attend the schools regularly because they have other business concerns and strong political connections. The headteachers were aware of such complaints but appeared unconcerned. One of the headteachers commented: “The situation has deteriorated from top to bottom in the country. So, why should schools in Jumla be any exception?” He tried to justify his irregular attendance by saying that he was frequently required to visit the DEO office to get instructions and find out about recent school education rules and regulations. He said examination work also required him to visit the DEO office very often.

The two headteachers felt that supervisors should come for regular school visits and do their duties which, according to them, was not happening. For example, no supervisors had visited either school since last year. The conversation with the headteachers indicated that:

- the supervisors do not visit the school because they do not have the skills to deal with instructional problems;
- schools need supervision to help discipline the teachers and take corrective measures, if necessary;
- schools need teacher support in the form of helping to learn ‘new’ methods of instruction and develop ‘new’ instructional materials;
- schools need help to sustain desirable activities, e.g. ensuring adequate numbers of teachers and their regular attendance, and construction and maintenance of classrooms and furniture so that classes do not have to be held outside or in unfavourable conditions.

The problems of school education in Jumla are further complicated by the fact that the textbooks do not arrive there in time, or in sufficient numbers.

### **(c) Perception of teachers**

Many of the teachers in Jumla were not local. One SMC member commented: “There are not enough qualified people to become teachers and those who have the requisite qualifications leave Jumla.” The shortage of local candidates has caused inconsistency in the supply of teachers and also frequent transfers.

Most of the schoolteachers contacted were of the view that the school supervision system has been influenced too much by politics. The system has been used as a tool to transfer the teachers or to make them redundant, in most cases without justifiable reasons. The teachers contacted did not view the role played by the supervisors as supportive. They referred to the extreme backwardness of the district.

Although the teachers have heard about the BPEP and its Resource Centres, they did not have any idea how it would work in Jumla. They believed that a new concept by itself would not work without an effective support system and the political will to make it succeed.

#### **4. Perception of District Education Officers**

In two of the three districts, there has been a high turnover of DEOs, as a result of frequent changes in the Ministry of Education. Consequently, the supervisors have been assigned more to handling various jobs in the district office.

In one district, the DEO had only just arrived, after having worked as a supervisor in several districts. His experiences helped him to identify the following problems and issues of school supervision:

- field allowances are insufficient and difficult to obtain;
- provisions for travel are scarce;
- there is a lack of attention to supervision and support for instructional improvement;
- it is difficult to develop a feeling of usefulness about the supervision system because of the inability of schools and communities to implement the suggestions generated through supervision;
- there is an absence of a stable and confident administrative system that can effectively monitor the supervision activities and take serious corrective measures if necessary;
- local education officials are frequently transferred;
- there is manifest political interference in school administration and educational offices.

This last point was also stressed by the two other DEOs, one of whom commented that: “Supervisors are engaging more in political activities than in the academic development work of the schools.”

He said he had encountered a similar situation in all the places in which he had worked and blamed this on the current political situation and the way supervisors and RPs are appointed directly from the centre. This has caused a lack of control over the supervisors at the local level. He added: “You can’t do anything to the supervisors or even the teachers these days, because you never know, some of them are even capable of getting the District Education Officer transferred to another place.”

---

## **IV. OVERALL ASSESSMENT**

### **1. Issues and problems in supervision in Nepal**

The system of supervision is expected to ensure effective monitoring of, and support to teachers to improve teaching-learning practices, but the field visits demonstrate that, at present, its impact is negligible, if not actually harmful. Although the introduction of Resource Centres has brought some improvements, both supervisors and Resource Persons struggle with a number of comparable problems. In the following paragraphs, we will comment upon the problems experienced by supervision personnel, before looking in more detail at issues relating to the Resource Centres and their staff.

One major complaint expressed by school staff concerns the attitudes of supervisors. Although there have been several attempts since 1951 to turn supervision into a resource service by providing professional and technical advice to teachers, there still seems to be a wide gap between this concept and actual practice. In reality, supervision still seems to be at best a routine of checking the regularity of teachers and other school activities. Different factors play a role in this regard including, for example, the history of the early school inspection system, which was more occupied with political policing than educational supervision. Furthermore, as supervisors working in district offices are responsible for teacher recruitment and promotion, there is an element of employer-employee relationship between the supervisor and the supervised.

The heavy workload of supervisors is another crucial factor. Attempts made during the National Education System Plan to direct supervision towards teacher development did not take this issue sufficiently into consideration.



The roles and responsibilities of supervisors as stipulated by the regulations (see *Part I*) include almost every aspect of school education: training, provision of resources and demonstration of model classes, monitoring and evaluation of the teachers in the class and outside the class, assessment of the school situation, assistance to school development, etc. Examination supervision, recruitment and employment of teachers and curriculum development are also explicitly or tacitly brought in. As a result, there is confusion about the role of supervisors. The supervisors would be overloaded if all the stipulated roles and responsibilities were to be undertaken. This confusion has contributed to a lack of responsibility and apathy.

The field studies seem to show that the support aspect and the monitoring/evaluation elements of supervision are incompatible for a single person. In practice the idea of inspection for monitoring and evaluation seems to outweigh the support element. Because of the heavy load of regular routine work, supervisors' involvement in schools is very limited. Instead, they are drawn more into the administration of the District Education Office. It should also be noted that school supervisors are responsible for both primary and secondary classes and that the number of teachers and schools per supervisor is relatively high.

The result of all this is the role-conflict faced by supervisors between the control and appraisal tasks and the development and support functions. The supervisors tend to stick to the former, as there is little they can do about the latter. The supervisors do not have the power to delegate resources or other support to the schools directly. They can only make recommendations. However, even in their monitoring duties they are granted little autonomy and, under present conditions, their recommendations are not very effective. Consequently, the supervisor's job has become more of a ritual.

The conditions in which supervisors are working do little to help them. On the one hand, many schools are in a bad situation. Overcrowded classrooms (over 70 students in many cases), lack of instructional materials and resources, overworked teachers, and shortage of finances are among the problems which have severely limited the capacities of the schools and the teachers to implement new ideas and suggestions for improvements. These issues are also constraining serious educational interaction between supervisors and teachers.

On the other hand, the working conditions of supervisors are equally deplorable. The schools-to-supervisor ratio is generally erratic and is considered high in all districts of the country. The supervisors complain that it is beyond their physical ability to cover all the schools in their areas. The problem is heightened by the fact that, in most cases, the only means to reach the schools is on foot as roads are inadequate and motor vehicles are not provided. In addition, supervisors need to stay overnight on the way to schools or in the school area, but are hampered by a lack of board and lodging facilities in many villages. The need for basic amenities, such as sleeping bags, torches and safe drinking water, was reiterated by most supervisors. This demand may seem out of context in many other countries of the world, but in Nepal most parts of the country do not have electricity, the roads are only simple walking trails, and safe drinking water is difficult to obtain. Food and accommodation have to be procured through special contacts, and not with money alone. Money does not go very far in such a place.

The impact of these conditions on the efficiency of school visits can easily be imagined. The effect on the status of supervisors is also obvious when compared to the position of supervisors in the pre-democracy days, who the school communities held in respect because of the high authority they wielded in rewarding or punishing the schools.

Another major problem with supervision pertains to the lack of motivation in the form of recognition of personal initiatives and hard work. Career prospects within the supervision services are almost non-existent, as promotion generally has to be obtained by leaving the post of supervisor. Very often the work is therefore conducted as routine tasks without very much personal involvement. Related to this problem is the lack of proper monitoring of the activities of supervisors, a point often made by members of the community, school staff, and even the local newspapers. On the other hand, supervisors complain that DEOs and other responsible authorities do not pay due attention to their field reports.

To this already long list of problems can still be added the inefficient recruitment practices and the lack of training opportunities, which were mentioned above (see *Part II*).

In such a context, simply changing the name and shifting the focus of the supervision system is of little use, as the limitations behind the existing system seem to dictate what goes on when schools are supervised.

A number of the above-mentioned points also cropped up in an evaluation of the Resource Centre system (CERES, 1995), but on the whole the picture was more positive. The main conclusions of this study are summarized below.

1. Most of the respondents were of the view that there was inadequate manpower to handle the RCs. The report noted that in almost all centres, the Resource Person was alone and many RPs have to cover more than one centre. As a result, there were cases of RCs being closed in the absence of RPs.
2. The lack of resources for activities has contributed to limiting RPs' activities to routine work of data collection and holding

meetings as scheduled in the BPEP calendar. In addition, as many supervisors regularly have to take over the tasks of their DEO, Resource Persons are then asked to perform duties of a supervisory nature at the district office.

3. About half of the respondents evaluated the day-to-day management of the centres negatively. Some dissatisfaction pertains to the inadequacy of supporting manpower, the unavailability or irregularity of RPs and the little time spent by key personnel on core tasks. It was also reported that the majority of DEOs, programme co-ordinators, RPs and Resource Centre headteachers were not motivated to effectively assume their responsibilities and were performing routine work and some centrally directed activities.
4. Too little attention was given to the needs for capacity-building and awareness-raising of all the actors in supervision, those within as well as outside the project. Programme Co-ordinators and Resource Persons were given RC-related training but not the DEOs. Besides, the training was viewed as impractical by Programme Co-ordinators and RPs. The report emphasized the need for training in administrative and management skills for DEOs and Programme Co-ordinators and in training skills for RPs. Monitoring and supervision skills were deemed necessary for all personnel.
5. Although the efforts to decentralize the management and planning of teacher support were well appreciated, various staff considered these insufficient. The operational-level personnel, particularly the Resource Centre headteachers, perceived the planning system in RCs as a centralized one, whereas a majority of the DEOs and RPs thought that these headteachers were not capable of planning school activities using RC resources.
6. Resource Centres seemed to be engaged in a high number of monitoring activities. However, this monitoring was neither well planned nor well organized. It relied mainly on information collected indirectly and on anecdotal evidence, rather than on a specific data-collection exercise.

7. The idea of school clustering was well received, but it was suggested that the existing distances considered for clustering are high. Undue political influence in forming the clusters and in the selection of schools by RCs was also reported.

The involvement of Resource Persons in regular training, the level of collective efforts, community support, the increased provision of supervision and feedback by the RPs, uniformity in examinations and decentralization were reported as the strong points of the RC structures, especially when compared to the situation before the centres were established. Lack of timely supervision and feedback, the inadequate representation of local people in the Resource Centre Management Committee, the unmanageable number of schools in clusters and the lack of manpower were some of the weak points. A further criticism was that the system emphasized a top-down approach and there had been a lack of team spirit.

Plans are under way to generalize the Resource Centre system through all 75 districts of Nepal and to integrate it fully into the education administration. However, this raises a number of issues, two of which are mentioned below.

- Now supervision is a general system without primary or secondary-level task specification, the regular supervisors are responsible for both the primary and secondary-level schools. In the case of the BPEP, the RC structure is primary-school based and the RPs are either primary teachers or persons with a similar educational background. If the BPEP is adapted into the regular supervision system either RPs will have to be recognized as primary-school supervisors or their qualifications will have to be upgraded through training to make them eligible for secondary-level school supervision. Very recently, in the districts covered by the BPEP, the regular school supervisors have also been

absorbed into the BPEP model of Resource Centres and school clusters. In other words, the regular supervisors are now Resource Persons and all the Resource Persons are now required to supervise primary as well as secondary schools.

- The regular school supervision system has a small number of supervisors based at the DEO office. The Resource Centres are school-based and there are on average about 10 RPs in a district. The question arises: will it be possible to sustain such a large number of RPs in the regular school system?

## **2. Recommendations**

The study findings, the discussions and the outcome of a seminar, organized to examine the first draft of this study, lead to the conclusion that there is a need to rethink the supervision strategy in Nepal in order to make it more effective and functional. Before proposing a new supervision model, we summarize a number of essential conclusions below.

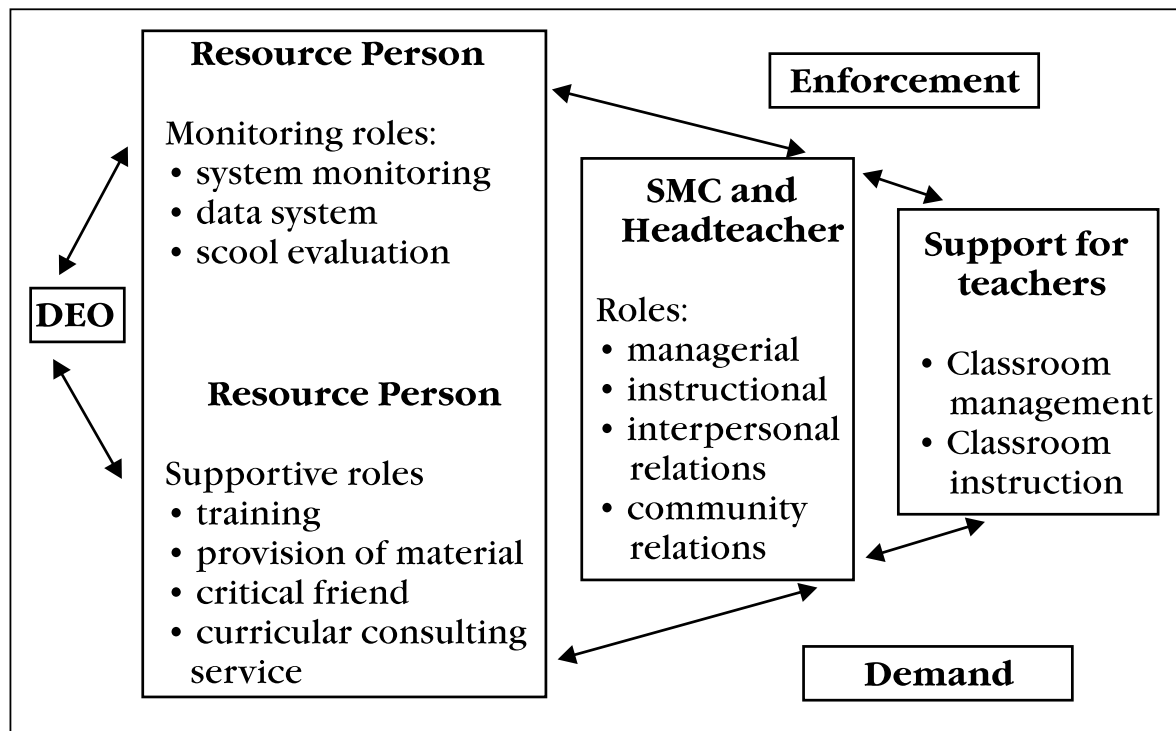
- One of the major issues of the current supervision system is that the supervisors are overloaded with specified as well as unspecified tasks. Moreover, the tasks of supervision and instructional support place supervisors in conflicting roles. There is thus a need to simplify the tasks and to categorize them into two parts: monitoring and instructional support.
- The stipulated tasks should be minimized in number, and be well defined, so that they can be easily understood and properly interpreted in the event of doubt or conflicting opinions between the supervisor and the supervised. This is necessary in light of complaints made by the school communities that the supervisors

do not visit the schools regularly and that, in several instances, the supervision system is used as a ploy for transferring or firing the teachers, which leads to a loss of confidence.

- Another important issue arises from the ad-hoc way in which the recruitment of supervisors is carried out, particularly the recruitment of temporary supervisors and the RPs in the BPEP. Serious questions are being raised regarding the validity of the criteria and about the abilities of the supervisors because of the alleged influences exerted by politicians. There is, therefore, a need to reform the recruitment system to make it more effective. This will be a difficult task because the posts are almost filled, and even if future recruitment was undertaken in a better way, the people who already hold positions will continue to be the dominant group.
- One of the lacunae concerns training for personnel involved in the supervision system. Training should be provided to all concerned – DEO, supervisor, Resource Person, headteacher, teacher and SMC members – on aspects relevant to school monitoring and support. There is also the need for parental education on similar topics.
- Another issue pertains to the centralized planning and development. An all-encompassing national model can hardly address all the needs of the various parts of the country. There is a need to establish supervision systems, adapted to the local context: flexible and, at the same time, a force in effecting quality changes.
- Such a locally adapted supervision system requires local participation and decentralized delegation of responsibilities and authorities. In this context, the internal supervision and support should be strengthened and the role and responsibilities of headteachers and SMC members should be enhanced.

Given the circumstances and the needs, the following scheme of supervision is suggested:

**Diagram 4. Suggested supervision and teacher support model**



The suggested supervision system has two distinct and parallel systems: one for system monitoring and the other for resource support. Each section in the scheme should have clearly defined and specified minimum tasks that are easily identifiable. There follows a brief conceptual description of the roles of each of the actors, with a few comments on preconditions and probable issues.



Section	Role	Prerequisites	Probable issues
<i>DEO</i>	Co-ordination; linkage to policy-making and programme direction; major decisions at district level.	Should be: trained in pedagogy; trained in monitoring and supervision strategies; politically neutral; a well-respected educator.	Currently the DEOs are being transferred and appointed on an ad- hoc basis, their positions are unstable and so they are unaware of the district situation. If this situation continues, the proposed scheme may not work.
<i>Resource Person (monitoring work)</i>	System monitoring; ensuring implementation of rules and regulations; keeping and updating the database; school visits in case of problems; instruction for the implementation of curriculum; school evaluation.	Should be: trained in pedagogy, monitoring and supervision strategies, database systems; non-partisan in political issues.  A list of verifiable monitoring and inspection indicators should be prepared and the list should be provided to all concerned.	In the current circumstances, supervision is at times used to transfer or dismiss teachers. Corrective measures may be necessary, including a legal defence system for the teachers. The school visits for monitoring purposes should be conducted on a random selection basis and on the basis of complaints so that the system is not misused.

Section	Role	Prerequisites	Probable issues
<i>Resource Person</i> (teacher-support work)	Arrange for the provision of instructional material support; arrange for short term training or facilitate the identification of available training; work as a critical friend with and provide counselling help to the headteacher and the teachers for instructional improvement; co-ordinate between school and community; maintain school database in the cluster and analyze it to serve specific support purposes.	<p>Should be: trained in pedagogy, instructional methods and technology, training/Resource Centres management; a person with good teaching experience; a well-respected teacher or educator.</p> <p>There should be adequate provision for developing and disseminating instructional materials.</p>	<p>Currently, many Resource Persons are fresh recruits and are unable to manage the Resource Centres. Retaining such persons will harm the credibility of RCs.</p> <p>Similarly, the budget for the day-to-day running of a Resource Centre is inadequate and subject to too much control by the administrative bureaucracy.</p> <p>There is a need for school support mechanism in the form of material provision. To make such provision self-sustaining, material Resource Centres should be created on a competitive basis.</p>

Section	Role	Prerequisites	Probable issues
<i>Head-teacher</i>	In-school management and supervision; instruction management; instructional support.	Should be: trained in pedagogy, instructional methods and technology, monitoring and supervision strategies, database system (EMIS); with good teaching experience; a well-respected teacher or educator.	Currently they are overloaded with all the responsibilities pertaining to school running as well as development. Responsibilities should be shared among the senior teachers, or a school management and supervision group should be formed. Otherwise, headteachers will not be able to accomplish the internal monitoring and supervision.
<i>SMC</i>	Supervision of the overall school management and administration; community relations.	Should have orientation in school management; should be elected from among the community.	The SMC members should not directly comment to the teachers on their performance. Their comments should be mediated through the headteachers. However, they should intervene in case of instructional misconduct. At present, the SMCs have not been able to work as catalysts to ensure community participation in school education. Their role is limited to raising financial contributions. The SMC and the community should be involved in overall functioning and development of the schools.

---

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

BPEP. 1994. *Resource Centre Operation Handbook*. Sanothimi, Kathmandu: Curriculum, Training and Resource Centre Development Unit, Basic and Primary Education Project.

BPEP. 1995a. *Basic and Primary Education Project – Project Implementation Booklet*. Kathmandu: Basic and Primary Education Project, Ministry of Education.

BPEP. 1995b. *Monitoring Package*. Kathmandu: Research, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, Basic and Primary Education Project.

CERES. 1995. *A study on resource centre structure*. Lalitpur: Centre for Educational Research, Evaluation and Services.

CERID. 1986a. *Instructional improvement in primary schools*. Kathmandu: Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development.

CERID. 1986b. *Primary Education Project: an Evaluation Study Report*. Kathmandu: Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development.

CERID. 1989a. *National Workshop on Reorientation and Reform of Supervision in Secondary Education*. Report of a National Workshop (26-30 November 1989). Kathmandu: Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development.

CERID. 1989b. *Primary Education Project: an Interim Evaluation Study Report*. Kathmandu: Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development.

CERID. 1995. *Decentralized management policies and practices in the primary education sector in Nepal: a review and reflections*. Kathmandu: Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development.

CHIRAG. 1996. *Role of school supervisors*. Kathmandu: Co-operative Hands in Restoration, Advancement and Growth.

Ministry of Education. 1992a. *Non-formal Primary Education Programme: a lead centre approach*. Kathmandu: Ministry of Education.

Ministry of Education. 1992b. *A Report of the National Education Commission*. Kathmandu: Ministry of Education.

Ministry of Education, Culture and Social Welfare. 1992. *Education Act 1971 and Education Rules and Regulations*. Kathmandu: Ministry of Education.

Ministry of Education. 1996. *Ministry of Education Nepal* (Second edition). Kathmandu: Ministry of Education.

National Education Committee, Ministry of Education. 1974. *A mid-term review report of NESP*. Kathmandu: Ministry of Education.

National Education Commission. 1992. *A Report of the National Education Commission*. Kathmandu: Ministry of Education.

National Planning Commission. 1982. *The Sixth Five-year Plan*. Kathmandu: NPC.

National Planning Commission. 1987. *The Seventh Five-year Plan*. Kathmandu: NPC.

National Planning Commission. 1992. *The Eighth Five-year Plan*. Kathmandu: NPC.

Wiles, J.; Bondi, J. 1986. *Supervision: a guide to practice*. Columbus, Ohio, Bell and Howell Co.



---

## **Chapter V**

### **National diagnosis on Teacher supervision and support services for basic education in Sri Lanka**

**Subhashinie Wijesundera, R.K.K.C. de Silva,  
Kanti Wijesinghe, D.A. Janasena<sup>1</sup>**

---

<sup>1</sup> Team members from the Department of Education Management Development (DEMD) in the National Institute of Education (NIE), Sri Lanka.

---

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADE	Assistant Director of Education
APDE	Assistant Provincial Director of Education
DDE	District Director of Education
DDG	Deputy Director-General
DEMD	Department of Education Management Development
DEO	Divisional Education Office
DepDE	Deputy Director of Education
DepDPE	Deputy Director of Primary Education
DOE	Department of Education
ERC	Education Reforms Committee
MOE	Ministry of Education
MT	Master Teacher
NEC	National Education Commission
NIE	National Institute of Education
PDE	Provincial Director of Education
PDepE	Provincial Department of Education
PMOE	Provincial Ministry of Education
PPC	Provincial Primary Co-ordinator
SLEAS	Sri Lanka Education Administrative Service
ZEO	Zonal Education Office



---

## **CONTENTS**

<b>List of abbreviations</b>	<b>216</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>221</b>
1. Education in Sri Lanka	221
2. Methodology of the study	224
<b>I. General overview of supervision and support services</b>	<b>226</b>
1. Historical background	226
2. The overall structure of supervision and support	229
(a) Structures at national level	231
(b) Structures at decentralized level	231
(c) The overall organization of supervision	232
3. Official functions of the different services	234
(a) Supervision at national level	234
(b) Supervision at provincial level	236
(c) Supervision at zonal level	237
(d) Supervision at divisional level	238
(e) A summary	238
4. Relations with other pedagogical services	239
5. Relations with school and/or community-based support and control structures	241
<b>II. The management of supervision services: basic facts and critical issues</b>	<b>243</b>
1. Basic facts and figures	243
(a) Basic facts regarding officers in the SLEAS	243
(b) Basic facts regarding Master Teachers	246

2. Critical issues	248
(a) Management of SLEAS Officers	248
(b) Management of Master Teachers	255
III. The daily functioning of supervision and support services	258
1. Working conditions	263
(a) Material conditions and service staff	263
(b) Financial conditions	264
2. The actual operation of supervision and support services	267
(a) Planning	267
(b) Workload	270
(c) School visits	280
3. Reporting	287
(a) Monthly reports	287
(b) Supervision reports	288
4. Use of reports and follow-up	290
IV. Overall assessment	292
1. Impact on school functioning and quality	292
(a) The opinions of the supervisors	292
(b) The opinions of principals	294
(c) The opinions of teachers	297
2. Synthesis of main problems	300
(a) Problems related to the management of supervisory services	300
(b) Problems related to the actual operation of supervision	303
3. Present trends	305
(a) Improving teacher professionalism and accountability	305

(b) The shift in emphasis from external to internal supervision	307
(c) Supervision is empowerment of teachers and principals	308
<b>Appendices</b>	
<b>Appendix I.</b>	
Organograms – Ministry of Education, Provincial Department of Education, Zonal Education Office, Divisional Education Office	310
<b>Appendix II.</b>	
Job descriptions of Zonal Director, Additional Zonal Director, Deputy Director of Education (Education Development in the Zone)	313
<b>Appendix III.</b>	
Format for Team Supervision Report	315
<b>Bibliography</b>	316



---

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Education in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka is an island, situated to the south of India. Until it gained independence in 1948, it had been occupied successively by the Portuguese, Dutch and British. Its population, estimated at 18.1 million in 1995, is multi-ethnic in character: according to the last census in 1981, about three-quarters are Sinhalese, somewhat less than a fifth are Sri Lankan or Indian Tamils and about 7 per cent are Muslims. Its population growth rate (1.4 per cent) is one of the lowest among developing countries.

With a GDP per head of US\$760 Sri Lanka belongs to the group of low-income economies. It is still a predominantly rural society: in 1995, it was estimated that 72.2 per cent of the population live in rural areas, 6.3 per cent in the plantation regions and the remainder in urban centres. However, it scores much better on a number of social indicators than its level of economic development would warrant: the infant mortality rate is 16 per 1,000 and life expectancy is about 70 years.

Since independence its successive governments have indeed taken a great interest in improving the social status of its population, in part by giving priority to education and health. The education system has thus known a significant expansion. According to recent data, the primary and secondary gross enrolment rates stand at 113 and 75 per cent respectively, and the overall pupil/teacher ratio is 22 (UNESCO, 1998). The share of females in education at all levels, approximately 50 per cent, is also encouraging.

Sri Lanka's literacy rate is one of the highest in South Asia: the 1981 census<sup>2</sup> recorded a rate of 87. per cent that increased slightly to 89 per cent in 1986/87, according to The Finance and Socio-Economic Survey. Recent studies, however, reveal that the literacy rate has declined and measures are being taken to remedy this.

The general education system comprises four levels, namely primary (years 1-5), junior- secondary (years 6-8), senior-secondary (years 9-11) and collegiate level (years 12-13). Education in Sri Lanka is perceived as a social welfare activity and is therefore essentially a public enterprise. Approximately 95 per cent of the schools on the island are government-run. The remaining 5 per cent include 'pirivenas' (Buddhist monastery schools) and a few private schools. All are partially funded by the state: teachers' salaries are paid by the government and they are entitled to the government pension scheme. *Table 1* shows the number of schools, students and teachers in each type of school and the respective pupil/teacher ratio.

**Table 1. Number of schools, students and teachers in 1994**

Type of school	Number of schools	Number of students	Number of teachers	P/T ratio
Government schools	10,192	4,204,341	187,383	22
Private schools	79	87,674	3,574	25
Pirivenas	509	46,314	4,002	12
Total	10,780	4,338,329	194,959	22

Source: Ministry of Education and Higher Education, 1995.

Schools are divided into five different types according to the grades being taught and the streams available in the A-level classes. In 1994, the government schools were distributed as follows:

---

<sup>2</sup> No census was conducted in 1991.

- 576 type 1AB schools: schools with Grades 1 to 13 or 6 to 13 with A-level science classes; a selected number of these are called 'national' schools which, as will be seen further, are supervised by the Central Ministry;
- 1,755 type 1C schools: schools with Grades 1 to 13 or 6 to 13 with A-level arts or commerce classes;
- 3,673 type 2 schools: schools with classes from years 1 to 11;
- 4,188 type 3 schools: schools with classes from years 1 to 5 or to year 8.

At the same time, in 1994, 96 per cent of the government schools included a primary section, in other words, they provided education from years 1 to 5 or higher.

A standard curriculum applies to all schools. A child completing the primary cycle is expected to achieve a range of competencies derived from the 'National Goals' that were formulated by the National Education Commission (NEC) in 1992. The competencies are related to academic skills, i.e. literacy and numeracy and national heritage and history, as well as a number of other subjects, such as healthy living, work experience, religious instruction, understanding the environment, and the development of values. The primary curriculum consists of nine subject areas: mother-tongue language, mathematics, environment, religion, creative studies, aesthetic education, physical education, English and basic science (from year 4).

While Sri Lanka has achieved considerable progress since independence, the education system retains some problems related mainly to the quality of learning. Internal efficiency could be improved by lowering the repetition rate (9.25 per cent on average at primary level) and the drop-out rate (4.4 per cent on average at primary level). According to recent studies, the achievement of primary students in mathematics and language is poor. Moreover, disparities in achievement levels exist between urban and rural

students. The following statement, taken from the 1995 Central Bank Annual Report, highlights the problems affecting primary education:

“The wide regional disparities in school facilities, poor quality of education and inadequate and low quality primary school facilities, particularly in rural areas, were the major issues in this sector”.

The situation is compounded by the fact that a large number of teachers are untrained (32 per cent in 1991), and the lack of effective monitoring and evaluation systems, which leads to poor accountability in education administration and in schools. It must also be noted that spending on education as a proportion of total government expenditure has decreased in the 1990s: in 1995 education was allocated only 10 per cent of the government budget, which represented 2.9 per cent of GDP.

Successive governments have therefore been confronted with the problem of ensuring that the education system is capable of providing the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values needed to improve the quality of life of the individual, and to execute tasks required to achieve national goals (Ranaweera, 1992). The present Sri Lanka Government declared 1997 as the ‘Year of Education Reforms’ and set up the National Education Commission to advise it on reforming the education system.

## **2. Methodology of the study**

The study used several methods to collect information: documentary analysis, focus group discussions, questionnaires and interviews. In order to describe in detail the operation of supervision and support services, the Central province was selected for an in-depth study.



Among the documents analyzed were: supervision reports, monthly work plans of Master Teachers (MTs) and log entries, i.e. entries made by supervisory officers in the log books maintained by schools. Copies of entries made during the most recent team and incidental visits were requested from a sample of 100 schools in Central Province. Forty-three principals responded: there were 37 entries on incidental supervision and 28 on team supervision.

Focus group discussions were organized with 12 Zonal Education Officers who attended a training workshop at the NIE, and with eight provincial and zonal Officers with specific responsibility for primary education. They represented different provinces. Similar discussions brought together Master Teachers from Central Province and some 15 teachers from different schools in the same province.

Four groups of education actors in Central Province received questionnaires: school principals, primary-school teachers within the same schools, Master Teachers and Sri Lanka Education Administrative Service (SLEAS) officers. The paper will give details on the number of respondents to these questionnaires further on.

Finally, interviews were held with three principals, six SLEAS Officers, the Provincial Co-ordinator for Primary Education, all based within Central Province, and two professionals in the Ministry of Education and Higher Education: the Deputy Director-General for Education Development, and the Director, Primary Education.

---

## **I. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **1. Historical background**

The history of the management of education in Sri Lanka traces back to 1869, when the Department of Public Instruction was established. In the early years of its existence, the department was managed by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools and other education officers from Great Britain. In Sri Lanka, in that early period, the school inspection system was based on the British HMI service existing at that time. The post of 'School Inspector' was that of an assessor, recommending the award of government grants for assisted schools, and was not, at this time, concerned with the educational or professional development of teachers.

A significant change in education policy on school governance – an important landmark in the history of education in Sri Lanka – took place about 35 years ago, when the management of all schools became a state responsibility. The Department of Education (DOE) until then was highly centralized and consisted of a Director and nine offices headed by Education Officers.

The first step towards the decentralization of education was taken in 1966 when the number of regional offices was increased from nine to 14. A Director of Education was appointed to manage each office. With the expansion of the number of schools under state ownership, methods had to be developed to improve the administration of schools. Each district was therefore divided into education 'circuits' and a Circuit Education Officer, whose main function was school inspection, was appointed to each circuit.

The early 1970s witnessed many important changes in the educational set-up. The Ceylon Education Service was established in 1971 and became the Sri Lanka Education Administrative Service (SLEAS) in 1985. The title 'Inspector' was replaced by 'Education Officer' to reflect the change and expansion of this post's job description.

Around the same time, the post of 'Master Teacher' (MT) was created to undertake supervision at the classroom level, provide assistance to teachers to interpret the curriculum, and conduct in-service seminars for teachers. The change in curriculum indeed necessitated updating teachers' knowledge on curriculum innovation.

The Education Reforms Committee (ERC), in its 1979 report, proposed the creation of school clusters. This idea was included in the 1981 *White Paper on Education Proposals for Reform*. According to the definition, schools within a defined geographical area were to be grouped into a cluster to improve organization, management and the rationalization of scarce resources. Each cluster was to function as one administrative entity. One large school within the geographical entity, which showed potential and had good resources, became the core school and, as such, the administrative centre. The Cluster Principal (the principal of the core school) was to function as the head of the cluster and was responsible to the District Director of Education (DDE). The supervision of schools, covering both administrative and developmental (improvement of teaching and learning) tasks, was identified as an important function of the Cluster Principal.

The concept of cluster schools was initiated as a pilot project from 1981 to 1983 in 20 selected groupings. It was later generalized throughout the whole country and the cluster became the smallest unit in the decentralized education set-up. With the organization of clusters, the supervision of schools by the Circuit Education Officers

became redundant and this post was abandoned. However, by the beginning of the 1990s, the cluster system itself faded away, for several reasons. Some have to do with its failure to function as expected, while the management reforms, such as the decentralization to the provinces and the strengthening of divisional education offices, may also have contributed towards its erosion.

The cluster system indeed suffered from several weaknesses. In many cases resources remained in the cluster school and one main objective, namely sharing between schools, was not achieved. In addition, cluster principals lacked the necessary experience and training, and the supervision they undertook was, in practice, not very different from what took place before, and its frequency did not increase significantly.

The last decade witnessed a major change in the system of governance. Until the year 1987 overall power and authority was concentrated at the centre. However, in that year, amendments made to the constitution of the country (13th amendment) allowed for more decentralization towards the provinces. As a result, responsibilities over education are now divided between the centre and the provinces. The overall capacities of each province may decide the extent to which each utilizes the decentralized powers.

Improving supervision has remained a priority of the government in recent years. The Ministry of Education (MOE) has, since 1968, issued three important circulars and guidelines on school supervision. A comprehensive guideline consisting of nine different formats of school supervision was circulated to all schools.

The most recent recommendations, with regard to the national education policy, were drawn up in 1996 and also refer to school

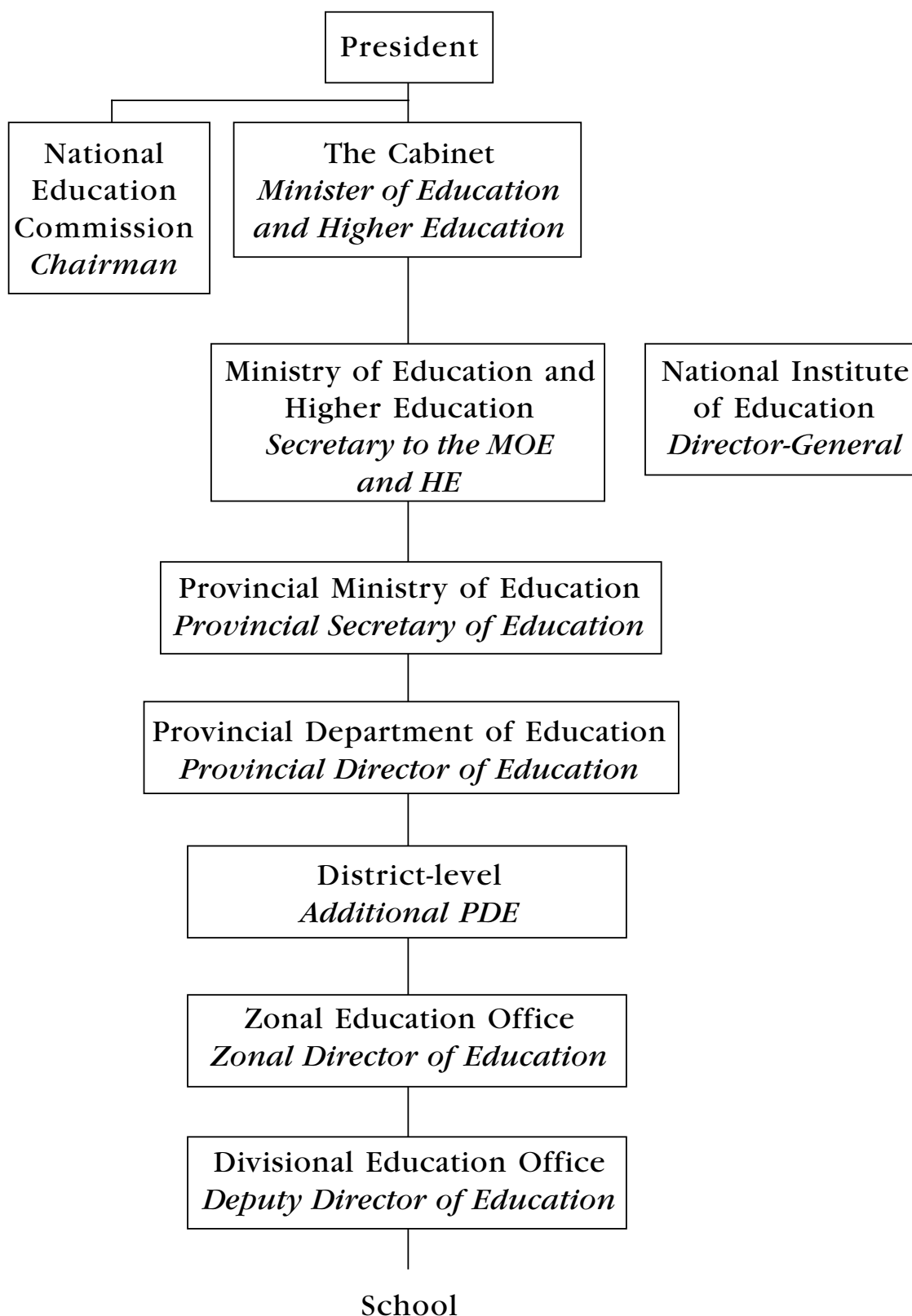
supervision. It is proposed that a National Unit on Quality Improvement in Education be established. This unit will provide guidance on several related aspects concerning education officers engaged in school supervision and evaluation. These officers will be exposed to different performance indicators related to distinct dimensions of quality improvement. The office will have a permanent staff and will be supported by specialists on educational management as the need arises. The National Unit on Quality Improvement in Education will also have authority to supervise the divisional offices, zonal offices and Provincial Departments of Education (PDepE). Although continuing efforts are being made to improve schools through supervision, much remains to be done in the future.

## **2. The overall structure of supervision and support**

This section first gives further information on who the policy decision-makers are, before looking at the different levels involved in implementing the policy on school supervision and support. As depicted in *Organogram 1*, there are two levels at which policy decisions are made: the Central Ministerial level and the Provincial Ministerial level. There are currently eight provinces.

The responsibility for implementing policy decisions lies with the MOE at national level and the PDepE at provincial level. Further down the hierarchy at local level are 87 Zonal Education Offices (ZEOs). The offices closest to schools, and the smallest administrative units in supervision, are the 299 Divisional Education Offices (DEOs). The Divisional Office is more of a field unit rather than an office with administrative functions. The following paragraphs look at the internal structure of each of the above-mentioned offices, from the central to the divisional level.

### Organogram 1. Educational executive and administrative structure



### **(a) Structures at national level**

The chief non-political executive at national level is the Secretary to the Minister of Education, who is assisted by three Additional Secretaries in charge of general education, general administration and education development respectively (see Appendix I: *Organogram 1*). There are also four Senior Assistant Secretaries and, below them, four Deputy Directors-General in charge of different aspects of education implementation, namely: primary and secondary education; school development, management, supervision and school activities; English, special education, guidance and counselling; and sports.

Due to its importance, school supervision is entrusted to a Deputy Director-General, who is also in charge of school development and management activities. This department is responsible for designing overall supervision policies and for supervising the national schools. The Deputy Director-General maintains links with the other Deputy Directors-General and also with the Deputy Director for Primary Education (headed by the Deputy Director-General for Primary and Secondary Education) who works in close collaboration with the school supervision branch as, out of the 218 national schools in the country, there are primary-level classes in about 187 schools.

Specific branches within the national MOE have the right to supervise the government-aided private schools and the 'pirivenas', since public funds are used for providing education to children in those institutes. The officers receive specific training for this type of supervision as the curriculum of the 'pirivenas' is, in part, specific to these schools.

### **(b) Structures at decentralized level**

The provinces are bestowed a high degree of autonomy in overall school development. The different departments and offices at

provincial level have the authority to plan, implement, and review matters regarding school supervision of all schools, with the exception of the national schools, for which collaborative planning between the Central Ministry and the provinces is necessary.

At provincial level, the Provincial Director of Education (PDE) is assisted by two District Additional Provincial Directors of Education, one of whom has to plan for and co-ordinate supervision functions.<sup>3</sup> The other officers who assist in supervision are Deputy Directors of Education and Assistant Directors of Education in the specific branches.

At the zonal level, the Zonal Director is directly in charge of School Supervision. There is one Deputy Director of Education (DepDE) and several Assistant Directors of Education (ADEs). Each Zonal Office is expected to have 18 subject specialist ADEs, but the actual number depends on the availability of officers. A clerk assists in the administrative work and, in some instances, and depending on the number of officers, an Assistant Director will be assigned the task of primary education supervision.

The divisional office is headed by a Deputy Director of Education, assisted by a clerk and one office aid and supported by several Master Teachers (MTs). Within the division, there should be a total of about 10 MTs with specific subject responsibilities at secondary level, and one MT who supervises primary-level education. However, there is a dearth of both subject specialists and primary Master Teachers at present.

### **(c) The overall organization of supervision**

*Figure 1* shows which offices have the authority of supervising which schools. National schools come under the purview of the Central Ministry and the Deputy Director-General of School

---

<sup>3</sup> Districts are sub-divisions of a province. They not have their own education offices.



Development and Supervision initiates their supervision. Directors in the Provincial Departments generally assist the MOE in organizing supervision that is, in most cases, undertaken by a team. The Central Ministry, on provincial recommendation, can enlist the co-operation of Directors, Deputy Directors and Assistant Directors at the provincial, zonal and divisional levels, and that of Master Teachers.

Type 1 AB and C schools are, in most cases, supervised by the Zonal Office. The Zonal Director, the Deputy Director in charge of supervision, and some subject specialist Assistant Directors of Education get together to form a team. The Divisional Director/Officer may also be invited, along with MTs in that division, to join the supervision team. Supervision of type two and three schools is

**Figure 1. Levels of authority and supervision:  
by school types**

School types	National	Provincial Department of Education	Zonal Office	Divisional Office
<i>National schools (primary)</i>	Has authority to supervise.	Supervises as a team when invited by the centre.	Officers may join by invitation.	Specialist in Primary Education joins by invitation.
<i>1 AB</i>	Can join team if invited.	Can initiate supervision.	Can initiate within the zone.	Can initiate within the division.
<i>1C</i>	No role.	Can initiate supervision.	Can initiate within the zone.	Can initiate within the division.
<i>2 and 3</i>	No role.	No role.	Can initiate within the zone.	Can initiate within the division.
<i>Private schools and pirivenas</i>	Respective branches have authority.	Can join by invitation.	Can join by invitation.	Can join by invitation.

generally left to the zone and the division. However, any officer/director working at any level, can pay incidental visits to any school within his geographical area, irrespective of the type of school, including national schools. Teachers in national schools may sometimes give little attention or recognition to such supervision because the authority over them lies with the Central Ministry.

### **3. Official functions of the different services**

A circular issued by the MOE on school supervision in 1986 noted that ‘supervision of schools’ is used to denote the offering of professional guidance and advice rather than close control. This idea is still expected to prevail in school supervision. The work of officers in charge of supervision therefore has the following objectives:

- to firmly and effectively establish supervisory systems at the school level;
- to provide assistance to the principals in the supervision of special subjects/curricular areas;
- to evaluate schools with a view to identifying their strengths and weaknesses and to provide feedback and guidance to schools;
- to monitor and co-ordinate the supervisory programmes at various levels;
- to update and train the supervisory staff.

As mentioned above, officers with supervisory tasks are based at four levels, not including the school itself: the central level (the Ministry of Education); the provincial level (Provincial Department of Education), the zonal and the divisional levels.

#### **(a) Supervision at national level**

The department of the MOE, in charge of supervision, has as its main function the supervision of national schools, colleges of education and teacher colleges. For the supervision of primary

sections within national schools, the Deputy Director in charge of primary education in the MOE plans the supervision programme in accordance with the general programme of supervision drawn up by the Deputy Director-General of school development and supervision. Supervising national schools implies different steps:

- preparing the annual supervision plan;
- organizing staff to implement the annual plan;
- informing the provincial authorities about the planned school visit at least two weeks in advance;
- implementing the supervision activities in schools with the selected team, which would consist of Ministry officials (including the Deputy Director of Primary-Level Education), Provincial and Zonal Directors and/or Officers and Master Teachers (both subject specialists and primary-level MTs);
- preparing a joint supervision report in triplicate, to be sent to the school that was supervised, to the Provincial Director and to the Additional Secretary in charge of National Schools.

Additional functions of this unit are listed below.

- Defining supervision policies, which implies, for instance, preparing and amending circulars and reviewing the implementation of existing circulars, guidelines and instructions.
- Training the supervisors in collaboration with the Provincial Directors of Education and the National Institute of Education.
- Co-ordination within the Ministry of Education and with the relevant departments of the National Institute of Education and the Provincial Department of Education; supervision of primary sections of national schools; and dissemination of research findings and innovative practice.
- Setting standards for quality improvement in primary education: this implies reviewing periodically the situation in schools and providing feedback. In this regard, the unit may also supervise

Type 1 AB and C schools with the agreement of the provincial authorities. However, this authority is seldom used.

As noted above, the supervision of primary sections of national schools is the responsibility of the Deputy Director of Primary Education (DepDPE) who has a permanent staff of three SLEAS Officers. In addition, a number of Master Teachers and principals can be included in the team when they visit schools. Principals are included in the team when there is a shortage of supervisors in the offices. The supervision team normally consists of 10 to 12 supervisors. Prior to a visit, the DepDPE communicates with the coordinators in charge of primary education in the particular province and makes arrangements for their participation.

### **(b) Supervision at provincial level**

The Provincial Ministry of Education (PMOE) is one of several ministries at provincial level. Implementing national education policy, deciding on provincial policies, issuing circulars and guidelines for implementation of policy, obtaining and controlling finances for implementation, appointment of teachers, providing for inter-provincial transfers, and general quality control are its main functions.

The Provincial Department of Education, which is under the control of the Provincial Director of Education (PDE), is responsible for carrying out all education programmes in the province. The PDE monitors supervision within the province in order to see that activities are carried out at the zonal level as planned, that all schools are supervised, that unnecessary duplication is avoided, and that regular and systematic follow-up of supervision is being carried out. Other functions include: the development of plans for educational improvement, the implementation and monitoring of plans, the allocation of money for different purposes, the supply of physical resources to schools, activities regarding teacher training colleges

and colleges of education, issuing circulars on provincial supervision, and quality control matters.

The District Additional Provincial Directors are in charge of districts in a province. The supervision of work of the zonal office, co-ordination between the zone and the province, and solving problems that are beyond the zone, are among their functions. In addition, their tasks include: monitoring educational development, supervision and training, and looking into appeals from principals, teachers, students and members of the community.

The Provincial Primary Co-ordinator (PPC) has, as his or her basic function, the overall co-ordination of primary education in the province, which includes the management of the financial allocation for primary education, in-service training and supervision, and the co-ordination and training of Master Teachers. The PPC also co-ordinates the activities of the Primary Education Development Committee, which comprises representatives from special projects involved in the development of primary education, and which meets once a month to review the progress of activities.

### **(c) Supervision at zonal level**

Fourteen different functions are listed in the Zonal Director's job description, of which the supervision of schools is one. Zonal Directors organize at least two team supervision visits per week. The team comprises Deputy and Assistant Directors of Education in the zonal office, subject specialist Assistant Directors of Education in charge of primary education, and Master Teachers. A zonal office has to supervise between 100 and 150 schools per year. To make this feasible, a common strategy adopted by the officers is to visit two adjacent schools on the same day. In some instances, the team divides into two in order to maximize its limited time.

Within the zone there is an Additional Director of Education and a Deputy Director of Education (Education Development) who are entrusted with specific supervisory and training tasks (see *Appendix II: Job description of supervisory officers at zonal level*).

#### **(d) Supervision at divisional level**

The supervision of schools is the main task of the officers in charge of the Divisional Education Office (DEO), for which they enlist the support of the Master Teachers who are appointed to each division. In addition to the supervision of schools, the DEO officers guide the relevant MTs in quality improvement activities.

Each Master Teacher is attached to a school on a part-time basis to work in the field for three days a week. On the other two days, they have to be in their own schools or report to the divisional or zonal office. They are not issued specific job descriptions, but in discussions they stated that their basic functions are threefold: to provide teaching assistance, to supervise primary-classroom teaching, and to conduct in-service training for teachers. The Master Teachers remarked that the purpose of visiting the zonal or divisional office one day per week was not properly clarified to them. However, this arrangement helps them to meet other MTs and to engage in the following activities, according to the needs of the province:

- to prepare examination papers for the zonal-level tests;
- to discuss pedagogical problems;
- to plan in-service training programmes;
- to prepare supervision plans for the next year;
- to seek the assistance of other Master Teachers to visit schools with a large number of parallel classes.

#### **(e) A summary**

At every unit of administration it is obvious that supervision and in-service training are major functions. A group of officers in each

office is entrusted with the task of school supervision for purposes of educational development. These same officers, however, have several other duties, including organizing training. In the hierarchy from the Provincial Director of Education, through the zone to the Divisional Director of Education, different functions of supervision and control have been identified. The level closest to schools is expected to monitor school activities more frequently than others. Team supervisory visits are planned at all levels and the overall activities of each office are supervised and monitored by the level immediately above them in the hierarchy.

#### **4. Relations with other pedagogical services**

Before examining the relationship between services in charge of supervision and other services that contribute towards an improvement in pedagogy, the role of the National Institute of Education (NIE) in these matters will be discussed.

The NIE is mainly responsible for the development of the primary curriculum, providing training for the professional development of teachers, principals, MTs and SLEAS Officers, and conducting research and developing evaluation systems. Different departments, in particular the Department of Education Management Development (DEMD), the Department of Primary Education, the Department of Distance Education and the Department of Postgraduate Teacher Education, play a role in teacher supervision and support.

The main functions of the NIE connected with primary education supervision and support services are shown below.

- In-service and pre-service training of SLEAS Officers and teachers, including MTs. This training is undertaken through regular residential programmes and one-off courses, some of which use distance teaching.

- Training of trainers: some SLEAS Officers, who also have supervision tasks, are trained in order to give training to school principals.
- Assisting the MOE in the formulation of guidelines and formats on supervision.
- Conducting research on school improvement and the production of reading materials on related areas.

Pre-service teacher training is organized at universities and colleges of education. As some staff members of these institutions belong to the SLEAS, there is a connection with the supervision staff who belong to the same Service, but this relationship is not a profound one. The course at colleges of education lasts three years. In the final year, the students are attached to a school where a supervisor conducts a close supervision of their teaching practices. This supervisor is both an SLEAS Officer and a permanent staff member of the College, who has no direct contact with the supervisors working in the zonal or district offices. School principals are also expected to supervise trainees and make assessments of their preparation and teaching and general conduct whilst in the schools.

Teacher training colleges organize a number of in-service training programmes of long duration, while the NIE runs a similar programme through distance education. Trainees at the colleges are supervised during their practical training by the lecturers, some of whom are members of the SLEAS. As far as distance education is concerned, regional co-ordinators appointed by the NIE organize contact sessions and supervise the practical components of the course. The external school supervisors therefore have no formal links with the supervision of the teachers taking part in this training. However, the Provincial Directors of Education are entrusted with the overall supervision of the training colleges.



This picture of non-involvement of regular supervision officers in teacher training changes where short-term in-service training is concerned. Indeed, the SLEAS Officers in the provinces are entrusted with the responsibility of organizing such programmes for teachers. For example, a group of Assistant Directors of Education in the zonal offices are entrusted with the management training of type two and three School Principals. Whenever curriculum innovation takes place, they are expected to conduct in-service training, along with the MTs. This clearly shows how supervisors work towards improving pedagogy at primary level.

Otherwise, the supervisors of schools are not directly or indirectly involved in other pedagogical services, such as curriculum development and implementation, or evaluation, examination and testing. These fields are the responsibility of departments within the MOE or within NIE.

## **5. Relations with school and/or community-based support and control structures**

The focus on in-school supervision has been growing since the 1980s. Studies on the improvement of administration and the teaching and learning process have shown how to develop a system of internal supervision structures in schools. The Principal, as overall line manager of the school, is expected to organize such supervision and take steps to implement supervisory activities.

Large, medium and small schools (depending on the number of students) are guided to develop their own internal supervisory structures. The overall responsibility of internal supervision is entrusted to the head of the school, who can delegate the functions related to

supervision to individuals and teams, identified for such purposes. In the larger schools several teams perform supervision tasks. These teams are either identified by level (primary, junior and senior secondary) or on a subject basis. These structures, if formed and used properly, assist the principal to run the school efficiently. For convenience of implementation, the supervisory tasks are separated into administrative and development tasks, such as the professional improvement of teachers and improved learning of students.

Collegial supervision, where all teachers are supervised by their colleagues under the guidance of the school principal, is also practised. Supervision in such cases is implemented as a project that covers all the teachers and all classes in the primary school. The external supervisors will, in such a scenario, concentrate their activities on the way the principal organizes and implements school management, including supervision.

The introduction of a system of teacher appraisal has been suggested. This proposes that, in addition to external supervision, teachers should be supervised by the heads of their schools, and carry out a form of self-supervision. The recorded level of performance would then be considered in relation to salary increments and promotion prospects. While the system of internal supervision is being implemented in most schools, it has not yet been linked to salaries.

---

## **II. THE MANAGEMENT OF SUPERVISION SERVICES: BASIC FACTS AND CRITICAL ISSUES**

### **1. Basic facts and figures**

The two main supervisory and support services are the SLEAS and the network of Master Teachers.

#### **(a) Basic facts regarding officers in the SLEAS**

The SLEAS consists of three hierarchical classes, namely Class I, II and III. Officers in Class I function as Heads of Departments at the central or provincial level (e.g. as Provincial or Additional Provincial Directors of Education), or as principals of national schools and of large and prestigious type 1AB schools. Class II and III officers are divided into general and special cadre categories. Officers of the general cadre perform various organizational and management functions at different levels of the administrative system, and fill posts as Principals and Deputy Principals of type 1AB and large 1C schools and teacher colleges.

Officers in the Class II and III of the special cadre category include:

- education officers, who are responsible for the management of special subjects in the school curriculum (science, mathematics, agricultural science, aesthetic subjects, handicrafts, physical education and commerce);
- Deputy Commissioner/Assistant Commissioners of examinations;
- Deputy Commissioner/Assistant Commissioners of educational publications;
- lecturers of training colleges;
- Deputy Directors and Assistant Directors of Education in charge of planning and evaluation.

Since 1989, the officers at all levels, except the school level, have been renamed as Directors, Deputy Directors and Assistant Directors of Education, according to the hierarchical levels of Class I, II and III.

The external supervision of schools is considered as a general function of all the DDEs and ADEs in the general cadre, and specialist DDEs, ADEs and planning officers in the special cadre. Officers in both types of cadre are allowed to supervise teaching in the primary grades and primary classes during incidental and team supervision, according to their own interests and background. Data are not available in the provinces about the officers who are actually involved in the supervision of primary grades.

A systematically maintained and updated database on officers in the SLEAS is not available at the national level. Therefore, the research team had to collect data from the provinces whose databases contained only a limited amount of data. Repeated efforts to collect bio-data from the officers themselves were unsuccessful. Finally, the research team succeeded in collecting partial data on SLEAS Officers according to their gender, class, age and province. *Table 2* indicates the distribution of officers in the SLEAS who are at the provincial, zonal and divisional education offices, by province, gender and SLEAS class.

As indicated in *Table 2*, only 22 per cent of the total number of officers are in the special cadre. This imbalance is due to unsystematic recruitment and promotion procedures adopted during the past decade. The percentage of female officers is very low except in Class 1. Further details will be discussed in the section on critical issues.

*Table 3* gives the distribution of SLEAS Officers in four provinces by age. According to the partial data available, a small minority (only 14 per cent) are below 45 years of age, while 45 per cent are above the age of 55 years, showing that the age profile of the SLEAS is relatively mature.

**Table 2. Distribution of SLEAS Officers in the general and special cadres by province**

Province	Number of officers												Grand total
	Special cadre					General cadre							
	CLASS II		CLASS III		TO-TAL	CLASS I		CLASS II		CLASS III		TO-TAL	
	F	M	F	M		F	M	F	M	F	M		
Central	1	14	11	14	40	1	1	1	85	3	12	103	143
North-Central	1	—	2	16	19	—	—	—	40	3	15	58	77
North-Eastern	—	2	4	15	21	—	—	1	46	10	29	96	117
North-Western	1	15	2	17	35	—	1	1	87	6	30	125	160
Sabaragamuwa	1	3	2	5	11	1	—	78		41		120	131
Southern	10	23	9	12	54	—	—	3	98	9	9	119	173
Uva	1	3	—	6	10	—	—	3	44	1	5	53	63
Western	Not available				29	—	1	Not available				119	148
Total	15	60	30	85	219	2	3	487		173		788	1,012

*Note :* The above data do not include the SLEAS Officers who are in schools as Principals, Deputy Principals and Sectional Heads. The data also exclude the officers in the teacher colleges.

**Table 3. Distribution of SLEAS Officers by age and province**

Province	Age				
	< 35 years	36 – 45	46 – 55	> 55 years	Total
North-Western	9	16	65	70	160
Southern	11	9	85	68	173
Uva	5	5	22	31	63
Western	5	14	52	77	148
Total	30 (5%)	44 (9%)	224 (41%)	246 (45%)	544 (100%)

## **(b) Basic facts regarding Master Teachers**

The total number of Master Teachers in the country is 245 with a distribution among provinces which varies from 24 to 45, as can be seen from *Table 4*.

Data on Master Teachers by gender and age are only available for three provinces. *Table 5* shows that a majority of Master Teachers (81 per cent of this sample) are women. It must be noted that Master Teachers are selected from a pool of teachers that is mainly female. Although this group is, on the whole, somewhat younger than the SLEAS Officers, the age difference is not large: about 40 per cent are over 55 years of age.

*Table 6* shows, on the one hand, the average number of schools with a primary section per SLEAS Officer, and on the other hand, the average number per Master Teacher. According to this table, there is a significant difference in workload between these two categories, as SLEAS Officers supervise a much smaller number of schools. However, the above data do not indicate the true situation for two reasons: firstly, the number of officers actually involved in supervising primary education is not known (the number used here

**Table 4. Distribution of Master Teachers by province – 1996**

Province	Number of Master Teachers
Central	34
North-Central	30
North-Eastern	24
North-Western	29
Sabaragamuwa	24
Southern	45
Uva	24
Western	36
Total	246

is the total of all SLEAS Officers); secondly, all SLEAS Officers have more than just supervision tasks. The data on schools per Master Teacher are more representative of the real situation, as only Master Teachers in charge of primary education have been included, as they have few tasks other than supervision.

General norms regarding the number of schools to be supervised per officer have not yet been established. However, the divisional and zonal offices are being restructured and, in this new divisional set-up, a single officer will be in charge of a maximum of 40 schools. This could be considered as the new norm at the divisional level, but

**Table 5. Master Teachers by province, gender and age – 1996\***

Province	Gender		Age			Total
	Fem.	Male	35-45 years	46-55 years	55 years <	
Central	18	14	23	6	3	32
Uva	22	1	—	18	5	23
Western	34	2	1	6	29	36
Total	74	17	24	30	37	91

\* Note: For three Master Teachers in these provinces no data were available.

**Table 6. Average number of schools per category of supervisor\***

Province	SLEAS	Master Teachers
Central	10	42
North-Central	10	25
North-Eastern	15	71
North-Western	08	44
Sabaragamuwa	09	48
Southern	07	48
Uva	13	18
Western	10	36

\* Note: The average number of schools is calculated using the total number of schools with primary grades in the province and total number of SLEAS Officers and Master Teachers who are in charge of primary education.

it is difficult to identify such an official norm for the other levels as the traditional practice adopted is to make all the general cadre officers responsible for supervision of all the schools except national schools in the administrative zone or the province. However, for the specialist DDE/ADE in the zones, the number of schools per officer depends on the number of schools teaching the particular subject. In the case of Master Teachers, the number of schools per Master Teacher depends also on the number of schools in the division. From 1997, there were two primary Master Teachers per division, one in charge of lower primary (years 1-3), the other in charge of upper-primary classes (years 4-5). As each division contains a maximum of 40 schools, every primary MT will not be responsible for more than this number of schools.

## **2. Critical issues**

The official rules and procedures that apply to the recruitment, training and professional development of supervisory personnel, and the critical issues raised by these rules, will be discussed in this section, both in relation to SLEAS Officers and Master Teachers.

### **(a) Management of SLEAS Officers**

#### *(i) Recruitment of SLEAS Officers*

The SLEAS was established in 1985.<sup>4</sup> Recruitment to the SLEAS does not take place on an annual basis. The major procedures used to recruit officers to Class III of the SLEAS are:

- open competitive examination followed by an interview;
- limited competitive examination followed by an interview;
- promotion by interview on merit basis.

---

<sup>4</sup> The official rules regarding the recruitment, promotion and salary structures of SLEAS officers are minuted in the Gazette Notification Extra Ordinary dated 15 October 1986 of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka. The rules and regulations specified in the minutes are valid from 1 January 1985. The minutes have been amended on two instances, in 1988 and 1996.



The weight given to the above procedures to fill the vacancies is 25 per cent, 45 per cent and 30 per cent respectively. *Table 7* presents the basic entry requirements of the candidates regarding the above procedures.

The examinations are conducted by the Commissioner of Examinations on behalf of the Education Service Committee (ESC) of the Public Service Commission. The ESC is responsible for selection and appointment procedures of the SLEAS Officers. A large

**Table 7. Recruitment procedures and basic requirements for candidates for SLEAS posts**

<i>Procedure</i>	Basic requirements		
	<i>Educational qualifications</i>	<i>Professional qualifications and experience</i>	<i>Age</i>
1. Open competitive examination	Degree from a recognized university	Required to obtain after recruitment: one year's teaching experience; and professional qualifications or postgraduate degree qualifications in Education or Education Administration, or the 2nd Efficiency Bar Examination	22-26 years
2. Limited competitive examination*	Degree or Trained Teacher's Certificate (TTC)	Five years' experience as a teacher*	25-45 years
3. Merit promotions through interview	Not specified	Grade 1 of the Principal's Service and three years' experience as a Principal	Not specified

\* The basic requirements to sit for the limited Competitive Examination were relaxed significantly in 1988 by a Gazette notification dated 23.12.88. The previous requirements demanded a postgraduate diploma in Education and five years' teaching experience, or TTC and five years' experience as a trained teacher, or 10 years as a teacher.

number of candidates normally sit for the above examinations. The factors that motivate them include enhanced promotion prospects, better salaries and allowances, and a higher status in the service itself and in society as a whole.

The recruitment process meets with a number of problems, two of which are worth mentioning as they have a number of important implications.

Firstly, the procedures laid down in the minutes are not completely adhered to in practice. Therefore, the following issues have arisen. There is a discrepancy between the approved and the actual cadre of each class (see *Table 8*). The actual cadre of Class II far exceeds the approved number, the opposite being true for Class III. For all three classes combined, there are 577 vacancies. The situation is due to backdated appointments and promotions that are not in accordance with the procedures laid down in the minutes. In addition, officers recruited through the officially recognized procedures have lost out on promotions and on seniority, due to backdated appointments and promotions made through cabinet papers. Regular recruitment to Class III and promotions are being delayed due to the need to regularize the whole process.

Secondly, amendments to the minutes, especially regarding the cadre, are still to be made in accordance with the changing requirements of the devolved and decentralized administrative structures of the education system. The present structure at the provincial, zonal and divisional levels demands a greater number of specialized officers to supervise and co-ordinate special subject areas. In this new structure there are 87 Zonal Education Offices, each of which should have 18 officers who are specialist DDEs or ADEs, and six other officers in the general cadre.<sup>5</sup> The 18 Officers include one

---

<sup>5</sup> According to Article 3/PPR/PP/GA-110 of March 1995.

officer specialized in Primary Education. Accordingly, the minimum required number of officers in the special cadre to manage the zonal offices will be 1,566. These offices need another 522 officers for general administrative functions.

There will thus be a total of 24 officers appointed to each zonal education office, which will have a maximum of 150 schools. The average number of schools per officer at the zonal level will be six. In addition, there will be one divisional education officer (i.e. a DDE/ADE ) and 18 Master Teachers at the divisional level. At least 299 DDEs/ADEs are required to man all divisional offices. It will be useful to analyze the costs and benefits of such an arrangement, and revise the approved cadre to ensure both the efficiency and the effectiveness of the service. As indicated in *Table 8*, there are at present only 219 specialist DDEs and ADEs. To implement the proposed administrative structure, more than one thousand such officers are to be recruited and trained. Moreover, in the 1986 minutes, no cadre provision was made for officers specialized in Primary Education. It is evident that

**Table 8. Approved and actual cadre of the SLEAS Officers as of 31.12.96**

SLEAS class	Approved cadre				Actual cadre					Vacan- cies
					at provincial zonal and divisional levels			Total  **		
					Cl.I	General	Special		Tot.*	
I	60	—	—	60	5	—	—	5	13	47
II	—	183	117	300	—	} 788	219	1,007	1,061	} 530
III	—	932	851	1,783	—				492	
Total	60	1,115	968	2,143	5	788	219	1,012	1,566	577

\* Data derived from Table 4 — actual number of SLEAS Officers at the Provincial/Zonal and Divisional education offices at present.

\*\* Data provided by the MOE — actual total number of officers in the SLEAS at present, irrespective of designation and place of work of the officers.

the approved cadre has to be revised and increased and arrangements made to redeploy the available officers where they are required. The balance has to be recruited through the official procedures.

*(ii) Training of SLEAS Officers*

SLEAS Officers are given pre-service training for a period of about six to twelve months, generally on a residential course, during which job orientation is provided. The main component in the training is on education management and administration. The Department of Education Management Development (DEMD) of the NIE organizes the training courses on request by, and in collaboration with, the MOE. The number of officers trained during 1988/96 included all officers recruited during this period through competitive examinations.

The officers are exposed to in-service training as and when the need arises. The content includes planning, principles of management and organizational behaviour, curriculum management and school supervision. Courses are organized by several bodies, including DEMD and other departments of the NIE, the MOE itself and the PDepEs. There are also opportunities for the officers to participate in short-term training programmes abroad, under the sponsorship of donor agencies. Only a small percentage of all officers has been trained annually (see *Table 9* for data on in-service training organized by the DEMD), limited by a lack of funds for travelling and subsistence. In addition, lack of co-ordination between different implementing organizations has led to duplication.

*(iii) Professional organizations*

There is only one registered professional association in the SLEAS which was created at the time the Ceylon Education Services was set up in 1971. Membership is not compulsory and currently stands at 500. Its

objectives include the support of educational development as a whole, the professional development of its members, and the protection of the rights of all those engaged in education implementation, including teachers. An annual general meeting is held once a year and members meet once every few months at provincial level. The central committee participates in the proceedings of each of the meetings.

*(iv) Career development*

As mentioned earlier, the SLEAS consists of three hierarchical classes, class III being the entry point. Promotion to Class II is through a competitive examination followed by an interview. A minimum of five years' experience is required to sit the examination. Officers in Class II who are graduates of recognized universities are eligible to be promoted to the Class I of the SLEAS. The criteria for selection are merit and seniority and selection is through an interview. Dismissal rules are in accordance with the establishment code. The Education Service Committee of the Public Service Commission conducts inquiries and forwards the recommendations to the Public Service Commission for necessary action.

**Table 9. Data on in-service training by DEMD of SLEAS Officers**

Year	Number of officers trained
1988	145
1989	43
1990	55
1991	36
1992	71
1993	115
1994	113
1995	120
1996	85

*(v) Monitoring and evaluation*

All officers have to submit a monthly advance programme of work and a progress report to their superior. Monitoring can take different forms<sup>6</sup> including an analysis of log entries made by supervisory officers during their school visit, regular meetings with supervisory staff, and an analysis of work reports. The time period to be considered may be six to 12 months and a stratified sample of schools will be referred to regularly.

Such monitoring should show the quality of the work carried out by supervisory officers, the impact of supervision on the school, the aspects that are covered and left out in supervision, and the abilities and weaknesses of supervisory staff. The supervision practices will be compared to what the MOE considers the standard, namely that they should influence schools to change and improve, rather than exert administrative authority as a device of control.

*(vi) Support*

Supervision guidelines, circulars and standard formats are provided by the School Development and Supervision branch of the MOE and the Provincial Departments of Education. The latter are attempting to introduce simplified formats for supervision. Guidelines include the ethical aspects of supervision in the form of 'dos and don'ts'. However, the lack of support in the form of detailed guidelines regarding professional ethics, conceptual, attitudinal and technical skills seems to be a major problem in this regard. Formats for reporting are designed at the provincial and zonal levels.

---

<sup>6</sup> Circular No. PMD/SD/SS/10 dated 31.01.1986.

## **(b) Management of Master Teachers**

### *(i) Recruitment of Master Teachers*

Master Teachers were originally recruited by the Curriculum Development Centre of the Ministry of Education through the recommendation of the Circuit Education Officers. They were appointed on a part-time basis. Two days of the week they had to be in their school and three days in the field. In 1988, the authority to appoint MTs was delegated to the Regional Directors of Education, who were instructed to conduct competitive examinations and interviews to select the required number. Since there have been several irregularities in the procedure of recruitment, a circular was issued in 1991 to regularize appointments. An additional problem was the lack of a proper system to recruit adequate numbers of qualified personnel in time. The ratio of Master Teachers to the number of primary teachers appeared very high, especially in congested urban areas.

In 1996, a new scheme was introduced according to which the MOE takes steps to fill vacancies in the provinces. Twenty-four subject areas, including primary education, have been identified. The recruitment of Master Teachers will be by a written examination conducted by the Commissioner General of Examinations and followed by an interview. The candidates should be trained graduates or trained teachers in Class I or II of the Teachers' Service. Under the new scheme, criteria for selection and placement of MTs are specifically laid down. There will be two Master Teachers for Primary Education in each division and a division will comprise an average of 40 schools. Moreover, the Master Teachers will be full-time officers attached to the divisions. The new scheme appears better equipped to answer the problems highlighted above. There will be

299 divisions in the island. Accordingly, the approved cadre of MTs in charge of primary education will be 598. The present number of MTs is 245, and 353 new MTs will be recruited in the near future to fill the vacancies. Teachers are generally motivated to be appointed as a Master Teacher, attracted by the post's recognition, enhanced job satisfaction and additional allowances.

*(ii) Training of Master Teachers*

Pre-service training of Master Teachers was initially conducted by the Director of Primary Education of the Ministry of Education and was subsequently assigned to the NIE. The residential pre-service course lasts 10 days and covers the role of the Master Teacher, the primary curriculum, methodology, preparation of teaching aids, and providing guidance in teaching.

In-service training of Master Teachers is done by several authorities, including the NIE, the MOE and Provincial Co-ordinators of Primary Education. The course content is tailored to the needs of the situation. Training takes place to facilitate the development of concepts and skills in implementing innovations in the primary curriculum. To quote one example, between 1992 and 1996 almost all Master Teachers (260 in the first four years, 288 in 1996) received training of four or five days to accompany the introduction of the new curriculum for Grades one to five. The number of participants in the in-service training was actually greater than the number of Master Teachers, as some of the provinces where there is shortage of MTs, sent selected senior teachers.



*(iii) Professional organization*

Master Teachers do not have a registered professional organization, but they organize themselves at the provincial and zonal levels in order to look after their welfare.

*(iv) Career development*

Master Teachers presently belong to the newly created Sri Lanka Teachers' Service, which consists of three classes. Only teachers in Class I and II who are trained graduates or have the trained teachers' certificate are eligible to apply for the post of Master Teacher.

*(v) Monitoring and evaluation*

According to the guidelines given to the Zonal Education Offices by the MOE, the programme of work drawn up by Master Teachers should be approved by the Zonal Director on the recommendation of the Divisional Education Officers. Monitoring and evaluation is therefore carried out by the Zonal Director with the assistance of the Division.

### III. THE DAILY FUNCTIONING OF SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT SERVICES

This part of the report is largely based on field data collected in the Central Province. At the time of the study, all the provinces, other than Central and North-Eastern, were undergoing structural changes. The administrative structure of the Central Province was showing some stability during the recent period and was therefore selected for this study. To describe the actual operation of supervision and support services in this province, it is useful to look at some basic data on schools and the general administrative set-up.

The Central Province is divided into four education zones and each zone is divided into several educational divisions, ranging from five to eleven. There are 32 divisions in total and the number of schools in each one ranges from 17 to 156. *Table 10* presents data on schools in the province by education zone and by grades available.

**Table 10. Number of schools in the Central Province by grades available and education zone – 1995**

Education zone	Number of schools by grades available						Total
	1 – 5	1 – 8	1 – 11	6 – 11	1 – 13	6 – 13	
Kandy	105	34	136	0	80	16	371
Dumbara	82	40	115	1	62	20	320
Matale	116	27	107	2	56	10	318
Nuwara Eliya	276	47	134	0	59	6	522
Total	579	148	492	3	257	52	1,531
<i>Per cent</i>	<i>37.8</i>	<i>9.7</i>	<i>32.1</i>	<i>0.2</i>	<i>16.8</i>	<i>3.4</i>	<i>100.0</i>

According to *Table 10*, 38 per cent of the schools only have a primary section (Grades 1-5). However, there are primary grades in 96 per cent of the schools in the province. The large number of schools, their organizational diversity, as well as the wide geographical distribution, make supervision of primary education a difficult task.

The following paragraphs describe, in some detail, the responsibilities assigned to officers at different levels, and highlight where relevant the differences with the national situation, described in *Part I*.

*Organogram 2* sets out the organizational set-up of the Provincial Department of Education of the Central Province at the time of study.

At the provincial level there is a separate branch for educational development and school supervision headed by a Deputy Director of Education (DepDE). A DepDE in that branch functions as Provincial Primary Co-ordinator (PPC) and has responsibility for the management of financial allocations for primary education, in-service training and supervision, and the co-ordination and training of Master Teachers.

At the time of study, the Provincial Department of Education did not organize team supervision. This function was delegated to the zonal level. Officers in the Provincial Department were expected to be in the office for three days of the week and visit schools, either on incidental supervision or on team supervision organized by the zones, on the other two.

The organizational structure of the education zones in the Central Province during the period of study is shown in *Organogram 3*.

The senior DDE is responsible for co-ordinating team supervision and in-service training programmes conducted by the specialist DDEs

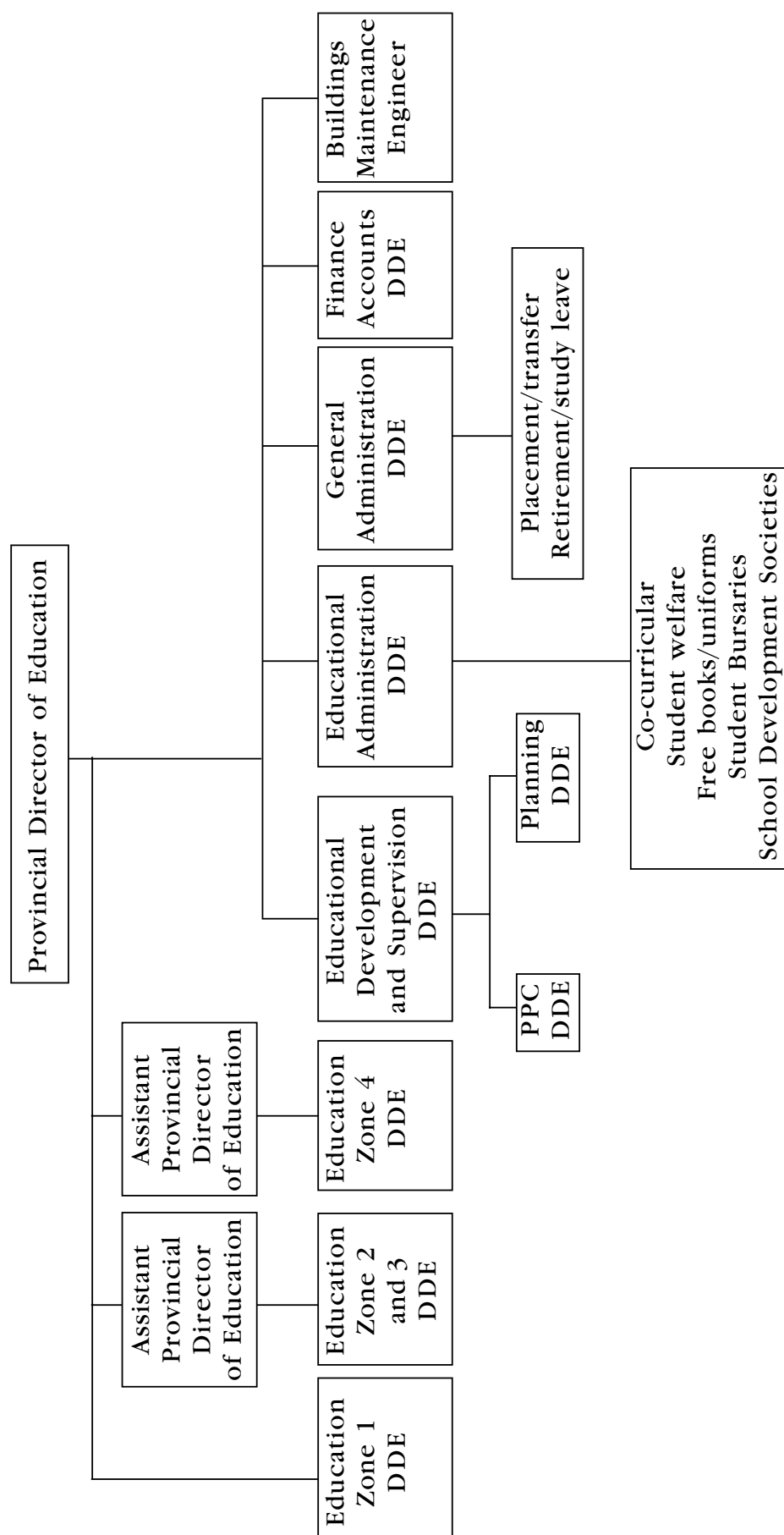
and ADEs. The specialist DDEs and ADEs are assisted by the Subject Co-ordinators and Master Teachers attached to the divisional offices in conducting in-service training. The zonal office organizes at least two team supervision visits per week. The team comprises a senior DDE and specialist Deputy and Assistant Directors of Education in the Zonal Office, Subject Co-ordinators and Master Teachers. The national rules state that the office has to supervise 100 to 150 schools per year.

The organizational structure of the Divisional Office is as shown in *Organogram 4*. It is headed by a Deputy Director of Education (DDE) and is responsible for both educational development and administrative functions. As indicated, two ADEs are in charge of these two main functions. The ADE in charge of educational development is assisted by the Master Teachers, including one for primary education. In addition to the supervision of schools, the officer has to collect annual returns and guide the relevant Master Teachers in quality-improvement activities.

The ADE in charge of administration is assisted by a Chief Clerk and a Finance Assistant and is responsible for the payment of teacher salaries (which are paid by the divisional office), teacher transfers, retirement, leave and other establishment matters. He also visits schools on incidental supervision and participates in team supervision organized by the division. The Divisional Education Office is expected to conduct a total of two team supervisions per week and a maximum of 10 supervisions per month.

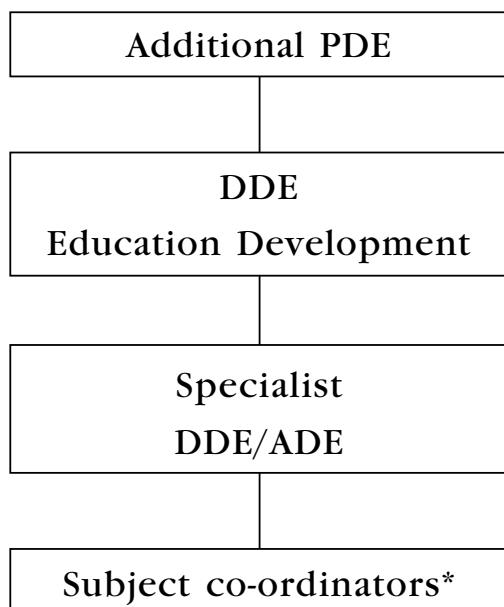
According to the above structure there should be three general cadre officers in the divisional office. However, in actual practice the number of SLEAS Officers in the divisions deviates from the norm and, at the time of study, varied from one to nine. In the case of Master Teachers, some had to look after two adjacent divisions.

**Organogram 2. Organizational structure of the Provincial Department of Education of the Central Province**



*Note:* Education Zone 1 - Kandy; Education Zone 2 and 3 - Matale and Dumbara; Education Zone 4 - Nuwara Eliya.

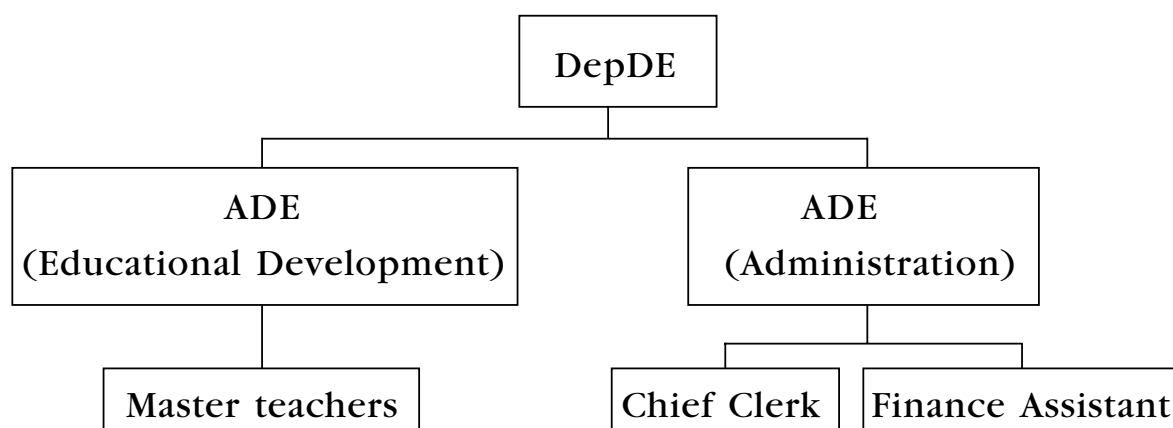
**Organogram 3. Organizational structure of the Zonal Education Office in the Central Province**



---

\* Subject Co-ordinators are Master Teachers in charge of specific subjects who co-ordinate the activities of MTs attached to the divisions in the zone.

**Organogram 4. Organizational structure of the Divisional Education Office – Central Province**



## 1. Working conditions

### (a) Material conditions and service staff

Basic office equipment and permanent office buildings are available for all the above categories of supervisors, except Master Teachers. However, transport facilities are not sufficient for the provincial and divisional officers. For example, the Provincial Co-ordinator of Primary Education has stated that there is only one vehicle available for 14 officers in the Provincial Department. He also added that at provincial level, no team supervision is carried out due to the inadequate transport facilities. At the zonal level there is at least one vehicle for each zone and most divisional offices are given a vehicle, although two adjacent divisions may have to share one.

Master Teachers do not have adequate facilities to carry out the supervisory work. They are expected to use public transport for school visits. It is reported that some do not even have a separate working table in the Divisional Office. Working conditions also depend on the infrastructure facilities available in a particular area and its geographical characteristics. The difficulties are described by a Master Teacher as follows:

“In my area, only six schools can be visited by bus. To other schools I have to travel about 30 to 40 miles by bus and walk another few miles. The travelling allowance I get is insufficient. Difficulties in travelling forced two of my predecessors (women) to resign from the post.”

In group discussions, other officers also revealed that there are difficulties in access to schools due to geographical barriers such as difficult terrain, poor environmental conditions and lack of infrastructure facilities.

Although clerical staff, typists and office aides are available for the overall activities of each office, officers at the zonal and divisional levels complain of inadequate service staff, especially typists. This has an impact on the preparation of supervision reports, most of which are handwritten due to the lack of typists.

## **(b) Financial conditions**

### *(i) Salaries and allowances*

The salaries of SLEAS Officers were revised in 1997 and are as follows<sup>7</sup>:

	Minimum annual salary	Maximum annual salary
SLEAS I	Rs.163,200	Rs.244,800
SLEAS II	Rs.127,500	Rs.155,100
SLEAS III	Rs. 86,700	Rs.111,000

The Master Teachers are presently in the teachers' service. The salary scales of different grades of teachers were revised significantly upwards in 1996 and are now as follows.

	Minimum annual salary	Maximum annual salary
Class I	Rs.117,960	Rs.173,160
Class II Grade I	Rs. 90,420	Rs.111,420
Class II Grade II	Rs. 67,320	Rs. 96,840
Class III Grade I	Rs. 55,140	Rs. 79,500
Class III Grade II	Rs. 45,900	Rs. 73,740

Before the recent revisions, the basic salary of the lowest paid SLEAS Officer was higher than the maximum salary of a teacher. According to the present revision, the salary of officers in Class III are equivalent to teachers in Class II, Grade II, with four years of

---

<sup>7</sup> US\$1 = about Sri Lankan rupees 57 (December 1997).



experience in that grade. It is interesting to note that as the increase in the teachers' salaries occurred about a year before that of the SLEAS Officers, during that period most teachers were better paid than their supervisors. This obviously did not facilitate the supervision work.

Officers in the SLEAS and the Master Teachers are entitled to travel and subsistence allowances that have upper limits decided by the provinces with slight variations. In all the provinces, except Western Province, SLEAS Officers are entitled to claim for travel and subsistence allowance up to a maximum of Rs.1,500 per month. In the Western Province this allowance varies according to the hierarchical status of the officer, from Rs.3,000 for a Zonal Director to Rs.2,000 for most other officers.

Master Teachers in all the provinces, except Western Province, are entitled to a monthly travel and subsistence allowance of Rs.1,000 for in-service training and providing assistance in teaching. In the Western Province the allowance for providing assistance in teaching is Rs.1,000 and the allowance for in-service training is Rs.500 per month. The Western Province also provides the Master Teacher with an office bag and a loan facility of Rs.70,000 to purchase a motorbike.

### *(ii) Budget*

The funds of the PDE come from two sources. Firstly, from the Provincial MOE that obtains its own funds from the Provincial Council, which collects revenues at provincial level, and in the form of a grant from the central government. Secondly, grants for national schools and teacher training institutes are provided by the MOE directly.

The PMOE prepares the provincial budget for education in consultation with the Provincial Department of Education and the administration of funds is carried out by the PDE.

As can be seen from *Table 11*, which presents financial data on the Central Province, recurrent expenditure is divided according to two programmes, namely General Administration and General Education. The former covers mainly clerical and administrative services and the latter is used for the salaries of educational personnel, including SLEAS Officers, principals, teachers and other staff in schools, and to provide other services and supplies to schools.

According to the data, 97.3 per cent of the total allocation is spent on salaries and other allowances to educational and general administrative staff. Only 2.7 per cent is spared for other items. It is difficult to find out the exact expenditure on primary education supervision and support services due to the lack of a specific budget line and detailed records regarding different levels of education. The existing budgeting system does not specify the allocations for activities such as supervision, student welfare, teacher welfare, rewards or co-circular activities. Funds for these are drawn from allocations made to such items as travelling, contractual services and supplies. Expenditure on supervision is mainly in the form of travelling allowances to SLEAS Officers and Master Teachers. As can be seen from the table, the total expenditure on travelling made for the officers, principals, teachers and other staff of schools amounted to Rs.4,100,000 in 1995, that is to say no more than 0.25 per cent of the overall budget.

The allocation for recurrent expenditure is therefore mainly spent on salaries. The amount spared for other activities, especially supervision but also in-service training, is insignificant. In addition, it should be mentioned that for reasons of administrative delay and lack of proper monitoring and replanning, half of this amount had not even been spent. If the little allocation available was to be completely utilized, some improvement would be achieved in the supervision and support system of the province.

**Table 11. Allocated and actual recurrent expenditure for education – Central Province Sri Lanka, 1995**

Category/Object title	Actual expenditure		Total allocation (In Rs.00,000s)
	in Rs.00,000s	As a % of total expenditure	
1. General administration			230
1.1 Salaries, overtime, holiday pay, other allowances	176	1.07%	
1.2 Travelling – domestic	10	0.07%	
1.3 Supplies	13	0.08%	
1.4 Contractual services	29	0.18%	
1.5 Other (holiday warrants etc.)	3	0.01%	
<b>Sub-total – 1</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>1.41%</b>	<b>230</b>
2. General education			11,787
1.0 Salaries, holiday pay and allowances	15,761	96.2%	
2.0 Travelling			
• domestic	41	0.25%	
• international	1	0.006%	
3.0 Supplies	53	0.32%	
4.0 Contractual services	175	1.07%	
5.0 Other (holiday warrants etc.)	28	0.17%	
2.1 In-service training	93	0.57%	
<b>Sub-total – 2</b>	<b>16,152</b>	<b>98.59%</b>	<b>11,787</b>
Appropriation estimate			4,706
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>16,383</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>16,723</b>

## 2. The actual operation of supervision and support services

### (a) Planning

A distinction must be made between incidental and team supervision. In the Central Province, the initiative for team visits is taken by the Zonal and Divisional Officer, not by the Provincial Officer. Plans for school supervision are prepared annually under the co-ordination of the Deputy Director in charge of educational development. In some zones, planning is done on a quarterly and monthly basis.

Team supervision at the zonal and divisional levels is planned to facilitate participation of supervisors at both levels. For example, the Kandy Education Zone generally conducts team supervision on Tuesdays and Fridays and the divisional-level supervision is conducted on Mondays and Thursdays. The plan of supervision at the zonal level is communicated to the divisional level in advance and vice-versa.

As far as incidental visits are concerned, plans are, as can be expected, prepared less in advance. Officers prepare individual plans on a monthly basis. However, they rarely prepare detailed plans indicating the schedules for follow-up visits. The monthly plan is forwarded to the Divisional, Zonal, Provincial Director in advance. In the discussions it was revealed that the effective use of such work plans depends on the commitment and the managerial ability of the Office Director, while restrictions on travel allowances and the lack of vehicles also hinder their implementation.

At the zonal and divisional levels, schools are not distributed among the officers for visits. For incidental visits, officers are allowed to select schools at their discretion. However, for team visits officers are invited to join the team according to their specialization in subjects. Although team supervision is better planned than incidental supervision, unforeseen complications can occur. For example, it was discovered during the field visits that two teams at different levels visited the same school within the same week. Another school was visited by a team of three Master Teachers, headed by a Divisional DDE, on a day when school tests were being conducted. In the log entry the officer mentioned that a partial supervision was carried out but, apparently, the purpose of the visit was not fulfilled.

In team supervision, schools are selected on the basis of different criteria:

- when there is a feeling that a particular school needs external support;

- to give preference to type 2 and 3 schools;
- to assist problematic schools;
- to assist newly appointed school heads;
- where transport facilities are available and when the locality is accessible;
- on the Zonal Director's advice;
- on the instructions of the political authorities.

In incidental supervision, other than the above criteria, the following appear to be important:

- schools where there is a lack of teachers;
- disadvantaged schools;
- to look into petitions;
- on a superior's request;
- when academic performance is weak;
- for monitoring the work of the schools that are on a foreign-funded project;
- to look into student and teacher discipline.

In practice the schools that are more accessible are visited more than others and schools that are more renowned are seldom visited. Responses of teachers reveal that schools situated in remote areas and difficult terrain are seldom supervised by external supervisors. Two such responses are as follows:

“I have not been supervised by any external supervisor since the time of my appointment as a teacher.”

“A school like ours has never been visited by primary supervisors. Lack of transport and lodging facilities in the locality prevent outsiders visiting the school. It takes one day to travel to school and another day for supervision. Coming back takes another day.”

Only team visits are announced in advance. The following are the steps taken in preparation for the team supervision:

- the date and time of the visit are announced to the team members by the co-ordinator of the visit;
- the objectives of the visit are explained to the team;
- the formats are distributed and their application explained to the team;
- the syllabus and the teacher guides are studied;
- the file maintained for the school is studied.

The planning for school visits by Master Teachers is carried out by the DDEs. In preparation for the school visit, Master Teachers examine the expected and actual achievement levels and go through the supervision report of the previous visit.

### **(b) Workload**

The following paragraphs will examine, on the basis of relatively small samples, the workload and allocation of time to different tasks of SLEAS Officers and Master Teachers in the Central Province.

#### *(i) Workload of SLEAS Officers*

*Table 12* sets out the time devoted to various tasks by a sample of eight officers working in different divisional education offices of the Central Province during an average month.

While data based on such a small, ad hoc sample have to be interpreted with care, a few points can nonetheless be noted. All eight officers indicate that they use at least 50 per cent of their time on school supervision, including pedagogic and administrative supervision. Four of the eight officers spend 40 to 50 per cent of their time on supervising primary classes. Almost all officers undertake some clerical work and spend time on writing reports.

**Table 12. Time devoted to different tasks by a sample of SLEAS Officers**

Activity	Percentage of time used in each activity by the officers							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Supervision of school administration	18	40	25	10	10	20	25	25
Supervision of primary classes	18	40	40	30	50	20	40	20
Instructional supervision of other classes	18	10	—	20	10	20	—	20
Assistance in teaching	—	—	—	—	10	20	—	10
Writing reports	14	—	10	5	—	10	10	20
Clerical work	18	5	5	5	—	5	5	5
In-service training	—	—	—	5	10	—	—	—
Organize meetings	5	—	—	5	—	—	—	—
Participation in meetings	5	—	—	5	—	5	20	—
Other (not specified)	4	5	20	15	10	—	—	—
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

*Note:* The activities listed in the table are given in the questionnaire distributed among the officers. The officers were asked to indicate time used during a period of one month for each activity.

Assistance in teaching is given by only three officers. Only two officers are involved in in-service training. Finally, it seems that meetings play a minute role as a means of communication between the officers and the other educational personnel, as few spend much time on organizing or participating in meetings.

The number of schools assigned to each officer depends on the number of schools in the zone or division. According to the information obtained from the eight SLEAS Officers interviewed, individual officers are not assigned particular sets of schools within the division or the zone. *Table 13* indicates the workload in terms of the number of schools to be supervised by different officers and the actual number of visits made in one year, namely 1996.

According to *Table 13*, only three officers were not able to cover almost all the schools assigned to them. It seems that the manageable number of schools is in the range of 30-40 schools per officer. However, the coverage also depends on the geographical distribution and access to the schools. Incidental visits are more frequent than team supervision visits. Two officers did not take part in any team supervision, another two took part in only one or two such visits.

To remedy the problem of low coverage, some solutions could be designed. The Ampara Education District of the North-Eastern province, for example, has adopted an innovative approach. It has categorized its schools according to their difficulty of access: there are three categories, namely 'most difficult', 'difficult' and 'easy' access schools. A plan is prepared to cover all the schools within the year and officers are assigned specific sets of schools including all three categories.

**Table 13. Workload in terms of number of schools per officer and the actual number of visits made during 1996**

Schools	Officer							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Total number of schools assigned to the officer	70	34	37	57	30	41	37	17
Total number of schools supervised	47	32	37	51	7	37	37	16
<i>Percentage of schools supervised</i>	<i>67</i>	<i>94</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>89</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>90</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>94</i>
Number of schools covered in team supervision	37	2	37	6	0	1	14	0



The data collected in the Central Province further revealed that some schools were supervised more than once during the year, while others were never visited. The divisional offices visited by the research team did not keep systematic records of school supervision. It was difficult to get the actual number of visits made to each school during the year, and the team therefore had to rely on the data provided by different officers regarding the frequency of their school visits (see *Table 14*).

Two officers succeeded in going to almost all their schools more than once. It is worth noting, on the other hand, that three officers, who were unable to call at all the schools under their charge, had none the less found the time to visit some schools more than twice. In the group discussions with SLEAS Officers it was revealed that they tend to go frequently to schools situated along accessible roads.

**Table 14. Frequency of school visits by SLEAS Officers**

Schools	Officer							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Total number of schools assigned to the officer	70	34	37	57	30	41	37	17
Number of schools visited once	38	29	5	36	7	35	5	3
<i>Percentage</i>	<i>54</i>	<i>85</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>63</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>85</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>18</i>
Number of schools visited twice	0	3	32	10	0	2	32	9
<i>Percentage</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>86</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>86</i>	<i>53</i>
Number of schools visited more than twice	9	0	0	5	0	0	0	4
<i>Percentage</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>24</i>
Number of schools not visited	23	2	0	6	23	4	0	1
<i>Percentage</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>77</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>6</i>

*(ii) Workload of Master Teachers*

Master Teachers in the Central Province are instructed to visit schools three days of the week. On Wednesdays they have to report to the zonal office and the remaining day they are supposed to work in their own school. Other provinces follow a similar pattern.

A group of 19 Master Teachers were interviewed on topics similar to those discussed with the SLEAS Officers. *Table 15* shows on which tasks they spend most of their time. ‘Supervision of primary classes’ and ‘assistance to teaching’ are two equally important tasks that take up more than half the time of most MTs. They do not supervise classes other than primary and very rarely pay attention to administrative issues. The rest of their time is fairly equally divided between meetings, in-service training and some administrative work, including report writing (although four Master Teachers did not do any report writing in the month under review). One Master Teacher utilizes one fourth of her time in classroom teaching.

Data collected from the same group of Master Teachers regarding the schools they visited during 1996 are presented in *Table 16*. According to this table, all but one Master Teacher visited two-thirds or more of the schools under their purview. The one exception is Master Teacher number 11, who has by far the largest number of schools to supervise and who also functions as a subject co-ordinator in the Dumbara education zone. He covered only about a quarter of the schools. On the other hand, four MTs succeeded in visiting all their schools and another six went to 90 per cent or more. It can be inferred from this data that the manageable number of schools is in the range of 25 to 40 schools. This was confirmed in the interviews conducted with the officers as well as the Master Teachers.

**Table 15. Time devoted to different activities by the MTs during a one-month period (percentage of total time)**

	Master Teachers																		
Activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Supervising primary classes	47	40	40	10	40	20	40	21	40	25	37	75	40	30	75	70	30	20	54
Supervising school administration	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	—
Instructional supervision of other classes	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Assistance in teaching	40	40	40	40	40	45	40	55	40	40	26	5	40	20	5	—	50	40	40
Report writing	3	10	—	10	—	6	10	6	10	—	5	5	2	—	5	5	4	4	2
Files and communication	2	10	—	10	5	12	10	2	10	10	7	—	—	—	—	—	4	4	—
In-service training	4	—	—	5	10	5	—	4	—	3	17	10	5	5	10	25	12	22	—
Organizing meetings	—	—	—	10	—	—	—	—	—	5	3	—	5	5	2	—	—	2	2
Participation in meetings	2	—	—	10	5	12	—	12	—	17	5	2	8	10	—	—	—	8	2
Others	—	—	20	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	—	25	3	—	—	—	—
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

**Table 16. Number of schools assigned to specific Master Teachers and the actual number of schools visited during 1996**

	Master Teacher																		
Description	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Total number of schools assigned to the officer	72	23	42	32	53	39	41	50	33	25	23	40	104	22	40	40	54	120	70
Total number of schools supervised	60	23	38	32	47	39	37	33	33	24	54	29	77	20	35	36	49	90	50
Percentage of schools supervised	83	100	90	100	89	100	90	66	100	96	23	73	74	91	88	90	91	75	71
Number of team supervisions	60	13	38	5	47	7	26	3	35	11	33	48	47	20	42	20	30	48	6
Number of incidental supervisions	—	23	62	30	—	56	29	45	45	24	23	32	71	20	35	6	45	42	50

*Note:* Master Teachers 11, 14 and 18 are in charge of Education Zones. Therefore, they have a relatively high number of schools to supervise.

The Master Teachers who are co-ordinators and those who are attached to special projects, or to the divisions based in municipalities, tend to be engaged in team supervision rather than in incidental supervision. However, the coverage of schools by these Master Teachers is lower compared to those attached to smaller divisions. The reason for this situation may be the large number of schools that they have to cover, and the additional responsibilities other than supervision. In other words, many MTs seem to be faced with the choice between longer but fewer visits, or more frequent but superficial ones.

*Table 17* sets out the data regarding the frequency of visits made by the same sample of Master Teachers during the year 1996 to the schools assigned to them. Only seven were able to go to more than half of the schools more than once. The number of schools under their charge was in the range of 23 to 54. Only one succeeded in visiting all the schools more than once. Not surprisingly, her workload in terms of number of schools was among the lowest: 23. Four MTs, whose responsibility varied from 42 to 120 schools, were unable to go to any school more than once. While, as was noted above, several MTs are unable to visit all their schools, quite a number of them can still visit some schools more than once.

As in the case of SLEAS Officers, the difference in the frequency of visits may be due to the number of schools assigned, difficulties in travelling, personal commitment, financial provisions and the special responsibilities assigned to Master Teachers. In the course of discussions, although they claimed there is no work overload, MTs complained that travelling long distances via improvised transport facilities makes their work tiresome.

**Table 17. Frequency of school visits by Master Teachers**

	Master Teacher																		
Schools	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Total number of schools assigned to the MT	72	23	42	32	53	39	41	NR	33	25	23	40	104	22	40	40	54	120	70
Schools visited once by the MT	60	–	38	3	12	15	25	NR	10	7	48	18	77	18	27	30	5	90	39
Percentage	83	0	90	9	23	38	61	NR	30	28	29	45	74	82	68	75	9	75	56
Schools visited twice or more by the MT	–	23	–	29	35	24	12	NR	23	17	6	11	–	2	7	6	44	–	11
Percentage	–	100	–	91	66	62	30	NR	70	68	3	28	–	9	18	15	81	–	16
Not visited by the MT 12	–	4	–	6	–	4	NR	–	1	176	11	27	2	6	4	5	30	20	
Percentage	17	–	10	–	11	–	9	NR	–	4	68	27	26	9	15	10	10	25	28

*Note:* NR – no response.

*(iii) Workload of supervisors viewed from the school*

In addition to the information collected from SLEAS Officers and Master Teachers, principals and teachers were also consulted in order to obtain a more complete picture. Sixty-nine principals and 292 teachers responded to questionnaires sent to schools in Central Province. *Tables 18 and 19* summarize their answers.

According to *Table 18*, Master Teachers have visited about four-fifths of the schools in the sample, whereas the officers visited only half of the schools. Master Teachers have also visited about half of the sample of schools three times or more, whereas the officers visited only 20 per cent of the sample three times or more. The analysis of data (not indicated in the table) also revealed that six schools had not been visited by any officer, Master Teacher or team during the year. Sixteen schools were visited only by the Master Teachers.

**Table 18. Number of visits made by different types of supervisors to a sample of 69 schools during 1996**

Types of supervisors	Frequency of visits	Number of schools	Percentage
Master Teachers	0	13	19%
	1	9	13%
	2	11	16%
	3	6	9%
	more than 3	30	43%
SLEAS Officer	0	34	49%
	1	13	19%
	2	9	13%
	3	4	6%
	more than 3	9	13%
Team supervision (both categories of supervisors are involved)	0	34	49%
	1	21	31%
	2	10	14%
	3	4	6%
	more than 3	0	0%

Team supervision visits were made to only half of the schools, while 20 per cent of the schools were visited twice or more by the teams. None of the schools received more than three visits from teams.

These data somewhat contradict those in *Tables 13* and *14* (based on responses of a small group of supervisors), which give the impression of a more complete coverage. This can be due to different reasons including the small size of the samples, their ad-hoc character, and the fact that the two sources of information do not relate to the same schools.

*Table 19* indicates the number of teachers supervised by different categories of supervisors during 1996. It shows that in 1996 38 per cent of the teachers had been supervised solely by the Master Teachers and 24 per cent by both categories. Nearly one-third of the teachers were not supervised by any type of external supervisor during a period of one year.

### **(c) School visits**

To gain a more precise image of what actually occurs during a school visit, in addition to interviews and questionnaires, an analysis

**Table 19. Number of teachers supervised by different categories of supervisors**

Category of supervisor	Number of teachers supervised by each category	Percentage
SLEAS Officer	30	10%
Master Teachers	109	38%
SLEAS Officer and Master Teacher	72	24%
None	81	28%
Total	292	100%



was made of log entries (i.e. entries made by SLEAS Officers in the logbooks maintained by schools). Copies of entries made during the most recent team visit and the incidental visit were requested from a sample of 100 schools in the province. Forty-three principals have responded. There were 37 entries on incidental supervision and 28 entries on team supervision. On the basis of this information, the following paragraphs will try to answer three questions: what are the objectives of different types of visits, in other words, what fields are being covered? How much time is spent on a visit? What is actually done during a supervision visit?

### *(i) Incidental visits*

According to log entries, incidental visits by SLEAS Officers have four main purposes, namely, to supervise:

- specific aspect(s) of general administration;
- curriculum implementation;
- co-curricular activities;
- developmental activities.

A few officers have covered two or more purposes in the same visit: of the 37 log entries on incidental supervision, only four indicated that the supervisors had looked into both general administration and curriculum implementation. Twenty of the entries indicated that the sole purpose had been the supervision of school administration. The remaining 13 indicated that the purpose was supervision of curriculum implementation, co-curricular activities or developmental activities.

Administrative supervision has covered the areas shown below.

- Office management: checking on school records, such as registers of teachers' attendance, budgets, record of distribution of textbooks, admission register, etc. and advice on school census.

- General school organization: delegation of work, organization structure, internal supervision system, student attendance, community relations, etc.
- Resource management: school premises, repairs and maintenance, financial management, teacher cadre requirements/surpluses.

The officers who visited schools to supervise curriculum implementation, co-curricular activities and developmental activities have focused attention on the aspects listed below.

- Curriculum implementation: lesson notes, scheme of work, class records; classroom teaching, both methodology and content; teaching aids; commendations on displays of good teaching; use of test results for remedial action.
- Co-curricular activities such as World Environment Day, tree planting, inter-house sports activities.
- Developmental activities: remedial teaching including improving handwriting; special projects, such as extra teaching for scholarship examination, or organizing the reading room; use of knowledge gained during in-service training.

According to the entries only one officer has provided guidance on remedial teaching:

“Visited the school incidentally. Supervised the language improvement and handwriting of students in three parallel classes in year four. The progress of the students is commendable. Techniques of improving handwriting, shape and size letters were introduced to the teachers” (quote from a DDE).

Three of the 37 entries on incidental supervision were very brief:

“Visited incidentally. The school functions well” (quote from a DDE).

“Visited the school to supervise the teaching of the subject” (quote from a specialist ADE).

“Visited the school today to supervise classes. Office management and teaching are satisfactory” (quote from a DDE).

Such types of entries are of little value to the supervisors who visit the schools subsequently, or to the principals and teachers. Information was given by six SLEAS Officers on the total time spent on an incidental visit and the time devoted to different activities (see *Table 20*). From these, it can be deduced that officers generally spend between four and six hours in schools. They devote a considerable part of their time to classroom supervision and the supervision of office work. They also examined other aspects of school management according to their interest. Not all officers incorporate discussions with teachers and principals into the visit.

*(ii) Team visits*

Team supervision covers a diversity of aspects of school management as well as classroom teaching.

**Table 20. Average time devoted by supervisors to different activities during a normal incidental visit**

Type of activity	Time devoted by the officers (hours)					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Classroom supervision	2	2	3	2	1	3
Office supervision	2	1	1	2	2	2
Environment	½	½	—	—	1	1
Discussion with teachers and principals	1	1	1	—	—	—
Welfare	—	—	—	—	1	—
Community and human relations	—	½	—	—	—	—
Internal supervision	—	—	—	—	1	—
Total	5½	5	5	4	6	6

There were 28 log entries on team supervision by teams numbering between 4 and 14 experts. Team supervision generally covers both primary and secondary sections in the schools. However, in five instances the primary sections were not covered, the reason being that the team did not include a primary specialist. There were also seven very brief log entries that only indicated the particular date of the visit and the number of members in the team.

*Table 21* shows the administrative and curriculum implementation aspects that had been covered in team supervision. It should be said that, on the whole, team supervision covers more areas than incidental supervision and also gives more equal importance to general management and administration, on the one hand, and, to curriculum implementation and classroom teaching, on the other hand.

While the duration of a team visit will not necessarily be much longer than an incidental visit, as the team includes several members, it will cover the school more completely. The various activities are divided among team members according to their speciality. Master Teachers are normally engaged in classroom observation and providing assistance in teaching. Their observations are discussed by the supervisory team prior to the post-supervision conference with the principal and teachers and the results of these observations are conveyed to the teachers by the officers at the conference. This practice is due to the lack of authority of the Master Teachers over the principals.

In the Western Province an innovative practice is adopted in team supervision. The following are the steps used:

- arrival in school before the start of the day;
- in the first period make general observations about the school and adjust the pre-prepared plan for classroom observations;
- classroom observations from the second period onwards for four periods;

- preparation of the team supervision report during sixth and seventh periods;
- post-supervision conference with the principal and teachers during the eighth period;
- discussions with the internal supervision team (Principal, Deputies, Sectional Heads and Subject Co-ordinators) and preparation of the final report.

**Table 21. Supervision of administrative and curriculum implementation**

General management and administration	Curriculum implementation and classroom teaching
1. Office management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• record keeping</li> <li>• teachers' leave</li> <li>• students' attendance</li> <li>• filing</li> <li>• financial records</li> </ul>	1. Teacher preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lesson planning</li> <li>• schemes of work</li> </ul>
2. School planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• timetable</li> <li>• school development plan</li> <li>• school calendar</li> </ul>	2. School environment and teaching aids
3. Teacher requirements: excesses and deficits	3. Teacher commitments
4. Teacher and student welfare	4. Student evaluation and public examination results
5. School premises, cleanliness	5. Special education needs and remedial teaching
6. School climate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• principal/teacher relationships</li> <li>• team work</li> <li>• leadership</li> <li>• principal's general conduct and discipline</li> </ul>	6. Implementation of innovation
	7. Teaching methodology
	8. Co-curricular activities

The last of the above activities takes place after normal school hours. A team supervision should thus always end with a meeting between the team and the teaching staff, including the Principal. In the post-supervisory meetings, the strengths and weaknesses, as well as areas to be improved, are highlighted by the officers.

During the team visits data on the following aspects are collected using a general format:

- basic data on the school (e.g. total number of students, teachers etc.);
- curriculum implementation: coverage of syllabi; public examination results; internal supervision system; student excursions; and co-curricular activities;
- utilization of resources: timetabling; teacher utilization; cadre requirements; prefect system; student discipline; and maintenance and utilization of physical resources;
- office management: quality of school records and filing;
- financial management: quality of records and adherence to rules and regulations.

### *(iii) Visits by Master Teachers*

The purpose of visits by Master Teachers is mainly to look into teaching and provide direct assistance to the teachers in order to allow them to achieve the curriculum objectives designed by the National Institute of Education. For this purpose, a Master Teacher is supposed to engage in lesson planning and preparation in collaboration with the teacher, to observe the implementation of the lesson plans and to provide feedback to the teacher. In discussions, the Master Teachers described as specific purposes of their visits the examination of:

- the term notes prepared by teachers in the primary grade;
- continuous assessment of students' progress;

- coverage of the syllabus;
- the use of exercise books according to the accepted norms;
- the extent to which exercises given to students are adequately marked and corrections noted;
- the techniques used for motivating students;
- the achievement level of students.

They also provide guidance on remedial measures on all of the above items.

Schools keep separate records of the visits by Master Teachers. The process that they normally adopt in classroom supervision is as follows:

- classroom observation;
- examination of students' workbooks and exercises;
- examining of class records;
- discussion with the teacher based on the observation;
- preparation of the report.

### **3. Reporting**

Two kinds of reports are generally prepared after supervision: a monthly report by each officer and Master Teacher and supervision reports prepared by individual officers and by the co-ordinator of the team.

#### **(a) Monthly reports**

The report indicates the visits made by the officers and Master Teachers during a period of one month. The report has only the name of the school visited and the date. It is used to keep a record of visits made by the individual officers. This is maintained by the immediate supervisor of the officer concerned.

## **(b) Supervision reports**

Immediately after a supervision, a report is prepared to describe its findings. In the Central Province the report is prepared in three copies. Its objective is mainly to give feedback to the relevant principal and the staff. Another purpose is to provide information that will be useful in planning and implementing follow-up activities. To facilitate the effective use of these reports, copies are filed in the school as well as the relevant education office. The remaining copy is sent to the higher authority for information and necessary action.

The formats used for team supervision consist of two main parts: part one gives an overall assessment of the aspects mentioned in the general format presented before; part two consists of reports produced by various officers and Master Teachers on individual classroom observations. The format used to report on classroom observation contains four main sections (see *Appendix III*):

- introduction (the class observed, the teacher, subject, theme, preparation for teaching);
- observations (what actually happens during the lesson, the teaching-learning process in brief);
- suggestions (suggestions for improvement);
- responsibility for implementation (name of teacher responsible).

It was revealed in the discussions that other provinces also use their own formats for the supervision report. In the North-Western Province, the format used for classroom supervision consists of the following:

- general facts about the class, the teacher and the lesson;
- a six-point scale of 0-5 is used to evaluate the lesson according to the following aspects:
  - ▲ lesson planning and objectives (five criteria);
  - ▲ development of the lesson (nine criteria);
  - ▲ assessment procedures and the remedial measures (three criteria).
- overall evaluation of the lesson (three criteria);



- a section on supervisor's comments; specific comments on strong or weak areas; measures to be adopted; complementary remarks.

The report will be finalized after individual discussion with the teacher, immediately after the observation and group discussions with the whole staff. The report on aspects of general school management is finalized with the principal.

The team supervision report has to be sent to the school within a two-week period. However, in analysis of log entries it was revealed that, in some instances, the report is prepared immediately after the supervision and handed over to the Principal on the same day.

Reports of incidental visits are not prepared according to a common format. Officers choose the format according to the purpose of the visit, and filing and reporting procedures are not well established in this regard. The team supervision reports, which were examined, had several shortcomings:

- vague and brief statements, such as the following, are made on important points:
  - ▲ 'class record books – are maintained';
  - ▲ 'daily/weekly notes – are written'.

It is therefore not clear whether all classes and teachers maintain class record books and write daily notes as there are no comments about the quality of the lesson notes or the entries in the class record books.

- lack of specific instructions for improvements which would be useful in a follow-up visit, as the following quote shows:
  - ▲ 'the first part of admission register is incomplete'.

It would, however, have been useful if specific instructions had been given and a target date for completion agreed.

- the suggestions which are finally made are, at times, not related to the reported situation, although the reports generally contain some constructive suggestions for improvement, a sample of which are given below:
  - ▲ conduct extra lessons for the students in the O-level classes;
  - ▲ specific instructions on improving student participation in the classroom;
  - ▲ provide a warm welcome to new entrants to year one, to mark this as a significant and memorable day for them.

#### **4. Use of reports and follow-up**

No supervision reports are published or made available to the public and there is no established procedure to discuss the reports with officers at different levels. However, information regarding good practice, as well as incidences of bad practice, is communicated verbally at the staff meetings and principals' meetings.

On the whole, supervision staff as well as principals and teachers expressed dissatisfaction about the follow-up activities. Officers felt that little use is made of the findings recorded in the reports by the supervisors and the school. They stated in focus group discussions that they lack authority to transfer teachers if there is an excess number of them, or if they do not fit into the requirements of the schools. The authority to transfer a principal lies with the Secretary of Education in the MOE.

Officers further added that they could not take any punitive action even in cases where the teachers do not come prepared for the lessons. Lack of an accepted code of ethics and written job descriptions make the task of the supervisor in convincing the teachers of such requirements a difficult one.

Principals and teachers, on the other hand, are of the opinion that officers “collect all the information regarding the deficiencies of teachers and physical resources, but never take action to provide those facilities.”

---

## **IV. OVERALL ASSESSMENT**

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the impact of supervision on school functioning and quality, to identify the main problems and to highlight present trends.

### **1. Impact on school functioning and quality**

#### **(a) The opinions of the supervisors**

Supervisory staff generally consider that their work has a positive impact on school functioning, by improving teachers' preparation and overall school management. Officers in the SLEAS stated that incidental visits motivate teachers to come prepared for teaching. A specific incident reported by an Additional Provincial Director is as follows:

“There is a positive impact. Students in one school that I visited have sent me letters asking me to visit their school unannounced. They have written to me that, at times, teachers cheat the supervisor by repeating a lesson that was conducted earlier”.

Officers are of the view that supervision of schools also helps to improve office management and physical resource management. They have observed that, with regular supervision, improvement takes place in keeping school records according to standards and keeping the school premises clean and presentable.

However, supervisors also point out a number of factors that adversely affect the impact of their work:

- the principal's lack of initiative to implement suggestions made;
- the insufficient number of specialized officers to supervise primary classes; although others are willing to supervise primary grades, they lack in-depth knowledge and skills;

- a lack of finances, material resources and clerical support, which hinders regular and systematic supervision and follow-up activities;
- the fact that supervisors themselves are insufficiently monitored and supported by their superiors.

Officers suggest a number of measures to improve the impact of supervision:

*Improve the coverage of supervision by:*

- allocating a realistic and adequate number of schools to each supervisor;
- providing adequate allowances to the officers, drivers and clerical staff;
- providing better transport facilities.

*Improve the quality of supervision by:*

- setting relevant criteria for recruiting Master Teachers, for example, in addition to the competitive examination and interview, there should be an evaluation of their actual teaching ability;
- increasing the number of officers specializing in primary education;
- upgrading the competency of supervisors by training and retraining on management and supervisory practices and curriculum management.

*Improve Master Teachers' conditions of service by:*

- legally establishing the Master Teachers' service;
- raising their academic and professional qualifications;
- regularizing the recruitment procedure by filling the vacancies as soon as possible.

## (b) The opinions of principals

A sample of 69 principals answered a questionnaire about the impact of supervision while interviews were held with several principals, to obtain more detailed opinions. *Table 22* sets out the responses on the questionnaire.

### (i) Principals who believe supervision has a positive impact

More than four-fifths of principals consider that supervision, whether it is by an officer or a Master Teacher, has a positive impact. They quote the following reasons given below.

- It improves teacher motivation: principals indicated that they have observed an increase in commitment and motivation among teachers following supervision. A principal in a remote school mentioned:  
“Teachers who were demotivated due to a longstanding lack of staff in the school were more enthusiastic and motivated after supervision”.

**Table 22. Responses of principals regarding the impact of supervision**

Type of supervision	Number of principals who responded						Total number of schools supervised
	Positive impact	%	Negative impact	%	No impact	%	
Incidental supervision	55	83	3	5	8	12	66
Team supervision	48	87	2	4	5	9	55
Visit by Master Teachers	52	81	2	3	10	16	64

\* The total number of principals who responded to the questionnaire was 69. The percentages are calculated by using the total number of schools covered in each type of supervision.

- It helps teachers improve the teaching-learning process and thus student achievement: teachers tend to use more and better teaching aids as a result of supervision. It also highlights strengths and weaknesses of teaching and helps teachers to solve problems that they face in the classroom. One principal commented on a visit by a Master Teacher:

“Master Teachers came to the school on my invitation. They have guided our teachers to improve students’ handwriting, achievement of basic mathematical concepts, creative activities. Finally, students’ performance has increased”.

- It encourages better planning and preparation by teachers: one principal was of the opinion that:

“If the students and teachers become aware that supervisors are coming to the school, they tend to be active and enthusiastic”.

Another principal added that:

“Frequent supervision stimulates teachers to be prepared and to plan their activities. They are reluctant to be caught unprepared in incidental supervision that is unannounced”.

- It helps the new teachers and the less experienced ones who, according to the principals, appreciate supervision and advice.
- It encourages teachers in deprived schools, as one principal stated:  
“The students in my school are affected by various socio-economic problems. The teachers who are working hard to give a good education to such students will be very pleased to be evaluated”.

*(ii) Principals who believe supervision has a negative impact*

Only a small proportion (3-5 per cent) of the sample of principals claimed that supervision has a negative impact, for the following reasons:

- teachers tend to become discouraged if supervisors make disparaging remarks, especially if these are repeated in other schools or public places;
- haphazard supervision also has a negative impact, as one principal pointed out:

“Supervisors just come and go. Teachers continue to work as before. Teachers who are serious and the teachers who are not, are treated in the same way. Most of the time, teachers who are not serious are evaluated as highly as their colleagues.”

*(iii) Principals who believe supervision has no impact*

A minority of the principals stated that supervision does not have any impact for the following major reasons:

- inadequate frequency of visits by the supervisors which results in only a partial supervision of the teaching-learning process;
- inadequate follow-up measures, of which one principal gave the following example:

“Teachers know that supervision takes place once a year. On that day some teachers tend to be absent. On the other days the same teachers carry on teaching in the usual manner. Some other teachers come well prepared, only on the date of supervision. They are rewarded but afterwards continue as before, in the same old way. For teachers who usually come well prepared, the date of supervision is not a special day. They are prepared for the lessons every day”.



- lack of behavioural change in the teachers: as a result of the irregularity of visits and the poor follow-up, the impact on teachers is low, as confirmed by the following quote:

“Suggestions are made by the supervisors. However, teachers do not change”.

The above quotes highlight several problems and point to a number of changes that need to be made. These include making incidental or unannounced follow-up visits, looking into evidence of the teaching-learning process that has taken place recently, and using different techniques to identify the strengths and weaknesses of individual teachers and thereby adopt suitable remedial measures.

### (c) The opinions of teachers

*Table 23* presents the responses of a sample of teachers on the impact of supervision on the teaching-learning process and on their motivation.

The most striking aspect of *Table 23* is, arguably, the fairly large number of non-responses. This can partly be explained by the fact that the

**Table 23. Summary of responses by teachers about the impact of supervision on the teaching and learning process and on their motivation**

Category of supervisors	Number of teachers											
	Teaching-learning process (NR – no response)						Motivation (NR – no response)					
	Posi- tive	%	Nega- tive	%	NR	%	Posi- tive	%	Nega- tive	%	NR	%
SLEAS Officers	53	60%	17	17%	32	23%	61	60%	2	2%	39	38%
Master Teachers	138	76%	13	7%	30	17%	129	71%	10	6%	42	23%

*Note:* Total number of teachers supervised by:  
i. SLEAS Officers = 102  
ii. Master Teachers = 181

questions on the impact of supervision on the teaching-learning process and on motivation were followed by a request to explain the answers given. Otherwise this could be due to the reluctance of the teachers to indicate their true feelings, or their inability to make a judgement on the impact due to insufficient exposure to external supervision. In any case, such a high number of non-responses is not a good sign.

The table shows that teachers prefer Master Teachers to SLEAS Officers as supervisors. According to the table, over 70 per cent of the teachers say that there is a positive impact on the teaching-learning process and on their motivation as a result of the support received from the Master Teachers. In comparison, the interventions by SLEAS Officers are well appreciated by only 60 per cent of teachers.

When comparing the opinions of teachers (*Table 23*) with those of principals (see *Table 22*), two points are worth raising. Teachers are, on the whole, less positive in their appreciation of supervision than school principals. Only about two-thirds of teachers believe school visits have a positive impact; this was the opinion of over four-fifths of principals. Secondly, teachers clearly favour Master Teachers over SLEAS Officers, while principals expressed a slight preference for SLEAS Officers. The fact that the latter group concentrates more on discipline, rather than pedagogical support, could help to explain this difference.

*(i) Reasons for positive impact according to the teachers*

- Supervision improves the knowledge of the teacher: supervisors help teachers to improve their knowledge on teaching methodology, subject content, use of remedial teaching and the use of teaching aids.
- Supervision motivates teachers to be better prepared: since the Master Teachers examine term notes, weekly notes and students'

exercise books, teachers say that they tend to keep those records systematically, and they also come prepared for teaching.

- Supervision improves teacher motivation and strengthens students' enthusiasm and active participation: the presence of an outside observer makes the students more active during the lessons; teachers feel rewarded by the progress of weaker students and Master Teachers compliment teachers who are involved in the process.
- Supervision helps teachers to solve problems that they face in implementing the curriculum and providing guidance to students.

*(ii) Reasons for negative impact according to the teachers*

In addition to the reasons given by the principals, teachers highlighted the reasons below.

- Lack of planning by the supervisors: teachers indicated that sometimes supervisors visit schools only towards the end of the year, which makes the exercise less effective; they also felt that some come unprepared and, occasionally, supervision is confined to only a few minutes of observation.
- Lack of systematic and continuous supervision: most supervisors visited schools only once a year and some teachers were not supervised for several years.
- Inadequate guidance and support for improving teaching and learning.
- Inadequate use of different sources of information for classroom supervision, e.g. class record books, teachers' lesson notes, exercise books and teaching aids.

The above analysis seems to indicate that supervision can make a positive impact if it is well planned and systematic. The impact also depends on the approach adopted by the supervisors, their ability to provide adequate guidance, the nature of feedback given to the school

and the teachers and the way the feedback is given. Haphazard supervision sometimes has a negative impact.

## **2. Synthesis of main problems**

Most of the problems which supervision services are facing have been highlighted in previous chapters. They will be briefly summarized below under two different headings relating to the overall management and the daily operation of these services respectively.

### **(a) Problems related to the management of supervisory services**

#### *(i) Recruitment*

The SLEAS was created principally to increase the professional quality of supervisors. The initial criteria were adequate to recruit personnel with the necessary academic and professional background to fulfil the role expected from officers of this calibre. The rules also provide for the infusion of young blood into the service. However, these criteria were not adhered to in the actual implementation. Backdated appointments and promotions made through cabinet papers created a discrepancy between the actual and the approved cadre. Amendments to the original minutes also diluted the academic and professional capabilities required to enter into the SLEAS. The situation has displeased officers who were recruited and promoted through the regular channels. The professional quality of the service has thus deteriorated.

The MOE has so far not been able to assess the needs and amend the rules to revise and increase the cadre accordingly. One reason for the delay is the lack of necessary data to assess needs. Problems such as the inadequate number of MTs and the lack of qualified

personnel among the MTs were expected to be rectified under the new scheme of recruitment launched in 1997.

### *(ii) Training*

In-service training of SLEAS is undertaken by various bodies, including the DEMD of the NIE, the Department of Primary Education in the MOE and the Provincial Departments of Education. Lack of co-ordination between the different authorities involved has, at times, created a duplication of work. In addition, the courses offered by DEMD do not contain special components on curriculum contents and the methodologies adopted in primary education.

On the other hand, pre-service and in-service training courses for Master Teachers mainly consist of curriculum and related matters. However, Master Teachers also require supervisory and management skills. Present pre-service and in-service programmes do not include those aspects.

### *(iii) Career development*

The lack of authority of Master Teachers to advise principals sometimes hinders the effectiveness of their service. Steps have to be taken to improve the professional status of MTs and to enhance their collaboration with principals towards school development.

### *(iv) Monitoring and evaluation*

The lack of a formal monitoring and evaluation system of supervisors is another problem. Tools for monitoring the coverage of schools by different categories of staff were not available in the offices visited by the research team. Monthly reports prepared by the officers and the supervision reports filed in the relevant offices are not used for the purpose of evaluation. Regular monitoring could

enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the supervision services by motivating the high achievers, and could provide officers and MTs with the type of professional guidance they need.

*(v) Support for supervisory personnel*

The guidelines so far provided by the MOE mainly consist of various formats to be used in supervision. More profound guidance is necessary on professional ethics and on developing conceptual, attitudinal and technical skills. Professional associations could be of use in this regard but their activities are presently limited to organizing awareness programmes for their members, and they would require strengthening to look after the professional dignity, ethics and quality of the service.

*(vi) Working conditions*

The material working conditions for officers and MTs leave much to be desired. Although many consider their workload to be acceptable, time taken up by additional tasks, such as co-ordinating the implementation of school activities with other departments, means they seldom succeed in making the number of visits required during a month. Two other factors are considered crucial in lowering the efficiency of services. Firstly, not enough is done to attack regional disparities, in particular in the distribution of available resources to different schools. There is a lack of attention to the deprived areas and a lack of incentives for officers who serve in these areas. Secondly, the resources available for supervision and other support services are inadequate. Officers stationed in the provincial education office find that the travel allowance does not enable them to visit the remote schools. The same is true for Master Teachers. The condition is further aggravated by the fact that funds allocated to those services are under-utilized.

*(vii) Database*

A major problem is the lack of a properly maintained database on supervision and support services for basic education at the national level that is also linked to databases at other levels. The study shows that basic bio-data on supervisory personnel, their place of work, the number of schools assigned to the officers and the number of visits made, follow-up activities, plans and budgets and in-service and pre-service training, are not collected and processed systematically or updated. Partial data available on the above aspects are insufficient especially at national level for policy-making and planning. Recruitment, training, monitoring and evaluation, as well as financing and budgeting procedures, are adversely affected by the lack of necessary data.

**(b) Problems related to the actual operation of supervision**

*(i) Inadequate coverage of schools*

The coverage of schools by the provincial, zonal and divisional levels is insufficient. Some schools have not been supervised once during the year. In our sample, 28 per cent of primary teachers were not supervised by any type of external supervisor during a period of one year. This could be attributed to the excessive number of schools and teachers to be visited, but could also be due to the inadequate planning and lack of division of labour among the officers. Each officer was trying to supervise all the schools that came under the division or the zone. Officers who had to supervise a smaller number of schools managed to visit schools more frequently. Therefore it would be possible to improve the coverage by assigning a manageable number of schools and teachers to each supervisor. The coverage of schools also depends on easy access to them, the commitment of the

officers and financial factors. The absence of a planned strategy to visit every school at least once leads to the inadequate supervision of schools located in remote, deprived and difficult-to-reach areas.

Although officers in the SLEAS are not specifically assigned to supervise primary-level education, some are concentrating on the supervision of primary grades. This is a commendable feature.

While Master Teachers are expected to visit schools more frequently, the study revealed that some were not even able to make one annual visit to more than 25 per cent of their schools. In addition, a considerable proportion of MTs could not visit many schools more than once for reasons such as the large number of schools to be covered, poor transport facilities and insufficient time and financial incentives.

*(ii) Shortcomings in the supervision approach*

Supervision by officers in the SLEAS mainly focuses on general administration, curriculum implementation and classroom observation. It is more disciplinary than developmental in nature. Limited support is given to the teachers on remedial teaching and overcoming the difficulties they face.

The techniques used by the supervisors to collect data on the actual teaching-learning process can sometimes be inadequate. The need to use a variety of techniques to gather data about the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching-learning process was highlighted in the responses of principals and teachers.

The credibility of supervision is also affected by the unplanned and hurried nature of interventions by the officers and Master Teachers. Principals and teachers are of the view that time spent by the supervisors in schools is insufficient to make a proper diagnosis of the schools. Unethical behaviour of some supervisors also



contributes to developing negative attitudes towards supervision among teachers and principals, and insensitivity to the feelings of the teachers can result in opposition towards supervision.

*(iii) Lack of a systematic follow-up procedure*

Inadequate or lack of follow-up makes supervision less effective. Principals and teachers tend to develop negative attitudes towards supervision if the information gathered about the school's problems is not used by the supervisors to provide at least some relief. Several changes need to be made to improve on the follow-up.

Firstly, at least two planned visits need to be made to each school: one for diagnosis of the situation and the other for corrective measures for improvement. Secondly, most of the time plans for supervision of schools at the provincial, zonal and divisional levels contain only the name of the school and the scheduled date of visit. These should also contain the schedules for follow-up visits and the names of the officers responsible. Thirdly, carefully made log entries after supervision can be useful tools for the officers who visit subsequently. It was evident that at times the entries made in the logbooks are not of that nature.

### **3. Present trends**

#### **(a) Improving teacher professionalism and accountability**

Over the past few years planned efforts have been made to regularize recruitment, promotion, training and appraisal systems of teachers as well as Master Teachers. The introduction of the Sri Lanka Teachers' service in April 1995, with stricter recruitment and promotion rules, is an indication of the change towards professionalism. Years of experience and participation in in-service training and retraining programmes are

the major criteria used to determine the promotion of teachers. A professional appraisal system with competitive examinations is proposed to facilitate the process of teachers' promotion. The proposed system consists of the elements listed below.

- During the period of appraisal the teachers should be evaluated at least three times. Classroom teaching is to be evaluated by one of the following: a university lecturer from a Faculty of Education; a lecturer of a College of Education or a Training College, or a supervisory officer who belongs to the staff of MOE.
- The principal has to keep records about the work activities of each teacher. The records are produced in two copies: one is kept in a common file in the school office for perusal by other teachers and relevant officers, the other is retained by the teacher.
- The officers who supervise the schools should make a summary of these records at least once a year. Two copies are to be made: one is kept in the school, the other is filed in the relevant education office.

The proposed appraisal system confers considerable responsibility on the school principal. The internal supervision system has to be strengthened to gather data to be recorded in appraisal forms, and a Teacher Record Book was suggested for this purpose. The establishment of the Teacher Service also increased the need to improve the pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes. Education divisions have to implement at least 50 hours of in-service training for each subject. A National Authority on Teacher Education should be established for overall policy development, co-ordination and monitoring and accreditation of the programmes of the integrated National Teacher Education System.

## **(b) The shift in emphasis from external to internal supervision**

This shift seems to stimulate the creativity of principals to devise innovative practices suitable for the schools. Two such innovative practices are presented below.

### *(i) In-school supervision by other teachers and the principal*

In a school visited by the research team, the principal observed that some teachers need professional support to improve their teaching. The primary-school teachers were asked to prepare model lessons and teach a class of pupils with the principal and the other teachers observing. After the observation, a friendly discussion was held and possible improvements were suggested where necessary. The model lessons were conducted on a weekly basis and all the teachers in the primary section of the school participated. The process was repeated during a six-month period and the Master Teacher responsible for the area was invited to the weekly model lessons and advice was sought where necessary. The system has helped the less competent teachers and has also helped the teachers to develop positive attitudes towards supervision and reduce the anxiety they experienced during external supervision. Teacher relationships have also improved. This practice of collaboration between Master Teachers and the internal staff of the school can be regarded as a model for improving internal supervision.

### *(ii) Parental support for internal supervision and classroom management*

Parents are encouraged to speak to the principal regarding the teaching-learning process. The parents who are available during the

daytime are invited to the school to help teachers in classroom activities such as cleaning, preparation of teaching aids and chaperoning children on educational excursions. The principal and the deputy principal have discussions with parents to identify strengths and weakness in the teaching and learning process, and they relay the outcome of the discussions to the teachers.

**(c) Supervision is empowerment of teachers and principals**

Since 1993 an innovative project entitled 'Improving the Institutional Development Capacity of Disadvantaged Schools' has been implemented by the Department of Education Management Development (DEMD) of the NIE. The basic strategy of the project is to strengthen the organizational development of disadvantaged schools through the empowerment of teachers and principals, in order to identify and solve the problems of the school.<sup>8</sup>

Facilitators from the DEMD and the provinces visit schools on non-working days to conduct in-house sessions. Ten such sessions are held over a two-and-a-half-year period. The facilitators develop a good rapport with the staff during these sessions, problems are identified and the staff prepares action plans to solve the problems. These plans are implemented at the school level and at the classroom level. The progress of the specific projects prepared by individual teachers and groups is reviewed in the subsequent in-house sessions. The process has helped the teachers to become reflective practitioners. The facilitators also identify the specific needs of schools regarding the improvement of teaching-learning and the provision of necessary guidance. Specialists in the fields of curriculum development and teacher training are also invited to in-house sessions.

---

<sup>8</sup> The IIEP has published a study on this project: Perera, W. 1997. Changing schools from within. Paris: UNESCO/International Institute for Educational Planning.

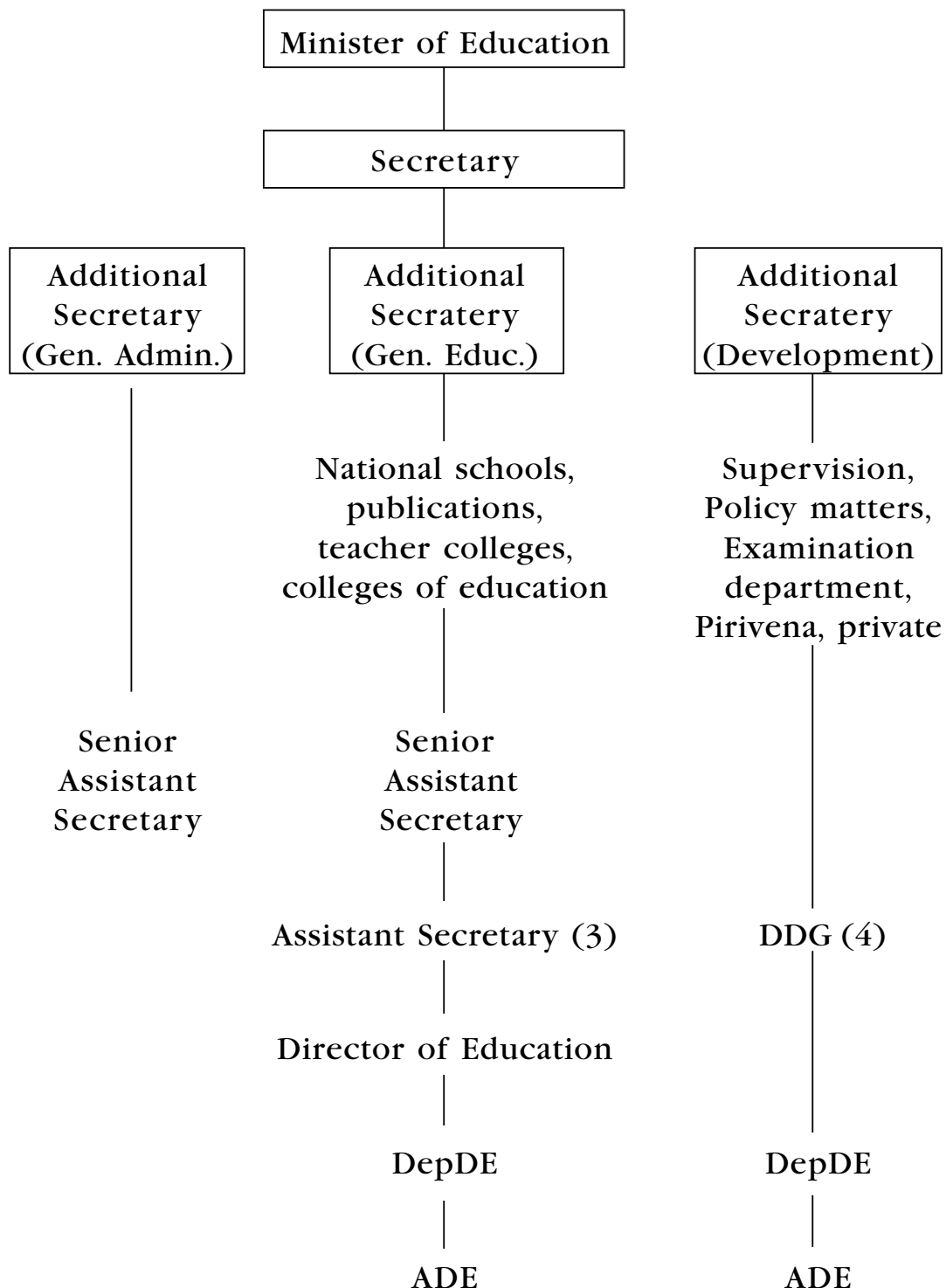
The project provides teachers with an 'activity book' that identifies activities to be discussed and implemented by individual teachers and groups. Together with the in-house sessions, the activity books help teachers to improve interpersonal skills and to release their creativity.

Studies conducted by the facilitators show that the strategies and processes used in the project have improved the overall learning situation in the school. The experience is useful to the external supervisors and the possibility of implementing similar strategies at the divisional level is explored by the DEMD. The outcome of the project clearly indicates that school quality could be improved through the empowerment of teachers and principals.

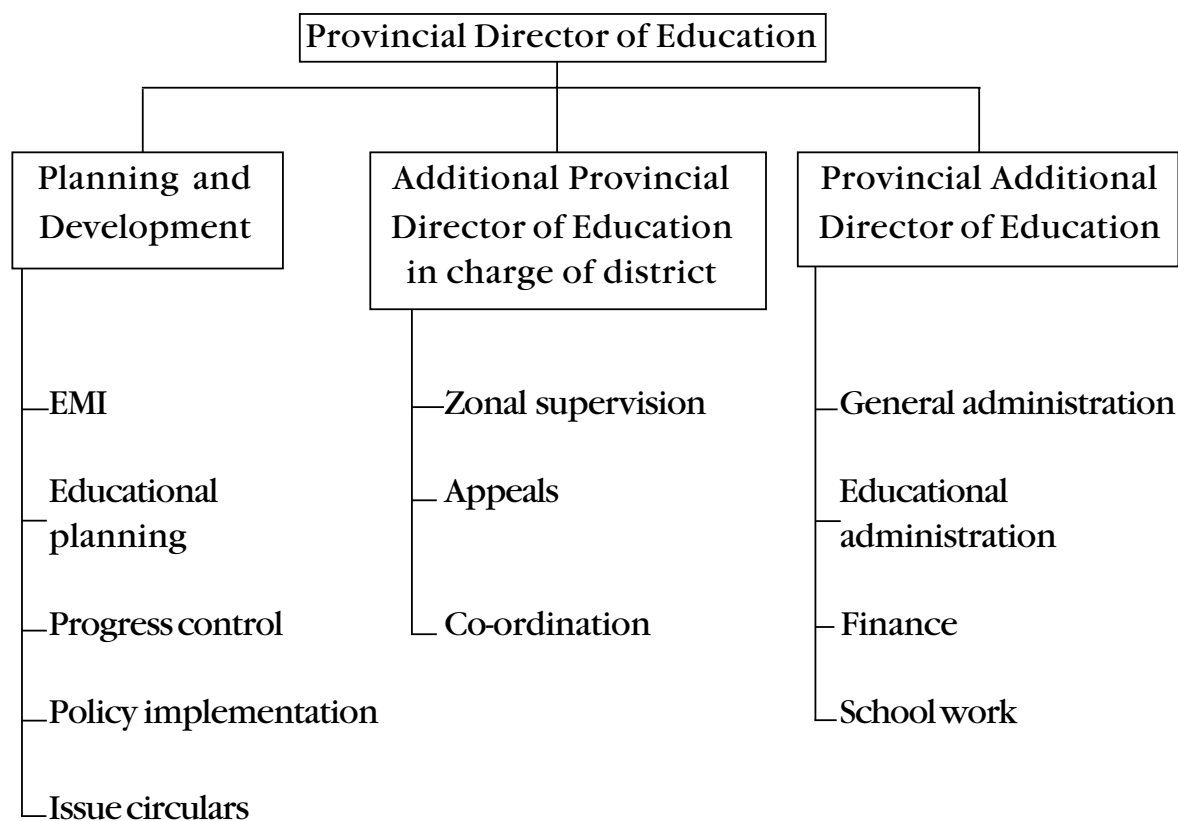
---

## APPENDIX I. ORGANOGRAMS

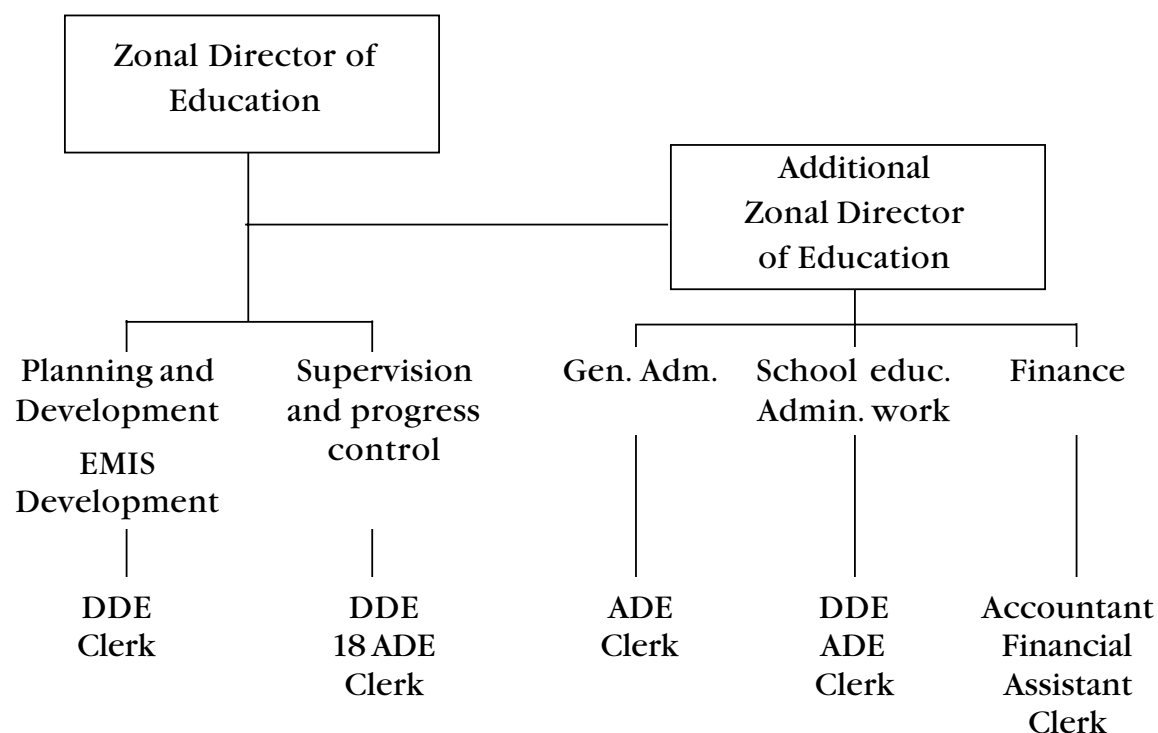
**Organogram 1. Structure of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education**



## Organogram 2. Structure of the Provincial Department of Education

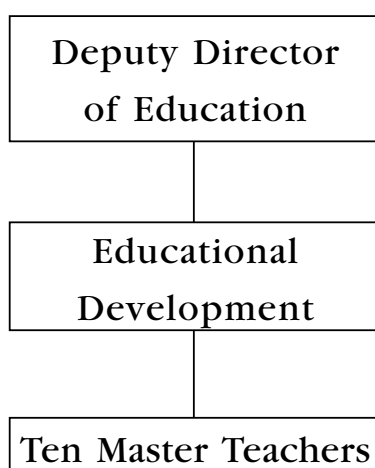


### Organogram 3. Structure of the Zonal Education Office



DDE= District Director Education  
ADE= Assistant Director of Education

### Organogram 4. Structure of the Divisional Education Office





---

## **APPENDIX II. JOB DESCRIPTION OF THREE SUPERVISORY OFFICERS AT ZONAL LEVEL<sup>9</sup>**

### *Zonal Director*

1. Supervision and progress control of activities of education institutes within the zone.
2. Direction and supervision of special projects supported through foreign aid.
3. Report with recommendations to the Provincial Director of Education on implementation of activities in schools within the zone.

### *Additional Zonal Director*

1. Supervising of inventories maintained on all educational physical resources in schools. Assisting the Assistant Directors of Education on this aspect of supervision.
2. Examining disciplinary problems in schools.
3. Taking steps on the advice of the Zonal Director to acquire land for schools.

### *Deputy Director of Education in the Zone*

1. Supervision of schools, provision of feedback and remedial measures.
2. Organizing and guiding the work of the specialist education officers and the Master Teachers.
3. Allocating money for in-service training of teachers and for teaching aids.
4. Co-ordinating teacher in-service training activities with the National Ministry of Education, National Institute of Education, and the Provincial Department of Education.

---

<sup>9</sup>This only includes tasks related to supervision of schools and of other education institutes.

5. Recommending, and forwarding for approval, the monthly plan of action of specialist education officers.
6. Supervising work of Master Teachers.
7. Forwarding for approval the monthly plan of action of Master Teachers.
8. Co-ordinating the work of the Master Teachers with those of specialist education officers.
9. Forwarding proposals for quality improvement of schools and the classroom teaching-learning process.
10. Planning the school supervision programme, implementing the programme, organizing the review activities.
11. Providing assistance towards development of education in private schools.
12. Identifying training needs of officers, principals, teachers and students.

---

## APPENDIX III. TEAM SUPERVISION REPORT PREPARED BY THE KANDY ZONAL EDUCATION OFFICE

Name of Master Teacher: ..... School: .....

Subject: .....

Date: .....

Serial number	Introduction	Observations	Suggestions	Responsibility

.....  
Signature of the supervisor

---

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Bandara, W.M.S. 1992. A survey on the success of Master Teachers in the Homagama Education Region. Prepared as a PGDEM Thesis in the Department of Education Management Development. Maharagama: National Institute of Education.

Central Bank of Sri Lanka. 1995. Central Bank of Sri Lanka Annual Report 1995. Colombo: Statistics Department, Central Bank of Sri Lanka.

Ministry of Education. 1981. Educational Proposals for Reform (White Paper). Sri Lanka: Ministry of Education.

Ministry of Education. 1984. Report on management reforms in the Ministry of Education. Sri Lanka: Ministry of Education.

Perera, W. 1997. Changing schools from within. A management intervention for improving school functioning in Sri Lanka. Paris: UNESCO/International Institute for Educational Planning.

Piyadasa, K.O.; Liyanage, E.S. 1984. Supervision of schools in management of education development in Sri Lanka. Colombo: Ministry of Education.

Ranaweera, A.M. 1992. 'Sri Lanka'. In: Postlethwaite, T.N. (Ed), International Encyclopaedia of National Systems of Education. London: Pergamon. pp. 912-919.

UNESCO. 1998. World Education Report 1998. Paris: UNESCO.

## IIEP publications and documents

More than 1,120 titles on all aspects of educational planning have been published by the International Institute for Educational Planning. A comprehensive catalogue, giving details of their availability, includes research reports, case studies, seminar documents, training materials, occasional papers and reference books in the following subject categories:

*Economics of education, costs and financing.*

*Manpower and employment.*

*Demographic studies.*

*The location of schools (school map) and sub-national planning.*

*Administration and management.*

*Curriculum development and evaluation.*

*Educational technology.*

*Primary, secondary and higher education.*

*Vocational and technical education.*

*Non-formal, out-of-school, adult and rural education.*

*Disadvantaged groups.*

Copies of the catalogue may be obtained from the IIEP Publications Unit on request.



## The International Institute for Educational Planning

The International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) is an international centre for advanced training and research in the field of educational planning. It was established by UNESCO in 1963 and is financed by UNESCO and by voluntary contributions from Member States. In recent years the following Member States have provided voluntary contributions to the Institute: Denmark, Germany, Iceland, India, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and Venezuela.

The Institute's aim is to contribute to the development of education throughout the world, by expanding both knowledge and the supply of competent professionals in the field of educational planning. In this endeavour the Institute co-operates with interested training and research organizations in Member States. The Governing Board of the IIEP, which approves the Institute's programme and budget, consists of a maximum of eight elected members and four members designated by the United Nations Organization and certain of its specialized agencies and institutes.

### *Chairman:*

*Lennart Wohlgemuth* (Sweden)

Director, The Nordic Africa Institute, Uppsala, Sweden.

### Designated Members:

*David de Ferranti*

Director, Human Development Department (HDD), The World Bank.  
Washington, USA.

*Carlos Fortin*

Deputy to the Secretary-General, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Geneva, Switzerland.

*Miriam J. Hirschfeld*

Chief Scientist for Nursing, Division of Analysis, Research and Assessment, World Health Organization (WHO), Geneva, Switzerland.

*Jeggan Senghor*

Director, African Institute for Economic Development (IDEP), Senegal.

### Elected Members:

*Dato'Asiah bt. Abu Samah* (Malaysia)

Corporate Advisor, Lang Education, Land and General Berhad, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

*Klaus Hüfner* (Germany)

Professor, Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin, Germany.

*Faïza Kefi* (Tunisia)

President, National Union of Tunisian Women, Tunis, Tunisia.

*Tamas Kozma* (Hungary)

Director-General, Hungarian Institute for Educational Research, Budapest, Hungary.

*Teboho Moja* (South Africa)

Special Adviser to the Minister of Education, Pretoria, South Africa.

*Yolanda M. Rojas* (Costa Rica)

Professor, University of Costa Rica, San José, Costa Rica.

*Michel Vernières* (France)

Professor, University of Paris I, Panthéon-Sorbonne, Paris, France.

### *Inquiries about the Institute should be addressed to:*

The Office of the Director, International Institute for Educational Planning,  
7-9 rue Eugène-Delacroix, 75116 Paris, France.