

# **THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE**

## **PROMOTING EQUITABLE ACCESS TO EDUCATION IN SRI LANKA OVER SIXTY YEARS**

**BY**

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# **THE BEGINNING OF THE JOURNEY THE INITIAL CONTEXT**

- **COMPARATIVELY HIGH PRIMARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT (60%)**
- **LOW ENROLMENT IN SECONDARY AND TERTIARY EDUCATION (COMBINED PRIMARY AND SECONDARY ENROLMENT 15%)**
- **ENLIGHTENED POLICY MAKERS COMMITTED TO INVESTMENT IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**
- **RELATIVELY WEALTHY DEVELOPING COUNTRY AT THE TIME (CIRCA 1950)**

## **PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES OVER TIME**

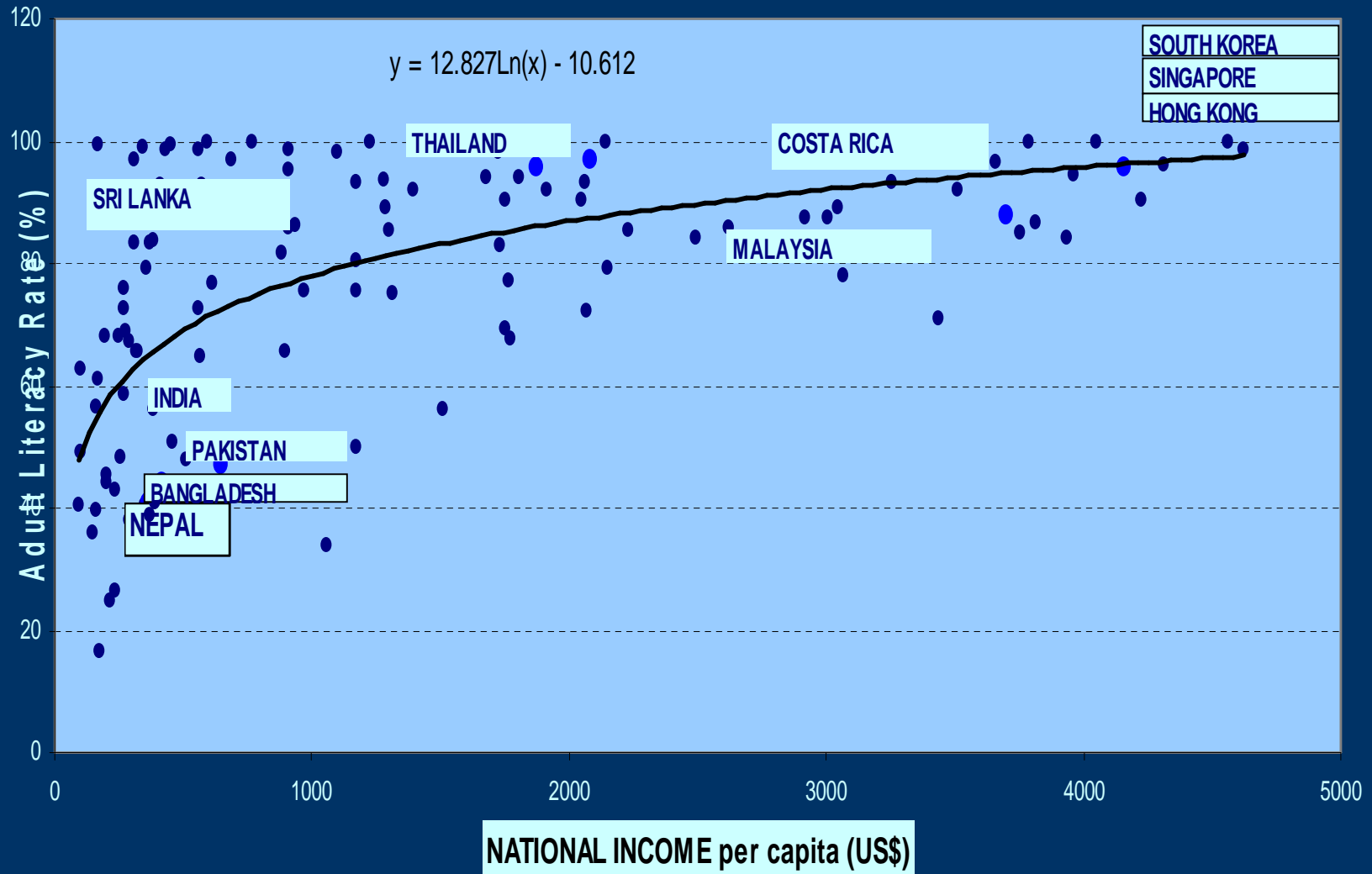
- **UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**
- **DEMAND SIDE POLICIES:  
FREE PUBLIC SCHOOLING, FREE TRANSPORT, SCHOOL MEALS, FREE UNIFORMS, FREE TEXTBOOKS**
- **SUPPLY SIDE POLICIES:  
PRIMARY SCHOOL IN EVERY VILLAGE, SECONDARY SCHOOLS WITHIN COMMUTING DISTANCE OF NEALY ALL HOUSEHOLDS**
- **EDUCATION CONCENTRATED IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR  
PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION RESTRICTED THROUGH LEGISLATION (EARLY 1960S)**

## THE EXPANSION OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OVER TIME

	1950	1960	1971	1981	1991	2006
<b>GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS</b>	<b>3,188</b>	<b>4,394</b>	<b>8,585</b>	<b>9,521</b>	<b>9,998</b>	<b>9,714</b>
<b>STUDENTS (MILLIONS)</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>3.8</b>
<b>TEACHERS (THOUSANDS)</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>205</b>
<b>PUBLIC INVESTMENT (PERCENTAGE OF GDP)</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>2.6</b>
<b>ADULT LITERACY RATE</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>93</b>

**NOTE: PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES ALSO EXPANDED OVER THE PERIOD, FROM ONE UNIVERSITY WITH LESS THAN 1,000 STUDENTS IN THE EARLY 1950'S TO SEVENTEEN UNIVERSITIES WITH OVER 75,000 STUDENTS BY 2006**

FIGURE 1 . Adult Literacy Rates in Relation to National Income per Capita, 2001



# THE JOURNEY SIXTY YEARS LATER

HIGH PRIMARY, RISING SECONDARY AND MODERATE  
BUT INCREASING TERTIARY ENROLMENT

ENROLMENT	1990/91	1995/96	2002
	%	%	%
PRIMARY (FEMALE)	95	96	96
PRIMARY (MALE)	95	96	96
SECONDARY (FEMALE)	73	77	77
SECONDARY (MALE)	68	75	77
TERTIARY (FEMALE)	4	6	9
TERTIARY (MALE)	3	6	7

## SURVIVAL RATES THROUGH COMPUSLORY BASIC EDUCATION (GRADES 1-9) BY PROVINCE 2007

PROVINCE	BOYS (%)	GIRLS (%)
WESTERN	90	93
CENTRAL	86	91
SOUTHERN	90	94
NORTH-WESTERN	84	90
NORTHERN	74	83
EASTERN	70	76
NORTH CENTRAL	88	94
UVA	83	91
SABARAGAMUWA	85	91
<b>SRI LANKA</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>90</b>

# THE IMPROVING QUALITY OF EDUCATION

## COGNITIVE ACHIEVEMENT SCORES OF PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS (FIRST LANGUAGE – SINHALA OR TAMIL)

PROVINCE	STUDENTS SCORING 50 PERCENT AND ABOVE	
	2003 (%)	2007 (%)
WESTERN	82	88
CENTRAL	67	79
SOUTHERN	72	83
NORTH-WESTERN	75	86
NORTHERN	61	79
EASTERN	58	73
NORTH CENTRAL	71	83
UVA	64	77
SABARAGAMUWA	71	81
<b>SRI LANKA</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>81</b>

# THE IMPROVING QUALITY OF EDUCATION

## COGNITIVE ACHIEVEMENT SCORES OF PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS (MATHEMATICS)

PROVINCE	STUDENTS SCORING 50 PERCENT AND ABOVE	
	2003 (%)	2007 (%)
WESTERN	81	89
CENTRAL	64	79
SOUTHERN	71	85
NORTH-WESTERN	74	86
NORTHERN	53	77
EASTERN	52	75
NORTH CENTRAL	72	85
UVA	63	78
SABARAGAMUWA	69	83
<b>SRI LANKA</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>82</b>

## THE IMPROVING QUALITY OF EDUCATION INCREASES IN GCE O/L PASS RATE

PROVINCE	STUDENTS PASSING	
	2002 (%)	2007 (%)
WESTERN	53	57
CENTRAL	36	44
SOUTHERN	42	50
NORTH-WESTERN	33	50
NORTHERN	36	45
EASTERN	43	52
NORTH CENTRAL	34	41
UVA	34	40
SABARAGAMUWA	38	47
<b>SRI LANKA</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>49</b>

# ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL BENEFITS

- HIGH ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RATES OF RETURN
- EARNINGS RISE PROGRESSIVELY AS EDUCATION LEVELS INCREASE
- POVERTY LEVELS DECREASE AS EDUCATION OF THE PRINCIPAL INCOME EARNER OR HOUSEHOLD HEAD RISES
- EDUCATION PROMOTES INTER-GENERATIONAL SOCIAL MOBILITY
- FEMALE LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION IMPROVES WITH EDUCATION
- FAMILY HEALTH IS POSITIVELY ASSOCIATED WITH THE EDUCATION LEVELS OF MOTHERS

# **FUTURE CHALLENGES AND THE CURRENT EDUCATION PROGRAM**

- **ACHIEVING UNIVERSAL COMPLETION OF BASIC EDUCATION (GRADES 1-9)**
- **IMPROVING EDUCATION QUALITY**
- **EXPANDING TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT IN TEACHING AND LEARNING**
- **INCREASING RESOURCES FOR RURAL AND ESTABLISHED SCHOOLS**
- **STRENGTHENING EMPOWERMENT OF DECENTRALIZED TIERS OF EDUCATION MANAGEMENT, AND SCHOOLS**

# **THE EDUCATION SECTOR DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK AND PROGRAM (ESDFP)**

**THEME ONE. INCREASE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION. (KEY OUTCOME: INCREASED SURVIVAL RATES THROUGH GRADES 1-9).**

**THEME TWO. IMPROVE EDUCATION QUALITY. (KEY OUTCOMES: INCREASED COGNITIVE ACHIEVEMENT SCORES IN FIRST LANGUAGE, MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE).**

**THEME THREE. ENHANCE EFFICIENCY AND EQUITY OF RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND DISTRIBUTION. (KEY OUTCOMES: INCREASE THE ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES FOR HIGHER-ORDER SPACES, ASSETS, AND PROCESS, AND PRIORITISE RESOURCES FOR RURAL AND ESTATE SCHOOLS).**

**THEME FOUR. STRENGTHEN SERVICE DELIVERY. (KEY OUTCOME: EXPANSION OF SCHOOL BASED MANAGEMENT).**

# INCREASING EQUITABLE ACCESS

## I

- STRATEGIC EXPANSION OF THE SCHOOL NETWORK
- SPECIAL EDUCATION
- NON-FORMAL EDUCATION
- SCHOOL HEALTH AND NUTRITION

# IMPROVING EDUCATION QUALITY

- CURRICULUM UPGRADING
- TEACHER DEVELOPMENT
- TEXTBOOKS AND EDUCATION PUBLICATIONS
- MODERNIZATION OF EXAMINATIONS
- PROMOTION OF SOCIAL COHESION
- TARGETED PROGRAMS FOR FIRST LANGUAGE, ENGLISH, ICT, SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS

# ENHANCING EFFICIENCY AND EQUITY

- A MEDIUM-TERM EXPENDITURE FRAMEWORK
- A ROLLING EDUCATION SECTOR PLAN
- A PUBLIC EXPENDITURE TRACKING SYSTEM

# STRENGTHENING GOVERNANCE AND SERVICE DELIVERY

- SCHOOL BASED MANAGEMENT (PROGRAM FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT)
- ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING (PARTICULARLY OF DECENTRALIZED LEVELS OF ADMINISTRATION)
- HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (LINKED TO ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING)

# FUTURE CHALLENGES

- LONG-TERM NATURE OF THE ESDFP GOALS
- A POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR TERTIARY EDUCATION
- THE TRAINING SECTOR
- ADULT EDUCATION