

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

EDUCATION STRATEGIC

Plan

2003 - 2007

Georgetown

September 2002

ACRONYMS

ACEO	Assistant Chief Education Officer
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
BEAMS	Basic Education & Management Support (Project)
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CHS	Community High School
CPCE	Cyril Potter College of Education
CPO	Chief Planning Officer
CSEC	Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate
DFID	Department for International Development
ECE	Early Childhood Education
EN	Escuela Nueva
GBET	Guyana Basic Education Teacher Training Programme
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEAP	Guyana Education Access Project
GEMP	Guyana Economic Management Programme
GPRS	Guyana Poverty Reduction Strategy
GPRSP	Guyana Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
GUIDE	Guyana Inservice Distance Education Programme
HFLE	Health & Family Life Education
HRD	Human Resource Development
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IRI	Interactive Radio Instruction
LRC	Learning Resource Centre
MIS	Management Information Systems
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoF	Ministry of Finance
NACE	National Advisory Committee on Education
NCERD	National Centre for Educational Resources
NDS	National Development Strategy
OAS	Organisation of American States
PEIP	Primary School Improvement Project
PIC	Practical Instruction Centre
PSM	Public Service Ministry
PTA	Parent Teachers Association
PUTT	Planning Unit Task Team
REdO	Regional Education Officer
SIAC	School Improvement Action Committees
SIMAP	Social Impact Amelioration Programme
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SME	School Mapping Exercise
SPC	Strategic Planning Committee
SSRP	Secondary School Reform Programme
STEP	Skills Training & Employment Programme
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats
TSC	Teaching Service Commission
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UG	University of Guyana
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific & Cultural Organisation
USE	Universal Secondary Education

TABLE OF CONTENTS

VISION, MISSION & MANDATES OF MoE	1
INTRODUCTION	2
Part I: BACKGROUND TO THE PLAN	4
A. Overview of the Education Sector	4
B. Analysis of the Sector	7
C. Existing Initiatives	12
Part II: PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY	16
A. Steps in the Development of the Plan	16
B. Strategic Issues as Grouped	18
C. Prioritising the Priorities	21
Part III: THE PLAN ITSELF	29
A. Changing Emphases of Actions	29
B. The Plan as a Unitary Whole	30
C. The Plan as Planning System	43
Part IV: FEASIBILITY OF THE PLAN	46
A. The Financial Cost	46
B. Funding of the Plan	49
CONCLUSION	51
ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OF THE PLAN	52
APPENDICES	53
1: Strategies Proposed in Consultations	53
2: Major MoE Projects	61

LIST OF TABLES, BOXES AND FIGURES

Table 1:	Phases in the development of the system	4
Table 2:	Percentage coverage at each level	5
Box 1:	Goals established at Dakar	8
Box 2:	Other Policy Documents guiding the Plan	12
Table 3:	Phases of the consultation meetings	17
Table 4:	Agenda of the consultations	18
Table 5:	Similarities and convergences – GPRS and MOE strategic issues	21
Figure 1:	The hierarchy of priorities	23
Figure 2:	Prerequisites for implementation of actions and programmes	24
Figure 3:	Academic or management means to achieve desired outcomes	25
Figure 4:	The hierarchy of strategic issues which are objectives in themselves	26
Figure 5:	Prerequisites, means and ends	27
Table 6:	Annual emphases of the plan	29
	The Plan Matrix	29
Figure 6:	How the planning system will work	46
Table 7:	Education as a percentage of the national budget	47
Table 8:	Annual percentage changes in allocations to education	48
Table 9:	Projected resources, expenditure and shortfalls	51

THE VISION, MISSION STATEMENT AND MANDATES OF THE MoE

VISION

The development of a citizenry able to modernise Guyana and live in mutual respect.

MISSION STATEMENT

To eliminate illiteracy
To modernise education
To strengthen tolerance

MANDATES

The Ministry of Education is dedicated to ensuring that all citizens of Guyana, regardless of age, race or creed, physical or mental disability, or socio-economic status are given the best possible opportunity to achieve their full potential through equal access to quality education as defined by the standards and norms outlined by the Ministry. The commitment to quality and equity in education, with no barriers in access to anyone, is clear in this declaration.

The Ministry defines education as more than the instrumental activity of supporting greater national development or reducing poverty. It has value on its own. It is the main way to help each human being to achieve his/her highest potential. It should be able to give the nation's citizens the necessary knowledge, skills, and values to lead happy and productive lives. On the basis of the education received, they should love their country and respect the diversity of its ethnic, religious and political traditions. They should adhere to the ideals and practice of democracy, justice, peace, diversity and accountability

In addition, although children are, and should be, the main target of educational efforts, the adult population and mainly the young adults, should be given opportunities to learn.

Finally, it is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education to define the quality of education to which each person in the system should have access at each time and place.

The mission outlined above should be reviewed during the implementation period of the strategic plan for 2003-2007. Nevertheless, it is very relevant, and all the concepts and actions included in the plan must be considered in the light of this mission and contribute to its achievement.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN 2003-2007

INTRODUCTION

Education has been signalled as a national priority. *The National Development Strategy* (NDS) document and the *Guyana Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper* (GPRSP) contain clear statements to this effect. There is considerable agreement in the society that the road to national development can be achieved only through learning and hard work. There is a profound level of consciousness in the leadership of the country that it is necessary to improve the human capital of Guyana by giving all citizens the opportunity to grow to their fullest potential, both as an end in itself and in order to pave the way to greater productivity and economic development.

During the past decade the Government has made substantial efforts to improve the education system. The proportion of the national budget allocated to education was increased by over ten percent; international loans from different agencies and bilateral cooperation from some countries have supported initiatives in the education sector; and some significant changes have been introduced. In 1995, the Ministry released a document entitled *An Education Policy and Five-Year Development Plan for Guyana*, outlining several options to improve the schools and the learning taking place in the country.

In March 2000 a consultant's evaluation of the results of this plan showed that some significant improvements had been achieved. The report detailed successes and failures, but overall showed a government and an education system committed to improving and to ensuring a better future for the younger generations.

As a continuation of these efforts, a Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) was formed under the leadership of the Chief Planning Officer (CPO) of the Ministry of Education (MoE) to develop a strategic plan covering the period from 2003 to 2007. Twelve officers from various levels and departments in the Ministry were charged with developing the new plan and outlining the direction that the Ministry should follow during this five-year period. The work of this team was also supported by an international consultant.

The consultation process which was part of the planning process was extensive. Trips were completed to each of the regions, and experts from different sectors and members of civil society were invited to participate in various meetings and task teams. The process in itself must be considered a great achievement.

The outcome of all this work was not only a written plan, but the development of a strategic planning system that could respond to the implementation of the plan by generating the evaluations, the new thinking, and the adaptations required by its results.

To facilitate a full understanding of the plan and the process that led to it, this document has been structured into four parts. The first provides an overview and analysis of the education sector; the second outlines the methodology used in developing the plan and the strategic issues and priorities identified during the consultations which informed it; the third details the plan itself; and the fourth discusses its feasibility.

PART I: BACKGROUND TO THE PLAN

A. OVERVIEW OF THE EDUCATION SECTOR¹

Since 1966, there have been four discernible phases in the evolution of the education system:²

Table 1: Phases in the development of the education system

1966 - 1976	Development of an indigenous curriculum. Expansion of educational opportunities.
1976 - 1990	Free education. Extension of access to educational opportunity.
1990 - 1995	Equality of access. Increase in capacity to meet manpower requirements for future economic development.
1995 - 2000	Free quality education from nursery to age 16 (Basic Education).

Within these phases, following almost universal trends in the region, Guyana's educational effort has had three major emphases.

1. Free Access to Formal Education for All

Compulsory education was introduced in 1876 by the colonial government, and in 1976,³ a century later; the commitment to free education was ratified by the government of independent Guyana. The national policy has long been to offer children, young people and other interested persons the opportunity to participate in the educational process free of cost.

Education is now compulsory for children aged five years and nine months to 15 years. However, children are expected to remain in secondary school and/or community high school until they are at least 16 years old, although there are only three years of compulsory secondary education.

In most of the education system, access in itself is not a great problem. Statistics show a high level of coverage in the nursery and primary schools, with a significant increase in secondary institutions. This is a signal

¹ All education figures are taken from the relevant Digests of Educational Statistics.

² See Macrae-Mason Development. *Review of the Ministry of Education's 5-Year Education Development Plan 1995-2000*. Draft report. March 2001. Mimeo. P. 9.

³ At that time, most countries concentrated their effort on basic education, which was then equivalent to the primary level. Under the influence of a socialist ideology, Guyana went beyond that, aspiring for free education for all at all levels.

achievement for a poor country whose population, though small, is distributed over a large land mass. There is room for improvement, but the data on general access are encouraging, although qualifications have to be made to the raw figures.⁴

Table 2: Percentage coverage at each level⁵

Level	Pct. coverage in each level		
	1994-95	1996-97	1999-00
Nursery	89	94	101
Primary	98	104	101
Secondary	39	67 ⁶	75

At the post-secondary level, there has been an expansion in continuing education. In particular, in the Georgetown area, the opportunities for school dropouts and slow learners to access technical and other types of programmes are increasing.

2. Equity in Education

The goal of equity in education is to provide all citizens of Guyana, and especially those of school age, with an educational experience of comparable quality. This is not an easy task, and the results of recent efforts are not as positive as they have been in the area of coverage. In many developing and even developed countries, the most sophisticated services are found in urban centres, as compared to rural areas where the population is almost always at a disadvantage. Guyana is no exception. Following historical trends in the country, most of the population, infrastructure, services and resources have been concentrated in the coastal area, particularly in Georgetown. Further, the geography of the country makes it difficult to travel to and communicate with the relatively isolated communities of the interior. The educational and other services provided to hinterland and deep riverain regions are clearly below national standards.

The education of children with special needs also demands urgent attention. Although there have been policy proposals, there is no clear direction, and efforts to provide services are far from being adequate.

⁴ The qualifications mainly concern the quality of the education offered and the results of the service provided by the schools at the different levels. Problems like attendance and dropout ratios also cast doubt on the meaning of these numbers.

⁵ The figures are gross enrollment ratios based on population estimates from the Statistical Bureau.

⁶ This percentage is for the academic year 1997-98. The percentage for 1996-97 was not available.

3. Quality of Education

The 1995 education plan presents the mission of the Ministry as providing “equal access to all Guyanese children and young people to quality education”,⁷ but officials from the Ministry and members of civil society are deeply worried about the situation in this area. As the civil society representatives put it in the NDS:

[A] Number of economic and social factors... have led to a most unsatisfactory and unacceptable state of affairs: learning rates in the schools are extremely low; a large proportion of the teaching force is unqualified and untrained; absenteeism on the part of both teachers and students is rife; and textbooks and other instructional materials are often unavailable.

Guyana's success in attaining universal access to primary schools... has been eroded and has been replaced by rising repetition and drop out rates. Moreover [there are] alarmingly high levels of functional illiteracy.⁸

In addition to the results of external examinations (which, although improving, are still low), there are other worrisome evaluations of the quality of education in Guyana. The following is an example:

Primary education is not enough for young adults who have to meet the demands of today's world. The educational offering of the CHS [Community High School] is inadequate. A good secondary education is perhaps the minimum requirement, even though it appears that it is from a tertiary level of education that young adults are most likely to acquire the level of functional literacy... This, however, is probably a function of the erosion of quality in the lower levels of the education system... ”⁹

The reasons for the poor quality of educational services in the country are many. A prolonged period of financial constraints and budget cuts has had many adverse results. A widespread lack of motivation, and perhaps even the growth of a certain culture of acceptance of prevailing conditions, have contributed to the development of many undesirable conditions in classrooms and schools. These are outlined in the next section.

⁷ p. 5

⁸ Civil Society of Guyana. *National Development Strategy*. May 2000, Mimeo, p.197.

⁹ Zellynne Jennings. *Nipped in the Bud*. Guyana Education and Development Services, Inc., 1998, p. 24.

The publication of the 1990 – 1995 and the 1995 – 2000 plans provides evidence of the Ministry's efforts to take a structured approach to improving educational services. These documents created the necessary platform to develop a culture of planning in the Ministry and effective terms of reference for officials in the Ministry to carry out the tasks of implementation and evaluation.

There have been significant areas of success in more recent years, many of which were outlined in the external evaluation performed in 2000.¹⁰ But clearly, much remains to be done.

B. ANALYSIS OF THE SECTOR¹¹

In the 1960's, Guyana's educational system was considered one of the best in the Caribbean. Today, it is considered one of the weakest, although some recovery has been achieved in the last few years: the series of educational development plans produced since 1990 have helped to direct that recovery effort. In each of the areas analysed below, there are both strengths and weaknesses.

1. The National Political Environment and the Availability of Resources

The political environment is favourable to improvements in education. The Government has emphatically declared and demonstrated its willingness to allocate increasing amounts of the national budget to education.¹² The sector has been identified as a national priority and a major component in national development in both the National Development Strategy (NDS) and the Guyana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS). One of the developmental strategies identified in the NDS and the GPRS is an increase in the level of resources allocated to education. Developmental targets such as the abolition of poverty, the increased acceptance of diversity, and gender equality contribute to the high emphasis on education.

With the rise in the level of funds available to the sector, many new schools have been built and improvements have been made in others. In general, the level of infrastructure in the system has been upgraded. Inputs such as books and learning materials reach the schools in greater numbers, although there are still inadequacies in areas such as Music and Art Education.

¹⁰ *Ibidem.*, Annex E, pps. 1-5.

¹¹ This section is based on the results of the SWOT session mentioned on page 16. It is important because it presents the insights of the most senior officers of the Ministry.

¹² The initial increases in expenditure on education (and health) were not financed by the the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative.

But complaints concerning insufficient resources remain. Moreover, growing social concerns over AIDS and other health problems could lead to future reductions in budgetary allocations to education. This is important, since the percentage of the national budget allocated to education, although rising, has remained below the sum necessary to cover all educational needs.

Good economic performance is critical to securing more resources for education. When society cannot provide the new generation with opportunities to work and develop, motivation in schools is more difficult and dropout rates generally increase.

2. The International Environment

The international environment is also favourable to prioritising education. The World Conference on Education for All (EFA) held in Dakar, Senegal in 2000 saw international agencies, e.g., the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), commit themselves to supporting the efforts of developing countries to achieve the goals established by the EFA (see Box 1). These goals are also supported by bilateral aid agencies, especially the G8 countries, which have poverty reduction as a major focus of their donor policy.

Box 1: Goals established at Dakar

- Expand and improve comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.
- Ensure that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances, and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and are able to complete education that is free, compulsory and of good quality.
- Ensure that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes.
- Achieve a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.
- Eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2015, and achieve gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.
- Improve all aspects of the quality of education so that recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

There is also an increasing number of regional activities, such as those organised by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Organisation of American States (OAS), which allow countries to work together and learn from each other. Another example is the Regional Early Childhood Association. International associations which can provide a place for discussion and

elaboration of important educational topics are also a source of significant contributions.

Because of the funding and cooperation available to Guyana, national and international experts have been able to contribute to the formulation of many innovative strategies and concepts that can be of great use in the future. Pilot projects are a valuable source of new ideas and are being used as testing grounds for creative initiatives.

The development of so many channels of international exchange of information and knowledge also provides valuable opportunities to increase the capabilities and options of the educational sector. Today, there is ready access to almost all the ideas and initiatives emerging globally, no matter how far away, through the electronic media.

However, while much of this is encouraging, there are also reasons for concern. The availability of international support, in itself an opportunity, can become a threat. International agencies, with the best of intentions, often have strong views on the policies and types of programmes countries need. Developing countries like Guyana can be pressured to accept these policies. As a result, the involvement of these agencies can, to some extent, change the country's planning process, and place stress on its administrative structures. There is also a danger of the country taking non-sustainable strategic options that can be harmful in the long run.

3. Collaboration on the Work of the Sector

There is an increasingly cooperative inter-sectoral environment, with collaboration now more likely to occur among Ministries such as Education, Health, and Culture, Youth and Sport. Overall, there is a willingness to move to a sector-wide approach, which can foster more and better cooperation among all actors in education.

In spite of this, there is still some dissonance between the MoE and agencies such as the Ministry of Finance (MoF) and the Public Service Ministry (PSM), which have overarching national responsibilities. This can sometimes lead to problems, for example, less efficient allocation of funds, bottlenecks in the award of contracts, and delays in filling important positions within the MoE. In addition, the existing differences in priorities between the Regional Democratic Councils and the Regional Education Departments and even the MoE itself, can lead to problems in planning and budgeting.

As far as collaboration between the MoE and non-government forces is concerned, there are fairly strong indications that the private sector and other parts of civil society are willing to work with the Ministry to develop policies and implement programmes that can generate a more qualified work force.

The level of attendance at the regional consultations and the keen participation of those attending suggested a resurgence of awareness of the importance of learning and personal development. Consciousness of the need to have community and parents' involvement in the schools has risen significantly, and an effort has been made to structure this involvement through the creation of School Improvement Action Committees (SIACs). However, there is still concern about vandalism and/or a lack of support for protection of the schools in some communities.

4. Management Issues

A great deal of work and thought has gone into the analysis and improvement of the management procedures, organisational structure and culture of the MoE; several consultants have been involved in this work. As part of this, a significant effort has been made to analyse jobs and to give staff a clear understanding of their duties. In general, there are very good relationships between supervisors and other staff. But major improvements are still needed in order to make the MoE the efficient and effective agency required to provide the leadership necessary to improve the education system. Following are three areas of concern:

- a). Access to new technology in the management of the education system (as in the schools themselves) is limited. While the Ministry has recognised the necessity of introducing more technology in its daily management and some steps have been made in this direction, much remains to be done.
- b). Another negative element is the tendency to look more at the present than to plan for the future. Crisis management has become too prevalent. There are complaints that work is not evenly distributed and that an overwhelming amount of time is spent in meetings, which have no real output.
- c). Other complaints revolve around the lack of a research culture and the unavailability of current literature in the Ministry. There is also a perception that the Ministry itself does not function as a learning organisation.

5. Personnel Issues

On the positive side, teacher training programmes have been upgraded and innovative delivery has increased access. Initiatives in secondary and primary schools to improve commitment and planning at the school level are evident.¹³

On the negative side, due to the relatively low salaries that still prevail, poor working conditions, competition from other sources and a relatively early age for retirement, there is a shortage of well-qualified and experienced staff at all levels of MoE departments, regional departments and schools. In some cases, positions have remained open because it has not been possible to find adequately qualified candidates.

In particular, the demand for trained teachers and other professionals in the Caribbean region and other countries threatens the availability of well-trained staff to Guyana's education system. The present attrition rate for teachers from Guyana is high and appears to be rising with aggressive recruitment by other countries.¹⁴ The growth of private education could also become a source of competition in the recruitment of qualified teachers: this is another factor that could contribute to the shortage of qualified teachers in public schools.

As regards MoE staff, the Ministry can count on a strong commitment to education on the part of some employees even in difficult circumstances. Well-qualified staff, including both young and experienced, are often self-motivated and show flexibility and adaptability to different situations. However, among some younger staff members, motivation to grow and develop is low because they perceive that better qualifications do not always lead to promotion: since the Ministry does not yet have a structured human resources programme, the result is both the perception and reality of a lack of opportunity for younger staff to develop.

Finally, there is also understaffing in support institutions such as the National Centre for Educational Resource Development (NCERD).

In summary, the Ministry faces many challenges, but it is not impossible to overcome them. Strong political will is required to make the changes required to meet the high expectations of improvement in the education system. Hesitancy or delay will result in widespread disappointment.

¹³ This is the case where SIPs have been introduced.

¹⁴ Reliable data are not available; often, the MoE only knows that a teacher has resigned.

C. EXISTING INITIATIVES AND THEIR RELATION TO THE 2003-2007 PLAN

The efforts made to upgrade education in Guyana through the projects and programmes carried out in recent years have produced a body of experience and lessons learned. Initiatives include the Primary Education Improvement Project (PEIP), the Guyana Basic Education Teacher Training (GBET), the Magnet Schools Project, the Secondary School Reform Project (SSRP), the Guyana Education Access Project (GEAP), the Amazon project, and the Guyana Inservice Distance Education Programme (GUIDE). A summary of some of these projects and programmes is provided at Appendix 2.

Some of the major policies in place are outlined in *An Education Policy and Five-Year Development Plan For Guyana* (1995). Most of the policy goals in this document continue to guide the education system, but additional policies based on lessons learned from the initiatives described above are being introduced and will guide activities during the plan period. Some of these policies have already been outlined in a number of documents (see Box 2).

Box 2: Other policy documents guiding the plan

- The Non-Academic Standards of the Ministry of Education
- A Policy Framework for Distance Education
- The Health and Family Life Education (HFLE) Policy Document

The following policies can be considered major reforms, which have begun to be implemented and which will be carried over into the 2003-2007 plan period.

1. Early Childhood Education

The 1995 policy goals for Early Childhood Education (ECE) remain relevant. While the target of universal ECE has almost been achieved, the emphasis will now be on ensuring access to children from very poor or very isolated communities and children with special education needs.

Work has begun on the recommendation in the 1995 education plan that the first two grades of primary education be conceptualised as an integral part of ECE. Students entering the Cyril Potter College of Education (CPCE) can pursue an option in ECE which, allows them to teach either at the nursery level or in the first two grades of primary school. The curriculum for nursery and early primary will undergo further revision so that the foundation for early literacy is laid at this level.

2. Primary Education

a). Functional Literacy: At the primary level, the major emphasis will be on improving the quality of education, in particular, on ensuring that basic functional literacy is acquired by the end of primary schooling. A new methodology to teach literacy will be introduced into the system, based on the adaptation of successful practices used in Guyana and other countries, and including regular assessment, school-based and national, to ascertain the students' progress.

b). The Use of Interactive Radio Instruction: The highly successful method of interactive radio instruction (IRI) will be used for the teaching of Mathematics, initially in the first three years of primary school. IRI will also be used to support the literacy campaign for persons in and out of school.

c). The Escuela Nueva: The Escuela Nueva (EN) programme, which has been piloted in two regions, will be extended to other hinterland communities. The Ministry will continue to systematically promote the transformation of schools into child-friendly institutions. Inherent in both of these programmes and in the HFLE programme is the promotion of life skills, the active participation of the community in the life of the school, and respect for diversity, all important policy objectives being promoted through several initiatives.

d). Foreign Language Teaching: Spanish, which was piloted in a number of schools during the last five years, will be extended to more schools across all education districts.

e). Student Assessment: An assessment policy document is being developed for all levels of the system, highlighting major changes in student assessment at the primary level in the next five years. There will be national testing at three key stages, grades 2, 4, and 6. Placement in secondary schools will no longer be based on a single examination at the end of primary school.

3. Secondary Education

a). Placement of Students: To ensure that quality education is delivered to all students, the MoE will identify secondary schools in various regions which will provide places for students from among the highest performers leaving primary school at the year of entry. Entry to the remaining secondary schools will depend on the individual student's home address, with students being placed at a secondary school within a distance that allows them to maintain a good record of attendance. By 2005, the Government will provide access to at least five years of secondary schooling for all primary school leavers.

b). Removing Inequalities: Government remains committed to removing or significantly reducing remaining inequalities of educational and financial

provision, and consequent dropout and wastage, in community high schools and secondary departments of primary schools.

c). Common Curriculum: Students will cover a common curriculum for the first three years of secondary school with extra support in Mathematics and Language Arts for weaker students. At the end of form 3, all students will be able to choose from two elective pathways to complete their secondary education on the basis of their performance at the National Third Form Examination.

In the 4th and 5th forms, all students will be offered the core subjects.¹⁵ Students in pathway 1 will also do a foreign language and will then be able to choose a selection of subjects from the Expressive Arts, Humanities, and pre-vocational areas leading to the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC). In pathway 2, students will pursue studies leading to CSEC and other certification in specified skill-based vocational competencies, for progression to further training or employment. Information Technology will also be a common component in both pathways. Entry to both pathways will depend on the student's performance in the various subject areas during forms 1 – 3.

d). The Phasing-in of the Unitary System: The lesson of the SSRP, the GEAP and similar conversion programmes undertaken by regions without external assistance is that the change to a unitary secondary education system is challenging in two ways: in terms of (i) the funds required for physical works, materials acquisition, and the training and retraining of teachers; and (ii) the management of the change process at local, regional and central levels. The Ministry will therefore implement the proposed changes in a phased manner, starting with the community high schools and then moving to amalgamate tops of primary schools to form new secondary institutions. A loan for physical facilities already being negotiated from external sources should provide 4850 new places and 3000 rehabilitated places in secondary schools. The Ministry will, wherever possible, make use of existing facilities that can be upgraded. Specialist facilities, such as Practical Instruction Centres (PICs), will serve a cluster of schools whenever this is feasible.

¹⁵ These are, English Language, Mathematics, Integrated Science and Social Studies.

4. Other

a). Class size: The Ministry is committed to making the most efficient use of its facilities and will ensure that, without depriving hinterland regions of education facilities, the standards laid down in *The Non-Academic Standards of the Ministry of Education* in relation to class size will be adhered to. Hinterland and deep riverain areas will have smaller classes even with the clustering of students in schools with residential facilities.

b). Special, technical and vocational education: The policies outlined for special education, technical and vocational education and teacher education in the 1995 education plan remain relevant. Emphasis will be placed on setting up a National Accreditation Body, a National Council for Teacher Education and a National Council For Technical and Vocational Education during this plan period.

c). Upgrading of heads: All heads will be required to be trained in administration either through the GBET or the administration option in the Bachelor of Education or Certificate of Education programmes at the University of Guyana (UG).

e). School Improvement Plans: The development of SIPs with the collaboration of parents, teachers and other stakeholders, piloted under the SSRP and GEAP projects, will be extended to schools at all levels.

PART II: PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

A. STEPS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN

The formulation of the strategic plan was designed as a participatory process: the Ministry of Education was committed to having all levels of the education system and all stakeholders participate in the evolution of a plan which would define its general direction and activities for the period ahead.

The Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) directed the process, supported by the international consultant specifically commissioned for the task. A Planning Unit Task Team (PUTT) was created to perform the technical work which the process required.

The major steps in developing the plan, some of which ran parallel to each other, started inside the MoE with discussions on strategic versus nominal planning, following which the process of clarifying the organisational mission and values of the MoE and the education sector began.

The MoE then embarked on a situational analysis of the Ministry. PUTT members participated in developing assessments of the different levels of the system. Another major contribution was the final report from the MacRae - Mason Development firm which evaluated the performance of the Ministry in relation to the 1995 education plan. The 12 members of the PUTT and the 16 members of the SPC also took part in a SWOT¹⁶ session designed to complete this assessment process.

Once the mission and mandates of the MoE had been redefined and the situation of the Ministry and the education sector as a whole had been analysed, it was possible to identify the strategic issues of the MoE. Again, PUTT members made the first attempt, producing a list of 13 issues. This product was analysed by other officers of the Ministry and by the SPC. The second draft was then taken to the regions in the first phase of the consultation process.

Wider SWOT sessions involving the SPC, other members of the MoE and Regional Education Officers (REdOs) further developed the analysis of strengths and weaknesses in the system and the opportunities and threats it faced.

In a second round of meetings in the regions, participants were asked to formulate strategies to best face the challenges of the education sector. Again, with hundreds of participants from all over the country, many options were

¹⁶ SWOT is a widely used acronym for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

proposed: these are summarised at Appendix 1. Following a parallel process, 13 strategy development groups were formed in Georgetown with 80 persons, selected as national experts, participating in a similar task: these groups took the proposals by the communities into account. Many valuable ideas were developed during this effort, completely based on voluntary participation. In the final phase of regional consultations, a draft plan outlining viable options for the Ministry to pursue was taken back to selected groups in the regions for their comments.

The consultation meetings were organised to bring a wide cross-section of stakeholders' voices into the strategic planning process, with parents being specifically invited. As shown below, the activities were divided into three phases:

Table 3: Phases of the consultation meetings¹⁷

Phase	Meetings	Objective
First	11 regional meetings (including Georgetown)	To discuss the strategic issues proposed by the MoE and identify the major challenges of the MoE.
Second	11 regional meetings (including Georgetown) 1 meeting with representatives of civil society and other units of the Government)	To give stakeholders an opportunity to suggest strategies that would enable MoE to successfully face the challenges identified as strategic issues.
Third	11 regional meetings (including Georgetown)	To allow a selected group in each meeting to analyse the document.
Total	34 meetings	To formulate a strategic plan in a participatory process.

Participants in each region were invited through their local authorities, and each regional office was responsible for the coordination of the meeting in its region. During the encounters, each lasting at least two hours, there was a fruitful exchange of views, and the general impression was that people in the regions were very receptive and willing to participate in the efforts being made to improve the schools. The agenda of the meetings followed these general lines:

¹⁷ All regional consultations were organised by the Regional Education Officers (REdOs), who also selected members of the groups which analysed the document during phase 3 (see the table).

Table 4: Agenda of the consultations

Time	Activity
4:00 pm	Introduction of participants. Explanation of the objectives of the meeting.
4:30	Outline of the strategic planning process and the issues to be considered.
5:00	Group discussions.
5:50 - 6.15	General sessions: presentation of the results of the groups.

The meeting with representatives from civil society and other units of the Government (see Table 3 above) served a dual purpose: one, to provide these sectors with an opportunity to contribute to the development of the strategic plan of the MoE, and two, to provide the MoE with an opportunity to be in contact with the sectors and to make its views known to them.

By the end of the whole process, the Ministry of Education had developed more than a written plan; it had developed a system designed to face the challenges of the future, fully capable of adapting to any changes which might become necessary during these years. At the completion of the plan period, the system will be rolled over into the next planning cycle, permitting the Ministry to build on the successes of these five years.

B. THE STRATEGIC ISSUES AS GROUPED

After the strategic issues were identified, they were grouped into six areas of concern to facilitate analysis. It should be noted that a strategic issue is not necessarily an objective, but a challenge in the future of the organisation, a fundamental issue that needs to be dealt with. As grouped, the issues are as follows:

1. Quality Issues

- a). To provide better ECE.
- b). To develop a more relevant curriculum at all levels of the education system.
- c). To make tertiary education more relevant and capable of contributing to the development of Guyana.
- d). To achieve significantly better levels of literacy and numeracy among students.
- e). To define standards for inputs, processes and outcomes.
- f). To improve infrastructure and equipment.

2. Equity Issues

- a). To improve the quality of education in the hinterland and riverain areas.
- b). To attain universal access to secondary education.
- c). To accelerate the mainstreaming/inclusion of persons with special needs into the education system.

3. Social Issues

- a). To increase stakeholders' level of participation and commitment.
- b). To increase the level of respect for and tolerance of diversity.

4. Human Resources Issues

- a). To produce competent teachers for the system and give them better support.
- b). To reduce the loss of valuable human resources in the system.

5. Management Issues

- a). To improve the managerial capabilities of the MoE.
- b). To decentralise the management of the system.

6. Support Issues

- a). To obtain government and societal support for the MoE at the central, regional and local levels.
- b). To obtain adequate financial resources.

There are significant similarities and even convergences between the MoE strategic issues outlined above and those identified in the GPRSP, which was approved in October 2001 after its own extensive participatory process of consultation.¹⁸ The GPRSP signals education as one of the major components of poverty reduction and again establishes it as a national priority. Critically, the document presents education not only as a means of increasing the human capital of Guyana, but also as part of the definition of poverty itself. As it explains:

*Poverty is multi-faceted. It manifests itself in low and uneven levels of income and consumption, physical insecurity, poor health, low levels of education, disempowerment, high levels of unemployment, and social and geographical isolation.*¹⁹

¹⁸ See GoG, *Guyana Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper*, Georgetown, 2001.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 4.

Given this conceptual framework, education is treated not only as a tool for development or for decreasing poverty, but as a goal in its own right. If the people of Guyana are going to defeat poverty, the GPRSP argues, one of the necessary elements is to raise the level of formal and non-formal education of the population.

The findings of the consultations held during the formulation of the GPRS were essentially the same as those emerging from the consultation process held under the auspices of the MoE. Since the processes took place at the same time, making it impossible for either to take account of the conclusions of the other, it is an indication of the validity of both series of consultations that their results so closely correspond. Table 5 outlines similarities and convergences between the strategic issues they identify.

Table 5: Similarities and convergences between the GPRS and MoE strategic issues²⁰

<u>G.P.R.S.P</u>	<u>MoE</u>
1. Curricula Reforms	<i>To develop a more relevant curriculum at all levels of the education system.</i>
2. Improving access to and attendance at school	<i>To improve the quality of education in the hinterland and riverain areas. To attain universal access to secondary education. To accelerate the mainstreaming/inclusion of persons with special needs into the education system.</i>
3. Teacher training/ancillary and emoluments	<i>To produce competent teachers for the system and give them better support. To reduce the loss of valuable human resources in the system.</i>
4. Reducing overcrowding and increasing allocations for maintenance	<i>To obtain adequate financial resources. To improve infrastructure and equipment.</i>
5. Targeting functional literacy among out of school youth	<i>To achieve significantly better levels of literacy and numeracy among students. To provide better ECE.</i>
6. Targeted subsidies for the poor	<i>None</i>
7. Skills Training and Employment Programme	<i>To make tertiary education more relevant and capable of contributing to the development of Guyana.</i>
8. Strengthening the MoE	<i>To increase stakeholders' level of participation and commitment. To improve the managerial capabilities of the MoE. To decentralise the management of the system. To obtain government and societal support for the MoE at the central, regional and local levels. To obtain adequate financial resources. To define standards for inputs, processes and outcomes.</i>

C. PRIORITISING THE PRIORITIES

All the strategic issues and strategies identified in the MoE process should be considered priorities, not only because very large groups of people in Guyana and its educational system understand them as important, but

²⁰ The GPRS strategic issues are at pages 37-38 of the GPRSP.

because they are part of the integrated effort that the Government will have to make to respond adequately to the needs of the population and the country. Nevertheless, they must be prioritised, for two basic reasons:

1. Not all the strategic issues have the same level of urgency or can be addressed in the short run. Preference may be given, for example, to issues, which affect a significant part of the population, have tremendous implications for national development, or are more likely to produce the desired impacts in a shorter time or at a lesser cost. On the other hand, action may be postponed on issues, which demand more research before they can be effectively addressed, or for which special resources that are not now available to the country are needed.

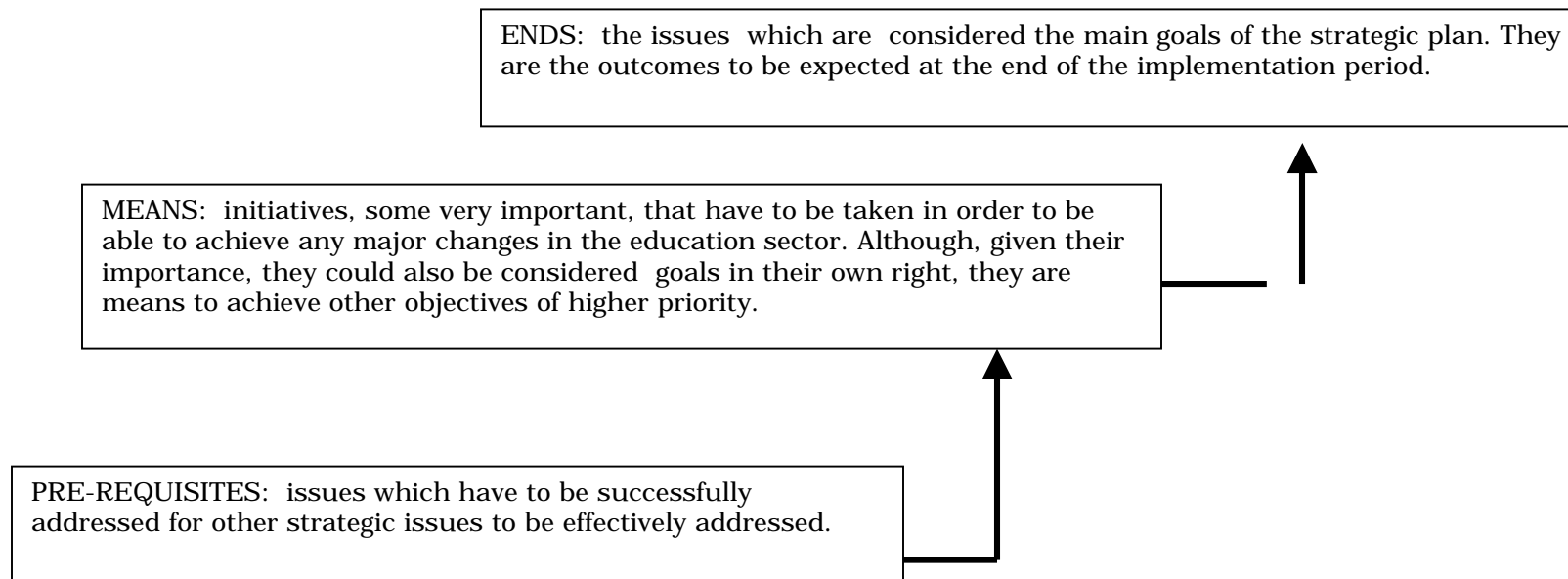
2. The managerial capability and financial means of the system are limited. Attention must therefore be paid to how much can be done in the period covered by the plan and what resources are available to the system to make and sustain improvements in its quality.

In order to correctly establish the priorities among the issues, it is also necessary to understand how they are interrelated. Some strategic issues are instrumental, that is, action on them is a pre-requisite for action on other strategic issues. For example, through a process of consultation, the Planning Unit Task Team identified two pre-requisites for considering the other strategic issues in education. In the previous section, these were referred to as “support issues” – governmental and societal support for the MoE at all levels; and adequate financial resources. While these pre-requisites are partly outside the control of the MoE and are not properly speaking educational matters, they have major significance for the achievement of the MoE’s goals. Considerable attention would therefore have to be paid to them if the strategic issues are to be effectively addressed.

To take all these concerns into account while safeguarding the possibility of action on all strategic issues, it was necessary to identify the relationship between and among the six groups of strategic issues; and the impact that action on one issue would have on another.

The following figures show the linkages among the issues.

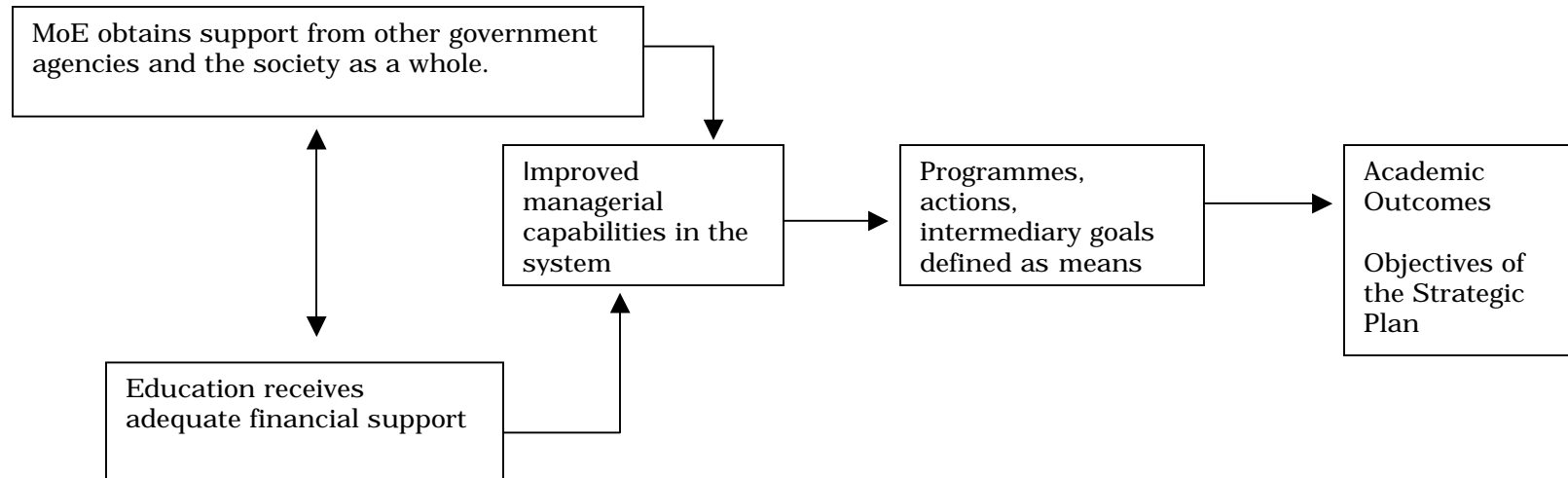
Figure 1: The hierarchy of priorities



Notes

1. The MoE has a high number of strategic issues because education is the type of sector which is expected by the population to deliver services.
2. Behind the conception of the plan are assumptions of flexibility and a hierarchy that have to be properly understood, especially by those who will be involved in its implementation and later evaluation.
3. There are three levels of strategic issues according to their nature and how they are embedded in the logical sequence of the plan.

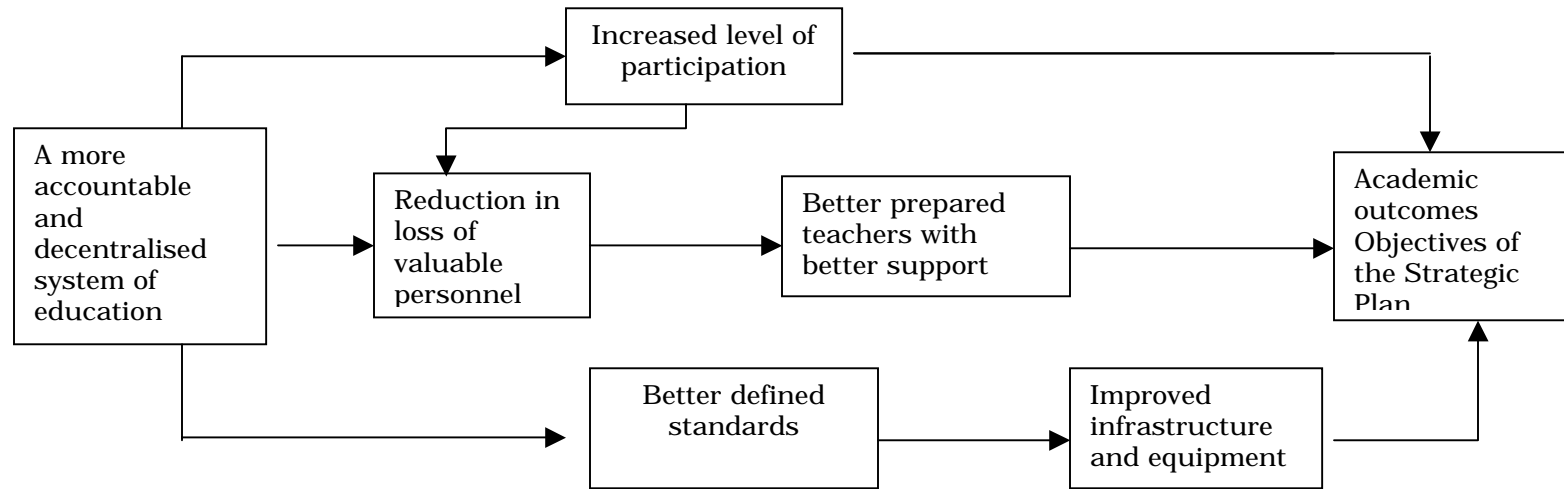
Figure 2: Prerequisites for implementation of actions and programmes



Notes:

1. All government Ministries must be aware and supportive of the role education is playing in the strategy for national development. Agencies like the MoE, the TSC, and the PSM must recognise the MoE as the driving force in the sector without resigning their functions and obligations, and MoE must put systems in place to make collaboration easier.
2. MoE needs an enhanced administrative framework in order to access and effectively utilise the increased resources provided by the Government from national and international sources.
3. To become more effective, the system must develop its managerial capabilities and achieve higher levels of effectiveness and efficiency. The scarce resources of time and money must be spent wisely and in a timely manner. Targets must be clearly defined so that monitoring and evaluation is easier, allowing for greater accountability.

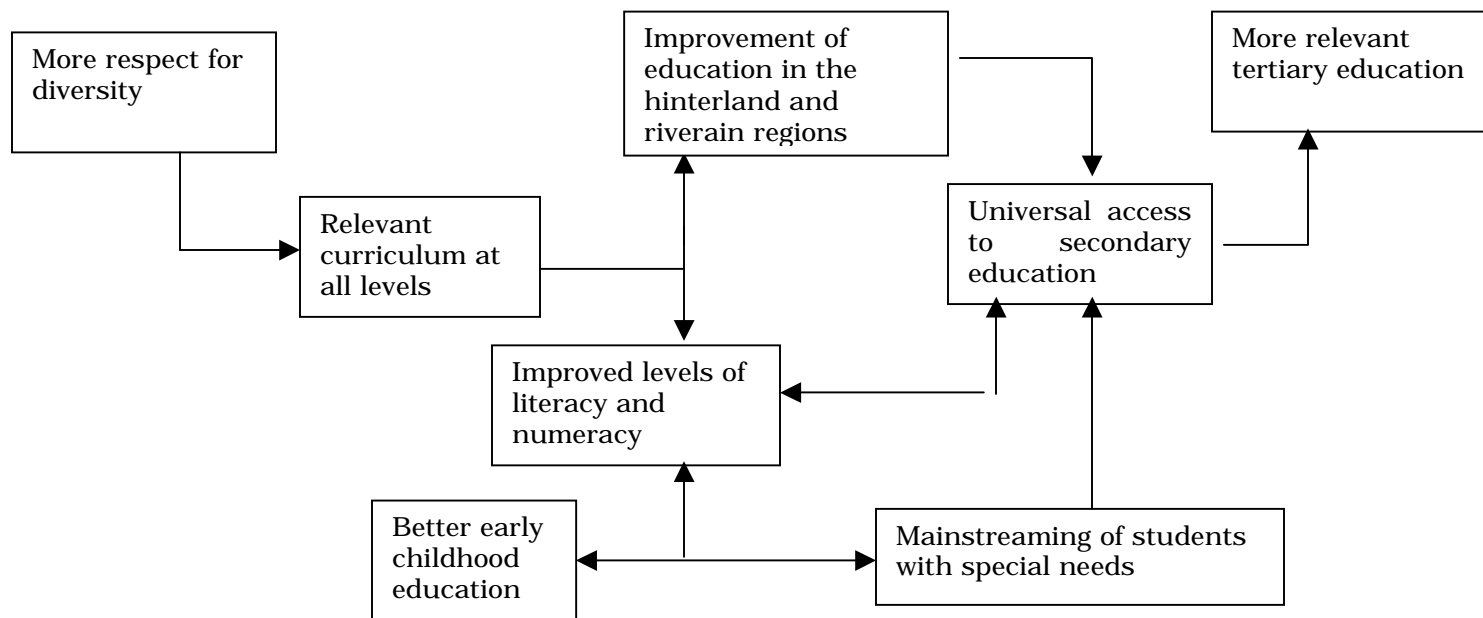
Figure 3: Academic or management means to achieve desired outcomes



Notes:

1. All the above issues are important, but as means to achieve better academic outcomes.
2. Since teachers are an essential element in transforming the schools, they must be better supported. The system may not be able to avoid all losses due to migration, but it must quantify the losses, prepare to find substitutes, and design a strategy to reduce losses to the lowest level possible. This is another way of trying to increase the capacity of the teaching force since it is mostly the better prepared teachers who are leaving.
3. Policies and academic and non-academic norms, including performance norms, need to be clearly defined and in the minds of all involved in the system.
4. An increased level of participation is necessary for working to address all other issues.
5. Better support for the teachers also has to come from the Government and education administrators, with greater monetary and non-monetary rewards, including accelerated promotion, for the better and more committed ones.
6. Standards must define the infrastructure and equipment that each educational institution needs to have, and they must be understood as a right of teachers, children, families and communities.

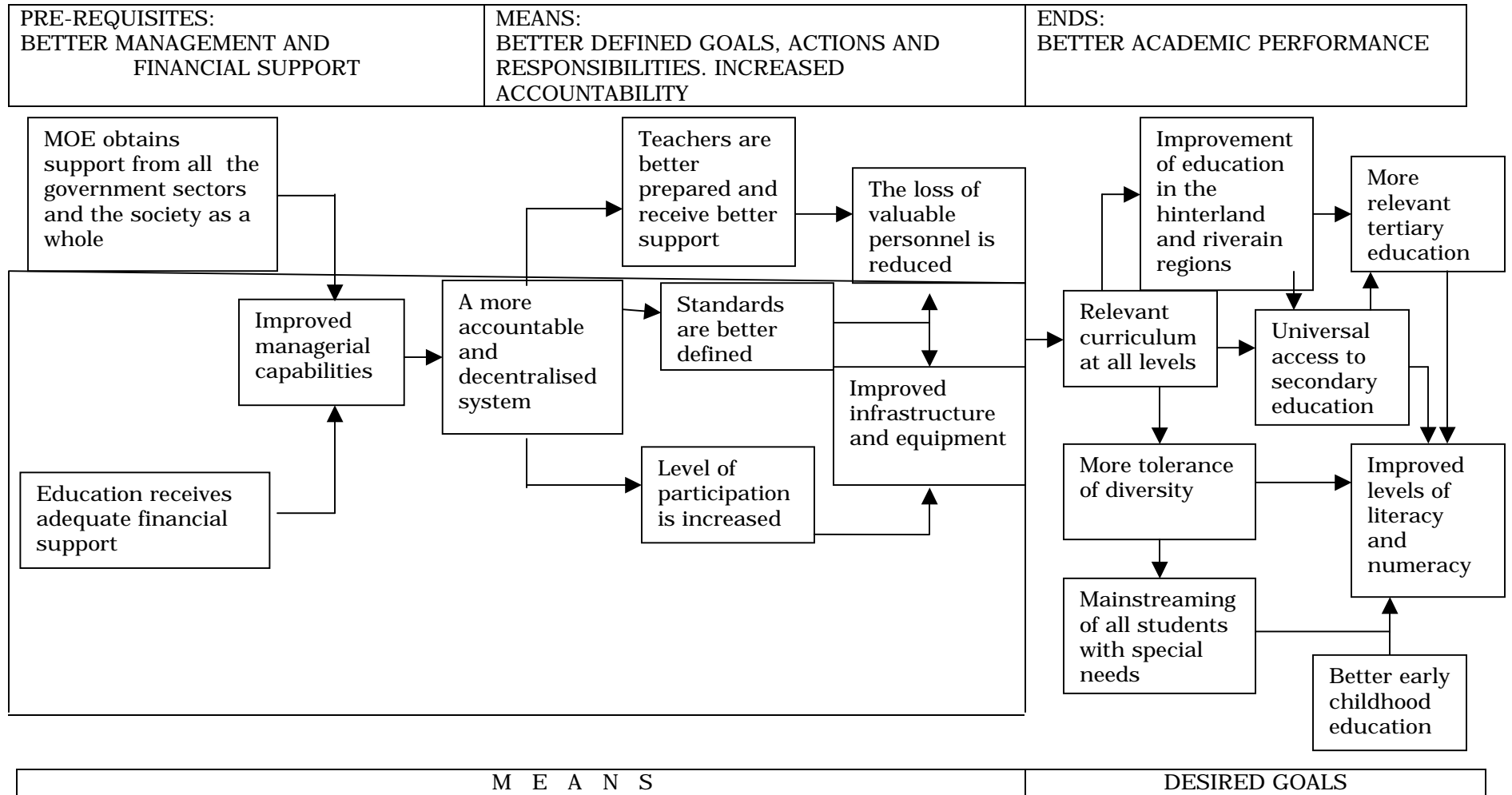
Figure 4: The hierarchy of strategic issues which are objectives in themselves



Notes:

1. Improved levels of literacy and numeracy are the central strategic issue of the plan, around which everything else revolves and to which everything else is connected.
2. Better ECE is the starting point of the educational effort and a necessity for achieving higher levels of literacy and numeracy. Guyana also has international commitments to better ECE.
3. USE will contribute to raising literacy and numeracy: today, basic education includes some secondary education (for the Caribbean it is defined as five years).
4. More relevant curriculum at all levels, including tertiary, is a necessary component of achieving all other gains.
5. More respect for diversity is a national problem and a mandatory part of a more relevant curriculum.
6. Improvement of education in the hinterland and riverain regions and mainstreaming students with special needs, where possible, are both major aspects of equity, and related to the other quality issues.

Figure 5: Prerequisites, means and ends



PART III: THE PLAN ITSELF

A. THE CHANGING EMPHASES OF ACTIONS IN THE 5 YEARS

Strategic thinking demands an effort to establish priorities and to identify the most significant issues involved in each process. The emphasis of the actions taken by MoE during these years will change in accordance with the evolution of the Ministry and the education system, the resources available, and the perception the communities have of the performance of the schools. In principle, five strategic lines will guide the development of the annual action plans. These are described below:

Table 6: Annual emphases of the plan

YEAR	AREA OF EMPHASIS
2003	<p>Getting ready Actions during the first year should concentrate mainly on preparing the MoE and the system as a whole to be able to undertake the changes necessary to produce the educational services the country needs.</p> <p>The MoE should become more efficient, faster in its responses and more effective in its overall performance. The regional offices should be improved to a level where they can perform their assigned tasks in the system. The various reforms should be studied and planned. The actions to be taken to address each priority should be clearly established. In short, everything should be in readiness for a leap toward the next level.</p>
2004	<p>Improvement in the delivery of services Once management is ready, the stage is set to deliver on the learning process. During the second year of the plan, efforts should concentrate on producing the improvements planned in the preceding year. Regional offices should work to supervise and guide the schools and provide capable leadership to the process. Schools should be able to produce their SIPs, and the Ministry should produce the curriculum reform and training support for the different levels. With a better level of management in the system, teaching is expected to improve and the final goal, which is better learning, can be achieved.</p>
2005	<p>All systems in place and running During the third year, the major and most dramatic changes should be completed or at least initiated. It is time to correct undesirable situations and to improve and/or finish whatever processes were started the year before. By this time, the system should have reached the structural and operational form desired.</p>

Table 6, continued	
2006	<p>Striving for excellence The fourth year is the time to start insisting on reaching a level of excellence throughout the system. Emphasis should be placed on monitoring and evaluation, training, and developing the kind of responsible attitude that will take any action to success.</p>
2007	<p>Producing a new future This is the last year of the period covered by the plan, and it is necessary to start the strategic planning process for the years 2007-2011. It should be the year of evaluation and decisions concerning the future. It is to be expected that with the experience accumulated during the previous years of the plan, the MoE will be able to face up to this new challenge.</p>

B. THE PLAN AS A UNITARY WHOLE

Once all the strategies to address the strategic issues had been identified and analysed, they had to be integrated into a rational and cohesive plan. Since some of the actions required by the different groups of strategies are the same, some are linked in time or are part of a sequence, and still others could be contributing factors to the same objectives, in order to be successfully carried out they had to be inserted into a unitary process, as parts of a whole.

THE PLAN MATRIX²¹

Strategic Objective	Intermediate Objectives	Strategies/Actions	Target Date/s	Performance Indicators
To improve the quality of the delivery of education, especially in the area of literacy and numeracy.	ECE is more effective and is up to the agreed international standards.	Nursery (years 1 and 2) and primary grades 1 and 2 (preparatory A and B) will be officially designated ECE.	2003	Relevant circular is issued
		An Assistant Chief Education Officer (ECE) will be appointed to be responsible for nursery and the first two grades of primary.	2003	Appointment is made. Officer is functioning.

²¹ As used in the matrix, a strategic objective is a major and broad category of objective in which several lines of actions have to be included, while an intermediate objective is a means or instrument to achieve the strategic objective.

Strategic Objective	Intermediate Objectives	Strategies/Actions	Target Date/s	Performance Indicators
		The nursery curriculum will be further revised to include greater emphasis on pre-literacy skills and will be closely aligned with the curriculum of the first two grades of primary.	2003	The curriculum document is completed, printed and distributed to all nursery and primary schools and to all relevant officers at regional and central departments.
		A special training programme will be developed for teachers in ECE, to orient them to changes in the curriculum.	2003-2007	Over 90% of teachers at this level take part in the training programme, approximately 20% each year.
		A policy of placing the best trained teachers in the lower grades of primary school will be put in effect.	2003-2004	80% of the schools have placed trained teachers at grades 1 and 2.
		Performance norms (academic) will be established for the ECE grades.	2003	The document is completed and circulated to all nursery and primary schools and to relevant officials.
		National standards (which include academic and non-academic norms) will be finalised and effectively communicated to all nursery and primary schools.	2003	A document with all the standards is published and disseminated to all schools.
		Regions will use a School Mapping Exercise (SME) to identify the schools that are not meeting national standards.	2003	Results of SME are published; and the weaknesses and strengths of schools clearly established.
		Schools will prepare School Improvement Plans (SIPS) to help them meet the	2004	60% of schools have documented SIPS.

Strategic Objective	Intermediate Objectives	Strategies/Actions	Target Date/s	Performance Indicators
		<p>defined standards.</p> <p>Regions will allocate additional resources and give more support to schools with the identified greatest needs (based on SMEs).</p> <p>Training programmes for parents and parents-to-be will be continued, using the parenting manual which has been developed.</p> <p>A national campaign to promote the importance of ECE will be developed and implemented with special emphasis on economically depressed areas.</p> <p>The existing programme for teachers in ECE at CPCE will be revised to include the new initiatives in the curriculum.</p> <p>A new methodology to teach literacy, based on a survey of</p>	<p>2005</p> <p>2007</p> <p>2004</p> <p>2005</p> <p>2007</p> <p>2003-2007</p> <p>2003-2007</p> <p>2004</p> <p>2003-2007</p>	<p>50% of schools are meeting defined standards.</p> <p>80% of schools are meeting defined standards.</p> <p>A formula for financing is established.</p> <p>30% of targeted schools meet national standards.</p> <p>50% of targeted schools meet national standards.</p> <p>50% of nursery and primary schools develop a parenting programme.</p> <p>50% increase in parental involvement in school life.</p> <p>70% increase in television and radio programmes on the topic.</p> <p>50% increase in the printed material on the topic distributed.</p> <p>Almost 100% coverage at this level in the specified areas.</p> <p>Programme is revised.</p> <p>50% improvement in the number of students meeting the defined</p>
	Levels of literacy and numeracy are			

Strategic Objective	Intermediate Objectives	Strategies/Actions	Target Date/s	Performance Indicators
	significantly improved.	good practices in Guyana and abroad, and on the defined performance norms, will be introduced at nursery and primary levels.		standards from cohorts entering primary education from 2003. All CPCE graduates in ECE from 2007 can deliver the new curriculum.
		Mathematics for grades 1 to 3 will be taught via Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI)	2004-2007	50% improvement in the number of students meeting the defined standards from cohorts entering primary education from 2003.
		Ten persons per year for 3 years from the various teacher training facilities (UG, CPCE, NCERD) and the regions will be trained as specialists in the new approaches.	2003-2005	No. of persons trained.
		Geographic clusters of schools will be created.	2003	Clusters are mapped out for every region
		By 2005, 90 cluster advisors will be trained to support teachers through monthly cluster meetings and visits to schools.	2003-2007	No. of advisors trained in 2003, 2004, 2005. No. of training meetings held. No. of visits made to schools.
		Teachers and headteachers will be trained to implement the literacy programme, starting with 20% in 2004 and completing training for all practicing teachers by 2006.	2003-2006	Percentage of heads and teachers trained. No. of teachers implementing the new methodology in classes.
		Teachers from grades 1 to 3 will be trained to use IRI in the classroom.	2003-2004	No. of heads and teachers trained. No. of schools using IRI in the relevant classes.

Strategic Objective	Intermediate Objectives	Strategies/Actions	Target Date/s	Performance Indicators
		A system of ongoing school-based assessment of literacy will be put in place. In addition, there will be national assessments at 3 key stages starting in 2003.	2003 2005 2007	Assessment of grade 2 (prep B) students carried out. Assessment of grade 4 (std II) students carried out. Assessment of grade 6 (std IV) students carried out.
		Books and other support material for literacy and numeracy will be produced or procured for all schools.	2004-2006	Assessment data are available in schools and in national reports. Proportion of schools with adequate supplies of recommended materials for students and guided material for teachers.
		A national awareness campaign will be developed to sensitise the public to the new approaches.	2004-2005	Proportion of parents who participate in the compact for literacy. Reduction in the number of queries about literacy from parents and other stakeholders.
		National level officers for ECE and primary education, as well as regional departments, will develop action plans to monitor and sustain these activities.	2004	Action plans of relevant officials.
	The nursery, primary and secondary curricula are revised and a mechanism to ensure that they will remain	A permanent commission will be constituted to advise the Minister on evaluation, revision, and updating of the curriculum.	2003-2007	Advisory and evaluation reports from the Commissioner. Inclusion of topical social issues, etc., in the curriculum.

Strategic Objective	Intermediate Objectives	Strategies/Actions	Target Date/s	Performance Indicators
	up-to-date is put in place.	Regions will study the curriculum and make recommendations for adaptation to their local environment if necessary.	2005-2007	Proposals for localisation of the curriculum made to Curriculum Unit. Region-specific material developed.
	A more relevant curriculum is used at the tertiary level.	Schools will develop SIPs with improved delivery of the curriculum as the major priority.	2003-2007	By 2003, 25% of schools will include improving the quality of delivery of the curriculum in their SIPs, rising to over 75% by 2007.
		Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) curriculum will be continually revised, in consultation with employers, to include new subject areas and new technologies.	2003-2007	No. of new subject areas introduced. No. of subject areas revised. Evaluation reports from employers and graduates. Rate at which graduates are employed.
		TVET institutions will be evaluated on their capacity to deliver the new curriculum, and plans for development will be made.	2004-2005	Evaluation reports. Improvement plans of each institution.
		Special programmes will be derived from the new curriculum to offer training at this level to young adults.	2004	The Skills Training and Employment Programme (STEP) is implemented.
		Standards for inputs, processes and outputs are defined and systematised.	Work on academic standards (performance norms) for all subject areas will continue.	2003

Strategic Objective	Intermediate Objectives	Strategies/Actions	Target Date/s	Performance Indicators
		A task force will make revisions or additions if necessary, to the non-academic norms and will organise all academic and non-academic norms in a way that allows for incremental implementations.	2003	Standards are widely known and are used as a basis for planning by schools and regions.
		Supervision and inspection of schools will be done in the light of these standards.	2004-2007	Standards form the basis of reports, evaluations, etc.
		An SME will be carried out to give regions a diagnosis of their institutions in relation to the standards.	2003	SME completed; regional and school indicators available.
		Regions will prepare action plans to help in the implementation of these standards.	2004	No. of plans developed. Proportion of schools meeting relevant standards.
	A monitoring system is developed.	The MIS Unit will install software at school, regional and central levels to allow for the storage and retrieval of the relevant data related to academic and non-academic standards; data bases will include information on personnel, buildings, equipment, students, etc.	2004	Proportion of schools with the relevant programmes. Timeliness of retrieval of information.
	Infrastructure and equipment will improve	Local (i.e., school level) and regional preventative	2004	Proportion of schools and regions with a maintenance plan.

Strategic Objective	Intermediate Objectives	Strategies/Actions	Target Date/s	Performance Indicators
<p>To improve equity in the education sector by giving special attention to previously un-reached students; (persons with special challenges), those without access to quality secondary education, and those in remote hinterland and riverain areas.</p>	<p>The delivery of education will be improved, especially in hinterland and riverain areas.</p>	<p>maintenance plans will be developed and implemented.</p>		<p>Proportion of recurrent expenditure on maintenance.</p>
		<p>New equipment to support educational innovations will be supplied to schools through GoG and donor-supported programmes.</p>	<p>2004-2007</p>	<p>Availability of equipment in schools as indicated in statistical returns.</p>
		<p>Schools will be constructed and repaired and dormitory facilities improved in the hinterland and riverain areas. Teacher housing will also be constructed.</p>	<p>2004</p>	<p>20% of schools are up to standard.</p>
			<p>2006</p>	<p>40% of schools up to standard.</p>
			<p>2006</p>	<p>600 new dormitory places available 20 new teacher flats/houses constructed.</p>
		<p>Schools will develop SIPs.</p>	<p>2004</p>	<p>30% of schools in remote areas working with a SIP.</p>
			<p>2007</p>	<p>75% of schools in remote areas working with a SIP.</p>
		<p>The Escuela Nueva (EN) programme will be expanded in Regions 1 and 9 and extended to Regions 7 and 8.</p>	<p>2005</p>	<p>10 schools following EN programme</p>
			<p>2007</p>	<p>20 schools following EN programme</p>
		<p>Training of teachers in hinterland and riverain localities by distance education will be increased and intensified.</p>	<p>2003-2007</p>	<p>The proportion of teachers in hinterland regions who are trained is increased by 50% by 2007.</p>

Strategic Objective	Intermediate Objectives	Strategies/Actions	Target Date/s	Performance Indicators
	Access to secondary education is improved and the curriculum is redefined, paving the way toward Universal Secondary Education (USE).	Plans will be formulated at central and regional level to gradually eliminate community high schools and primary tops.	2003	Regional USE plans are in place.
	New schools will be constructed. Schools will be extended and rehabilitated to give a 10% increase in capacity at the secondary level.	2003-2007	6000 new places provided.	
	Curriculum for secondary level, including alternative learning paths, will be developed.	2003	Curriculum being implemented in 50% of all secondary institutions.	
		2005	Curriculum being implemented in all secondary institutions.	
	Teachers in secondary schools, in particular in community high schools and secondary departments of primary schools, will be given special training to allow them to deliver the new curriculum.	2003	90% of teachers in CHS and 10% of teachers in secondary departments of primary schools trained.	
		2004	40% of teachers in secondary departments trained.	
		2005	60% of teachers in secondary departments trained.	
		2007	80% of teachers in secondary departments trained.	
	Mainstreaming of some persons with special	A national study will be done to establish the number of	2003-2004	Data on number of students with disabilities available at

Strategic Objective	Intermediate Objectives	Strategies/Actions	Target Date/s	Performance Indicators
To increase the level of commitment of students, parents and communities to the education process and to human rights.	needs into regular schools.	students with special needs.		national and regional levels.
		Data bases at schools, regions and central level will be updated through screening of students at entry grades for each level.	2005	
		All students at CPCE will do a basic special education module to sensitise them to the needs of these students and increase their observation skills.	2004	No. of persons receiving the new module. Reports from schools . No. of teachers willing to have children with special needs in their classes.
		Special resource and support units for children with special need will be established.	2003 2005 2007	1 unit established. 3 units established. 6 units established.
		Special schools will be assisted to produce SIPs.	2006	All special schools will have SIPs developed with assistance from many stakeholders.
		Closer links will be established with the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security.	2004	Exchange of data among Ministries. Proportion of children receiving early support through information received from Ministry of Health. Proportion of families receiving support from Human Services Ministry.
	Increasing stakeholder participation and commitment.	MoE will strengthen its existing policy of promoting the participation of stakeholders through training of PTAs and School Improvement Action Committees (SIACs)	2003-2007 2005 2007	75% of schools will have active PTAs and/or SIACs. 50% increase in the number of parents

Strategic Objective	Intermediate Objectives	Strategies/Actions	Target Date/s	Performance Indicators
		to participate in school improvement plans/activities.	2005	active in PTAs and SIACs.
			2007	10% improvement in attendance. Attendance up to 90% in coastal areas and over 80% in hinterland areas.
		Regional and local advisory councils will be set up to monitor schools and to advise and recommend strategies to regional and local school authorities.	2003	No. of councils set up.
		National Advisory Commission on Education (NACE) will be strengthened through the provision of a regular budget.	2003	Reports/recommendations from NACE to Minister.
	Increased level of respect for and tolerance of diversity.	A special programme derived from UNICEF Management of Social and Sensitive Issues programme will be implemented to prepare teachers to be more effective as facilitators for tolerance of diversity.	2005	40% of teachers will have taken part in this programme.

Strategic Objective	Intermediate Objectives	Strategies/Actions	Target Date/s	Performance Indicators
To improve the human resources of the system.	The competency of the teachers in the system is improved.	The issue of tolerance of diversity will be included in the HFLE programme.	2003	Curriculum is available. Reduced incidence of problems related to intolerance in schools.
		Special programmes for parents and the community will be organised in the schools.	2006	25% of the schools will have developed this type of programme.
		Literacy and artistic contests will be established on a yearly basis on variations of this topic.	2003	From 2003, these contests become a feature in the system.
		See initiatives under improved literacy and numeracy, ECE and USE		
		A council for teacher education will be set up to promote greater collaboration among providers of teacher training and effect smoother transition from one programme to another.	2004	UG and CPCE agree on a credit system for various courses, including courses offered via projects, etc.
		Greater training opportunities (post-graduate) will be provided for teacher educators.	2004-2007	A 20% improvement in the proportion of teachers at CPCE with post-graduate qualifications.
CPCE and NCERD facilities, especially equipment, will be improved to facilitate additional programmes, greater orientation to education technology, etc.	2006	Innovative technology centre opened at CPCE. Rehabilitation of NCERD completed. Special facilities at NCERD properly equipped.		

Strategic Objective	Intermediate Objectives	Strategies/Actions	Target Date/s	Performance Indicators
	Teachers receive better support.	Each region will implement a plan to support the development of its teachers with a school-based approach.	2007	40% of the schools have a developmental programme for their teachers.
		Learning Resource Centres (LRCs) to be upgraded.	2005	5 regional LRCs upgraded and used by teachers.
		Training programme for supervisors will be initiated.	2006	30% of the supervisors receive special training.
		Communications with the regional offices and the schools will be improved.	2006	90% of the schools have a reliable and effective way to communicate with the regional office.
		Schools are provided with water, electricity and a telephone or alternatives to them.	2007	90% of the schools have all three services or their substitutes.
		Teachers in the hinterland and riverain regions will be provided with appropriate accommodation. (See initiatives under hinterland)	2007	60% of the schools in the hinterland region have living quarters for teachers constructed or rented.
		Heads of schools to receive training in Management.	2004-2007	70% of Heads will have completed course.
	There is a reduction of the loss of valuable personnel in the system.	A study will be made to quantify the loss of personnel in the system, especially teachers.	2003	Up-to-date information is available on the system losses.
		A task team will be formed to develop a comprehensive strategy to minimise losses in the system.	2003	Policy is improved and implemented.
		The HRD	2005	Recommendations from

Strategic Objective	Intermediate Objectives	Strategies/Actions	Target Date/s	Performance Indicators
MoE's managerial capabilities are improved and the system becomes more effective and accountable.	Managerial capabilities of the Ministry are improved.	department of MOE will be developed and improved.		consultancies in HRD are put into effect through an IDB-supported project.
		A training centre for HRD will be developed and equipped with project resources.	2004	Centre is opened. Programmes offered.
		A new Education Bill will be taken to Parliament.	2005	Bill approved.
		A task team will be formed at MoE to develop an action plan to introduce the managerial changes estimated necessary and/or achievable.	2003	Plan is approved and implemented.
		Cadet scheme for managers will be introduced.	2004-2007	30 cadets complete training and are placed in management positions by 2007.
		A strategic director will be appointed to co-ordinate the rollover of the strategic plan.	2003	Action plans of all units, regional or central, are prepared annually and are in congruence with the strategic plan.
		Reforms will be introduced in the department of finance as recommended by consultants.	2003	Reforms are made in the financial area of the MOE.
		Staff of the MIS unit will be increased in number and existing members trained.	2003-2004	Staff appointed. Training courses attended.
		Information Technology staff will be appointed in each region to support the MIS.	2005	Staff appointed.

Strategic Objective	Intermediate Objectives	Strategies/Actions	Target Date/s	Performance Indicators
		Equipment for management and administrative purposes will be provided to central and regional departments and some schools under an IDB-supported project.	2005-2006	Equipment inventory, especially number of computers.
		A virtual library will be developed.	2003	Documents from MOE and data are available through the internet.
		See initiatives under stakeholder participation.		
	Improving the decentralised management of the system.	Officers in regional offices will be trained and prepared to fulfill their tasks.	2004-2007	75% of the regional personnel participate in training workshops.
		An improved financial management system will be introduced for better resource allocation and accountability at the school level.	2004	Six schools in two regions implement the new system as a pilot project.

C. THE PLAN AS PLANNING SYSTEM

The strategic plan 2003-2007 is a planning system more than a plan. It is more strategic and less nominal than past plans. It has been developed from the strategic issues that the Ministry has to face in the period, stresses feasibility, and provides flexibility to accommodate the changes in the environment, and the opportunities, threats, weaknesses and strengths that might evolve in the course of the next five years.

Strategic planning was the course chosen over other options because it produces an environment more conducive to innovation. In the case of Guyana, it was able to analyse the Ministry and the environment in which it works in a new way, one that could lead to solutions different from those unsuccessfully tried in the past.

Strategic planning is important because it plays a central role in political decision-making which itself begins with issues. It can improve decision-making by shaping how issues are framed and addressed, leading to choices and actions more likely to be politically acceptable, technically workable, and in accordance with an organisation's basic philosophy and values. These choices and actions are also likely to be morally, ethically, and legally defensible.

The decision in favour of a flexible planning tool for the Ministry of Education was based on the recognition that the main characteristic of the 21st Century in all societies is rapid change, and for countries like Guyana, rapid change which will frequently have to be made under pressure from more powerful countries and external agencies. In place of a document which can rapidly become outdated in such an environment, the plan is a guiding instrument, a framework in which developmental efforts should take place. It must always remain flexible, giving priority to the strategic thinking that the institution must generate if it wants to be successful in the future. It must leave all doors open for the Ministry to search for the best strategies at all times.

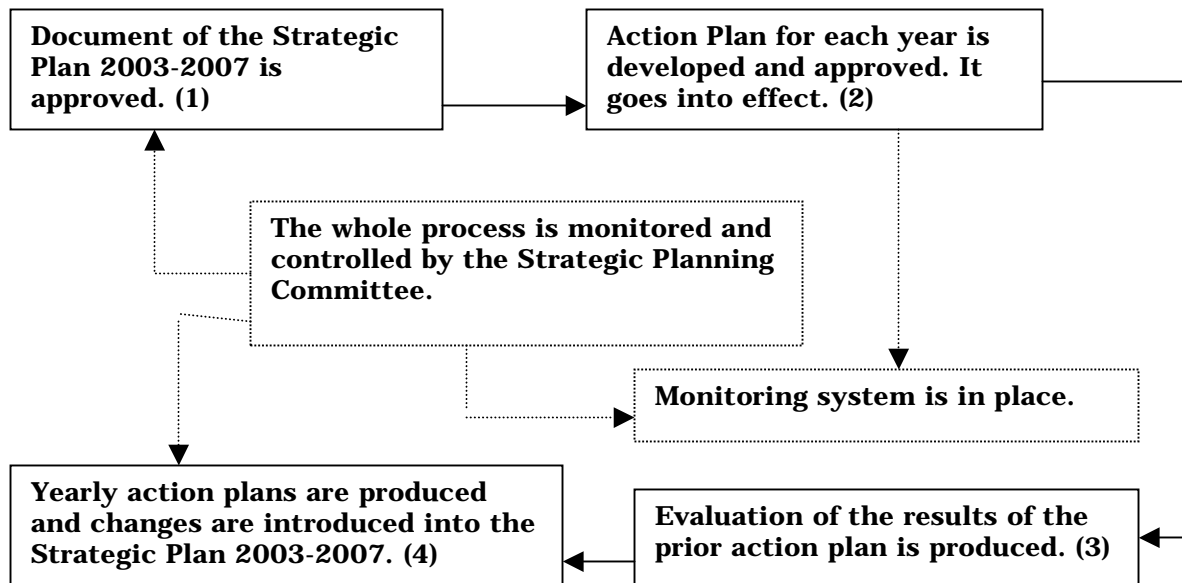
The system which has been designed has the following components:

1. A written document which has all the necessary elements to give a sense of direction to the institutional actions that will be required in the five-year period. It is the product of a very participatory and demanding process which is geared to take into account all significant opinions, and based on the work of a number of dedicated persons in the Ministry. This written plan provides the vision for significant improvements and changes in the education system.
2. A commitment to develop five action plans, one for each year of the plan period, which will define the specific actions to be taken in each year and outline the steps necessary for implementation.
3. A group committed to consistently supplying the necessary strategic ideas and concerns and to functioning as the coordinating unit for the execution of the plan. The Strategic Planning Committee will assume this important task. It will manage the plan and will introduce whatever new perspectives become necessary. The education system and the Ministry are institutions with thinking, living beings who must be able to adapt to changes and use whatever new opportunities become available.
4. A monitoring mechanism to report on the implementation of the actions included in each annual plan and in the overall strategic document.

5. An annual evaluation immediately before the start of the planning and budgeting processes, to determine the level of success achieved and to ensure that the necessary corrections and adaptations are made. The Strategic Planning Committee, supported by the Planning Unit, will be responsible for this task.

The following figure outlines how the process should develop:²²

Figure 6: How the planning system will work



²²Numbers in parentheses show the chronological order of the process.

PART IV: FEASIBILITY OF THE PLAN

A. THE FINANCIAL COST

The availability of financial resources is a central question for the implementation of this plan. The developmental needs of the country are many and varied: major spending is needed on infrastructure, utilities, and social services, and there are urgent calls to increase the budget for internal and external security. Education has however been maintained as a priority in spite of the increasing demands from every sector.

1. Government Allocations to Education, 1990 - 2000

From 1991, funding to education has increased steadily and expenditure on education as a percentage of the national budget and as a proportion of G.D.P. has also generally increased. Table 7 below shows allocations to education as a percentage of the national budget.

Table 7: Education as a percentage of the national budget
(G\$000)

Year	National Budget	Education Budget	Ed. as a % of the Nat. Bud.
1990	11,907,193	525,506	4.4
1991	12,793,000	832,610	6.5
1992	29,826,332	1,700,400	5.7
1993	30,194,677	2,225,146	7.3
1994	40,185,824	2,857,663	7.1
1995	40,077,495	3,267,287	8.1
1996	45,442,508	4,591,873	10.1
1997	56,690,074	4,939,375	8.7
1998	51,422,353	5,748,484	11.1
1999	54,568,995	6,828,412	12.5
2000	65,575,867	9,527,210	14.5

A steady decline in the exchange rate of the Guyana dollar and other inflationary trends have resulted in a decrease in expenditure on education in real terms in some years, but Table 8 shows that over the last eight years, expenditure has increased in both nominal and real terms, a fact which reinforces government's commitment to education as a priority. Increased expenditure on education seems to be supported by all parties in spite of differences in approaches and strategies.

Table 8: Annual percentage changes in allocations to education in \$US

Year	Education Budget G\$000	Rate Of Exchange	Budget In \$US000	% Of Change
1990	525,506	39.5	13,304	-
1991	832,610	111.8	7,447	-44
1992	1,700,400	125.0	13,603	+83
1993	2,225,146	130.2	17,070	+26
1994	2,857,663	138.2	20,678	+21
1995	3,267,287	141.9	23,025	+11
1996	4,591,873	140.2	32,752	+42
1997	4,939,375	143.6	34,397	+5
1998	5,748,484	150.2	38,272	+11
1999	6,828,412	176.2	38,754	+1
2000	9,527,210	184.7	51,582	+33%

2. Key Areas of Expenditure in the Plan

As pointed out earlier, at nursery and primary levels, access to education is not a serious problem: coverage at both levels is more than ninety percent. The problems of access are concentrated mostly at the secondary level and in what could be considered special services, e.g., schools for children with special needs. Since the major issue facing the MoE in Guyana is the issue of quality, even at the first two levels in the hinterland and riverain regions, most of the actions in this plan are concentrated in the area of quality, and range from curriculum reform to the type of supervision and material and equipment support that schools receive in various regions of the country.

Four main areas will require substantial funding. These are:

a). Construction/Rehabilitation of Education Buildings (G\$14.4 billion)

The MoE has committed itself to reducing its backlog of rehabilitation needs and thereafter, to working to keep its physical stock in fair condition through a strong maintenance programme. This, together with the construction of new schools to achieve universal secondary education and the enhancement of offices and resource centres, will constitute the key item of expenditure. It should be noted, however, that most of the schools at the primary level are new or were renovated in the not so distant past, although there are still unmet needs. It is expected that support through programmes such as SIMAP and the Basic Needs Trust Fund will continue for at least another two or three years. It has already been indicated that a loan from the IDB will provide nearly 5000 new places at the secondary level.

b). Salaries (G\$ 5.4 billion in 2002)

In spite of substantial increases in recent years, teacher salaries continue to be a disincentive to encouraging people to enter and/or remain in the profession. The Guyana Government cannot compete with the salaries offered by some countries, but in addition to possible monetary increases, it is considering non-salary incentives such as land and loans for housing. The issue of teacher compensation however remains a challenge, as the level of teacher salaries cannot be totally divorced from the level of salaries in the rest of the public sector.

c). Equipment and Other Learning Materials and Tools

The demand for equipment and other learning material or tools at all levels, in particular computers, is another major cost (over G\$ 1 billion for innovative technology in schools and for the Ministry's MIS). Assistance is forthcoming through some programmes, but in general, the MoE will give priority to the provision of reading material and then take an incremental approach to the provision of equipment. Whenever it is needed and wherever it is feasible, a cluster of schools will share expensive equipment.

d). Human Resource Development

Human resource development, in particular the training of teachers, will require increased financial resources during the plan period. Ongoing annual costs are currently over G\$450 million and are estimated to rise to G\$525 million by the end of the plan. In addition, nearly G\$224 million is budgeted for this activity under phase 1 of the BEAMS project. As with the other areas, some assistance has already been negotiated for HRD but even more importantly, there is a firm basis to build on, in that the GUIDE and GBET programmes have given MoE considerable experience in training teachers via distance modalities. The curriculum created for these programmes and the support systems which have been developed are well-established, and except for the enhancement of some additional resource centres, the infrastructure for improved HRD is fairly well established. The unit cost for this kind of training should fall in the future.

3. Preliminary Estimates

The new education initiatives proposed in this plan, together with ongoing activities, are estimated to cost G\$ 70.4 billion (approximately US\$ 371 million) over the five-year period. Seventy-five percent of this sum (G\$52.8billion) is for recurrent estimates and twenty-five percent (\$17.6 billion) for capital expenditure.

A ten percent increase in salaries is projected over the period and estimates for materials, equipment and supplies include an annual inflation rate of five percent. Recurrent expenditure will largely be financed from Government of Guyana resources, but some cost recovery or cost sharing measures will be actively considered in the next five years.

B. FUNDING OF THE PLAN

The expected financial commitment by the Government of Guyana to the education sector and the support of donor and loan agencies will be crucial to the financing of the plan.

1. GOG Funding

Citing education as a continuing priority in the Government's development policy, the GPRSP projects a substantial increase in GoG funding to education over the next five years.

The estimate of the Guyana Government's contribution to available resources in 2003 is based on the actual sum the Government committed to education from national resources in 2002, i.e., it does not include external assistance. For three years, an increase of five percent is estimated based on the release of additional funds through the HIPC initiative, and the GOG contribution is then slightly reduced as the need for counterpart funding to some projects declines or comes to a halt.

2. External Assistance

In addition to the projected increase from GOG sources, the Ministry expects significant assistance to its capital programme.

a). Over G\$ 1.9 billion is already committed as a part of ongoing programmes. Included in capital expenditure is the funding for BEAMS which has recently been approved by the IDB. The IDB's input to this project during this period is expected to be G\$ 5.7 billion (US\$ 30 million). The Government is also seeking to negotiate another G\$ 2.85 billion (US\$ 15 million) to fund technical and vocational education. Negotiations have not yet been completed for this project or for additional resources, about G\$ 3.3 billion, to help with construction and rehabilitation of schools. These sums have however been factored into the projected available resources outlined in Table 9.

b). Guyana is one of eighteen countries eligible to participate in what is being called the EFA Fast Track Initiative which, in the words of the World Bank (coordinating agency on behalf of several bilateral and multilateral agencies),

“is designed to channel increased support for primary education to countries with sound policies and strong domestic commitment to the goal of universal primary education.” Key features of the initiative are the offer of incremental funding which can be flexibly used for recurrent expenditures such as the hiring of teachers, as well as for capital requirements. It is expected that with the 2003-2007 strategic plan and the GOG’s proven commitment to primary education, Guyana can meet the criteria for accessing this fund.

c). The MoE also expects that the assistance given by the smaller bilateral agencies and agencies such as UNICEF, UNESCO, and the OAS will continue.

3. Possible Shortfalls

The projected assistance outlined above should allow MOE to fill gaps in GOG’s provision. However, even with committed and projected external assistance there are shortfalls in the available resources in the first three years, and these shortfalls will be greater if salary increases are more significant than the ten percent estimated. It should also be noted that in the event of unexpected challenges or shortfalls in financing, the strategic planning approach embedded in the 2003-2007 plan will enable the Ministry to make the best choices and to delay or fast track activities as appropriate. The annual action plans which are to be derived from the strategic plan will reflect these changes, and delayed activities can be rolled over to a subsequent year.

Table 9: Projected resources, expenditure and shortfalls
G\$000

Year	Projected Available Resources	Projected Expenditure	Difference
2003	13,760,093	14,174,253	414,160
2004	14,562,975	14,987,408	424,433
2005	14,292,355	14,382,745	90,390
2006	13,967,989	13,967,789	-
2007	12,836,082	12,836,082	-

CONCLUSION

While the ability to finance this plan will be a central factor determining its success, the availability of funds is by no means the only, or it might be argued, the most important factor for success. At least three other elements are essential:

1. National Consensus: One main reason why this plan was developed in a participatory manner was to achieve the most wide-ranging consensus possible on the priority issues to be addressed and the strategies to be implemented. The existence of such a consensus was evident in the similarities among the issues and some of the strategies emerging from the various regional consultations. However, this plan also proposes significant changes in the way education is delivered, the way students are assessed, particularly at the primary level, and the way the whole system is to be managed. It is critical that these changes are understood and supported not only by most, if not all the staff of the Ministry of Education, but also by major stakeholders such as parents. The Ministry will therefore give much stronger emphasis to its public awareness and sensitisation programmes to promote this understanding and support.

2. Leadership: While no one group can be responsible for the success or failure of the plan, sharing its vision and providing efficient and effective direction to the implementation of the proposed strategies is the responsibility of the managers at every level of the system, school, region and central Ministry. The emergence of strong leadership at all levels in the Ministry is also a critical element for success. The training proposed under the Human Resource Improvement initiatives will help strengthen leadership skills, but commitment to the plan by the managers themselves will be essential.

3. A culture of accountability: A key element in the success of this plan will be the development of a culture of accountability. This must be based on an acceptance of the concept of individual responsibility, the adoption of a system which rewards good performance and punishes bad performance, and the establishment of structures to evaluate and regulate administration. The broad objectives of this plan have been broken down into measurable performance objectives or targets. These must be further broken down into smaller measurable targets at the levels of the regions, units and departments and even the classroom teacher, and persons at every level must be made accountable for the achievement of targets at that level. The monitoring and evaluation capabilities of the MoE will be enhanced as a result of a new programme. This, together with the performance norms being created for each grade, will provide a good basis on which to start developing a culture of accountability.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OF THE PLAN

At the end of the period of implementation of the plan:

1. The Ministry of Education will be an effective and efficient organisation, striving to achieve its goal of delivering high quality education to all persons living in Guyana and particularly to the children.
2. The actions of the Ministry will have made possible a rise in the functional literacy rate in the society, and at all levels of the system students will be working with an updated curriculum.
3. The first unit of the curriculum will comprise the two years of nursery plus the two first grades of primary, with teachers working with a full understanding of the importance and objectives of this period of schooling. Coverage in nursery education will be universal, especially in the hinterland and riverain regions. As a consequence of improving the first years of schooling and of the introduction of educational programmes for parents, early childhood education will be at its best ever, contributing to better development of the future generations of Guyana.
4. In general, primary schools will be delivering a much better quality of education. Standards will be established for all educational institutions at primary level, and regional directors and their staff will be providing strong leadership and supervision.
5. Secondary education will have seen a significant increase in coverage and will be moving towards universal coverage with the construction and rehabilitation of several schools at this level. The curriculum will have been redesigned and the opportunities for students will be expanding. In the hinterland and riverain regions, there will be a number of boarding schools providing appropriate accommodation for students.
6. Tertiary education, including that in the technical-vocational schools, will have been improved, and the curriculum will be more relevant to the Guyana of today and especially to the world of work. Graduates will be becoming agents of development by integrating their skills into the production system.
7. The quality of teaching and learning will be much improved, due to better training and preparation and more professional development of teachers. In all regions, the majority of teachers will have the necessary certification while all other teachers will be working to obtain it. A system will be in place which permits quality preparation of all teachers who consciously work to gain and maintain the professional teaching certificate.
8. All educators, ancillary personnel, and other participants in the education system will share in the vision of a better education for Guyana. Generally, society will appreciate the effort made to improve the system and will be willing to support and cooperate in this effort. The Government will continue to give priority to education and other agencies will be willing to support the Ministry. The national budget will clearly reflect the importance given to education, and the private sector and the international donor community will be willing and able to support the actions carried out by the Ministry in accordance with this plan.
9. The education system as a whole, and each of its institutions, will be role models for tolerance of and respect for diversity, with mechanisms and programmes in place to avoid all kinds of discrimination and to foster inclusiveness.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: STRATEGIES PROPOSED IN CONSULTATIONS

Quality Issues

Strategic Issue: To be able to provide better early childhood education.

Proposed Strategies

1. Conduct a national campaign to raise consciousness on the importance of ECE and the duties of parents.
2. Develop a programme to help families and families-to-be become better prepared to raise their children.
3. Create a unitary curriculum for the two years of nursery and the first two years of primary.
4. Prepare special training sessions for teachers in ECE.
5. Make a commitment to dedicate the best teachers in primary to the first years of schooling.
6. Strengthen the ECE teacher certificate by clarifying the knowledge, skills and aptitudes required.
7. Prepare special programmes to support teachers in ECE through CPCE, UG and NCERD.

Strategic Issue: To have a more relevant curriculum at all levels of the education system.

Proposed Strategies

1. Create a task force to review the curriculum, with working groups for each level.
2. Develop a team in each region to review and revise the curriculum and make proposals to adapt it to each regional reality.
3. Initiate an improvement action plan at each level, incorporating all past and current experiences related to the curriculum.
4. Consider the curriculum a priority in all SIPs and train school personnel in curriculum development.

Strategic Issue: To make tertiary education more relevant and capable of contributing to the development of Guyana.

Proposed Strategies

1. Create a task force to decide on actions in tertiary education.
2. Maintain institutionalised lines of communication to coordinate actions with UG.
3. Establish a body to oversee tertiary education and promote cooperation among the institutions.
4. Promote technical education in each region, with at least one institute in each region specifically designed to respond to the region's needs.
5. Carefully study the report of the consultants working on technical education and implement an action plan.

Strategic Issue: To obtain significantly better levels of literacy and numeracy among students.

Proposed Strategies

1. Organise a national awareness campaign.
2. Create a task force to propose national action on literacy and numeracy.
3. Develop an action plan in each region to improve the level of literacy and numeracy.
4. Revise the nursery and primary curricula with the aim of making full functional literacy and numeracy a goal to be achieved by the end of primary school.
5. Adapt and/or design books and teaching materials to support the effort.
6. Provide teachers at this level with training and special support in the form of a detailed manual for everyday activities.
7. Institute national contests to promote learning in these two major areas.

Strategic Issue: To define standards for inputs, processes and outcomes.

Proposed Strategies

1. Review and update the present document on non-academic standards.
2. Adapt the document to the needs of each region and evaluate each educational centre in order to create an inventory of needs in each school. The document should be approved by MoE authorities, Government should commit itself to taking all schools to the level established as acceptable, and curriculum experts should analyse the proposals and elaborate guides for all levels. All supervision of schools should be done in the context of these standards.
3. Set minimum and maximum enrollments for each school.
4. Establish the highest possible minimum standards for books, labs, libraries and other support facilities for schools at each level.
5. Consider electricity, communication and running water a must in all schools, using different strategies to ensure that they are provided.

Strategic Issue: To improve infrastructure and equipment.

Proposed Strategies

1. Put an action plan in place for the rehabilitation/upgrading of all schools, so that, by a date set, all schools will be up to the recommended standards.
2. Produce and use a guide for construction of new schools for all new projects.
3. Put a system for the timely delivery of equipment and supplies into effect with the cooperation of the regional offices.
4. Invite communities to be an integral and active part of the security and maintenance of schools.
5. Create at least one resource centre in each region to give support to schools and help them develop best practices in teaching and learning. The resource centres should organise workshops for teachers on how to develop teaching materials with local ingredients.

Equity Issues

Strategic Issue: To improve the quality of education in the hinterland regions.

Proposed Strategies

1. Draft a model for the development of each regional office.
2. Using this model, upgrade each regional office by the addition of new personnel and training.
3. In each region, draft a school map reflecting all the region's educational needs.
4. Identify a team of trainers for each region to support schools in the development of SIPs.
5. Develop an SIP for each school in the region.
6. Put in place a programme of maintenance and rehabilitation of old schools and other educational facilities in the region.
7. Carry out a study on strategies for providing power, running water and some form of communication to each school.
8. Establish a construction plan for each region.
9. Establish academic and non-academic standards for each school, with a plan to gradually achieve them.
10. In each region, develop an action plan within the framework of the strategic plan.
11. Develop an MoE monitoring and evaluation system to support the implementation of these plans.

Strategic Issue: To obtain universal access to secondary education.

Proposed Strategies

1. Urgently decide which secondary schools need to be built immediately.
2. Design a maintenance and construction plan with the participation of all regions.
3. Evaluate the results of the SSRP and GEAP so as to build on them.
4. Appoint a task force to organise a national conference on secondary education and use the results to revise the curriculum and to propose the kind of secondary education the country should offer, drawing on lessons learnt from experience and current developmental issues.
5. Propose relevant changes in teacher training, following the adoption of the new model for secondary education.
6. Make an assessment of the inputs necessary for curriculum changes in the secondary schools and estimate the resources that will be needed.
7. Design, implement and enforce a time-bound action plan to introduce the new curriculum and all its modalities.

Strategic Issue: To accelerate the mainstreaming/inclusion of persons with special needs into the education system.

Proposed Strategies

1. Appoint a high level task force, with representation from the Ministries of Health, Education and Human Services, to review the current draft national policy on the disabled, especially as it relates

to education, and propose an inter-sectoral approach to implementing some of the recommendations.

2. Launch a national awareness campaign.
3. Evaluate each school for exceptional children, and develop a plan to maximise its use.
4. Design programmes in the teacher-training institutions to train the necessary personnel at each level of the system: specialists, special teachers, regular classroom teachers, counselors, etc.
5. Develop special guidelines to help teachers to deal with slow learners, pupils with certain types of disruptive behaviours, and children with exceptional needs.
6. Hold an annual screening exercise in all schools to determine which incoming children are in need of special support.
7. Carry out a national survey to determine the size of the population with exceptional needs.
8. Provide day-care for children with exceptional needs.

Social Issues

Strategic Issue: To increase stakeholders' level of participation and commitment.

Proposed Strategies

1. Strengthen the National Advisory Commission on Education (NACE) as a permanent stakeholder voice in the system and a way to increase societal support for the Ministry.
2. In each region and school, create a body similar to NACE, with members of these groups (parents, community members) helping to improve their schools and in particular, playing a part in the development of SIPs.
3. At the regional level, encourage and support the development in each school of a programme aimed at helping parents become more conscious of their responsibilities and be better equipped to perform their roles in the family, the school and the community.
4. Evaluate the present situation of PTAs and issue a MoE policy statement supporting them and offering guidelines to all regions and schools.

Strategic Issue: To increase the level of respect for and tolerance of diversity.

Proposed Strategies

1. Include respect for and tolerance of diversity in the whole curriculum from nursery to university, not as a subject, but as a component of the affective behaviour that every child and young person must develop while in school.
2. Ensure that the organisation and registration of all schools always reflect the desire of Guyana to be one people and one nation, i.e., schools must be inclusive, and no child should be kept out on the basis of ethnicity, religion etc.
3. Make the education system as a whole and each of its institutions role models for tolerance, with mechanisms in place to avoid all kinds of discrimination and to foster cultural and social exchanges among all social groups.

4. Ensure that programmes for parents deal with issues of tolerance and diversity.
5. Establish a yearly contest to identify and reward schools and communities that deal best with these issues.
6. Hold special workshops for teachers.

Human Resources Issues

Strategic Issue: To produce competent teachers and give them better support.

Proposed Strategies

1. Appoint a commission with representatives of CPCE, UG and NCERD to develop an action plan to train the teachers the sector needs, using 3 approaches: one, urgent development of options for training a significant number of current teachers, using all available resources and installations, including distance education and regional centres, and with each region making an input into the design of this national effort; two, common approaches among existing institutions to the preparation of teachers entering the system at each level; and three, development of a system for existing teachers to develop professionally.
2. Improve the quality of supervision provided in the regions, and provide personnel and transportation to ensure that each regional office periodically visits the region's schools.
3. Link schools to nearby institutions capable of communication with the regional educational offices.
4. Develop a means for teachers to obtain the necessary teaching/learning materials for themselves and their students, and in each region, study how its schools can be supplied with energy, water and other critical supplies.
5. In training institutions, pay special attention to the development of a programme to train secondary school teachers in sufficient numbers.

Strategic Issue: To reduce the loss of valuable human resources from the system.

Proposed Strategies

1. Establish an HRD unit in the Ministry, with the goal of improved management of the human resources available and decreasing the losses that the system suffers every year.
2. Establish a training centre in the HRD for all non-teaching needs of the Ministry.
3. Reduce the loss of teachers to a minimum through the following steps:
 - a. Ensure that each candidate receiving training (in and/or before incorporation into the system) sign a contract making him/her legally obliged to work for a number of years determined by the type of training received. If that condition is not met the person and the hiring agency must pay compensation.
 - b. Evaluate forms of compensation and other incentives for teachers and other MoE employees, in order to offer the best

- possible conditions by building a comprehensive and feasible reward system.
- c. Launch a campaign to develop a sense of vision throughout the system, and to encourage teachers to remain.
 4. Provide teachers willing to go to hinterland and riverain areas with special incentives and support to facilitate their acclimatisation. A proposal should be drafted by the Ministry on this issue and pushed for approval.
 5. Provide living quarters for teachers in remote areas.

Management Issues

Strategic Issue: To improve the managerial capabilities of the Ministry of Education.

Proposed Strategies

1. Form a high-level task group having access to any outside help needed and available, with the urgent responsibility of examining the different recommendations on re-organisation of the MoE, and of producing a time-bound plan to introduce whatever changes are considered necessary.
2. To meet all the managerial needs of personnel development, create a training unit in the HRD of the MoE with the necessary human and material resources. The first task of this group should be to develop a comprehensive plan that will lead to the institutionalisation of the unit and the training of the necessary personnel at MoE.
3. Institute training for personnel with managerial and administrative duties through a specific programme included each year in the action plan.
4. In each unit of the MoE, use a participatory process to develop a vision of the unit that fits into the overall picture of the institution and describes its role in the Ministry. From that vision it will derive the activities and changes required to be more effective in the future.
5. Develop an adequate system for the MoE to generate the necessary information for managers and decision-makers. This task should be performed by the MIS department supported by the consultant in the area.
6. Develop a programme for an effective financial system in the Ministry. This task should be carried out by the finance department supported by the consultant in the area, and the initiative should be carefully designed and implemented in a timely fashion.
7. Develop an adequate system of human resources management for the MoE, so that these valuable resources can be used in the best way possible, all relevant information is available to managers and decision-makers in the institution, and actions can be completed in a timely and acceptable manner. This task should be carried out by the personnel department supported by the consultant in the area.

Strategic Issue: To decentralise the management of the system.

Proposed Strategies

1. Name a task force, including REdOs in its membership, to urgently study and propose an adequate structure and mode of functioning

for all regional offices, the report to cover all issues related to making these units effective.

2. Institute a training programme to support all the regional offices by providing their personnel with special training as soon as they are selected. The Ministry will form a team to carry out the training in the regions.
3. Organise for each regional office to apply the strategic and action plans to its own region, starting with a school map that will identify its current needs. At the end of an established period the regional offices will have developed their own action plans and will be ready to start implementing them.
4. Institute an approach by the MoE to the TSC to look for ways in which regional directors can be empowered to appoint acting teachers.
5. Clarify lines of authority for the REOs, defining more clearly the respective roles of the Regional Councils and the Ministry. This initiative might require changes in current legislation.
6. Evaluate procedures for the allocation of funds to make the improvement of the regional services easier.
7. Develop a vision of responsibility and accountability in all regions, based on their commitment to the advancement of education in their regions and localities.

Support Issues

Strategic Issue: To obtain the support of other government agencies and civil society for the MoE at the central, regional and local levels.

Proposed Strategies

1. Obtain central government approval for the MoE to carry out several experiments to see how the new system of management can be implemented. This decision will open the door to a new structure and a different kind of organisation.
2. Create or hire a specialised unit in the MoE to develop and produce public campaigns to obtain support for MoE and the institutional initiatives that will take place in the period. This unit should present plans on the issues identified by MoE as priorities, with the aim of obtaining public support at all times.
3. Maintain a line of communication between the MoF and the MoE, with the best persons from MoE designated to have systematic exchanges with their counterparts from MoF, in order to be able to secure its support at all times. The same needs to be done with the PSM in order to help them to understand whatever changes are undertaken in the MoE. It is important to have their support at all times so that structures can be revitalised.
4. Develop a mechanism whereby the regions can appoint their acting teachers with final approval coming from the TSC. There is a very strong recommendation by several people that the REOs be given the power to appoint acting teachers. At present, the Commission is the only agency empowered by the Constitution to carry out this function, although it has previously delegated this authority.

Strategic Issue: To obtain adequate financial resources.

Proposed Strategies

1. Use the proposed public awareness unit as a fund raising unit, after some special training.
2. Improve the existing working relationship of the MoE with the MoF and seek ways to improve how resources are assigned to and managed by MoE.
3. Institute financial planning in order to minimise problems in the annual development of educational activities caused by delays in the approval of the yearly national budgets.
4. Improve the MoE's rapport with donors and insert them into the dynamics of the strategic plan in a way that permits their grants and loans to be used in a timely manner, and in the best interests of the educational initiatives of the country.
5. List possible contributors to the educational effort and start or develop relationships with them.
6. Start several national programmes, including an adoption programme (enterprises adopting particular schools); donations for specific projects; a national book fund; and development of teaching material.
7. Consider the introduction of contingency fees at certain levels and/or new special taxes.

APPENDIX 2: LIST OF MAJOR MINISTRY OF EDUCATION PROJECTS IN GUYANA

Name of Project	Donor/Loan Agency	Value of Project	Status/Remarks
1.Primary Education Improvement Project (PEIP).	IDB (Loan)	US\$51.million	<p>This project originally involved the construction/rehabilitation, `equipping and furnishing of about 52 schools, development of textbooks, training of education personnel, strengthening of CPCE, NCERD and some central Ministry departments. IDB's contribution was US\$46 million.</p> <p>Over 60 schools have been constructed or repaired. Civil works included construction of a new library at CPCE, studios for distance education programmes and office space at NCERD. Because of a significant reduction in construction costs, approximately US\$23 million was made available for additional activities which conformed to the objectives of the original programme. These included the introduction of computers in some schools. Another major component is strengthening the institutional capacity of the Ministry. The project comes to an end this year (2002).</p>
2. Guyana In-Service Distance Education project (GUIDE).	DFID	446,000 pounds (Phase 1), G\$60 million to date (Phase 2)	<p>This project aims at improving the quality of education at the secondary level by providing in-service school based training for untrained, unqualified practicing teachers using a mix of distance education methods and face to face sessions with tutors.</p> <p>The current phase of this project involves approximately 289 teachers in Regions 3, 4, 5, 6, and 10. This was preceded by a pilot phase in Regions 5 and 6 from 1995 to 1997.</p>

<p>3. Secondary Schools Reform Programme (SSRP).</p>	<p>(Loan) IDA</p>	<p>Approximately US\$19 million</p>	<p>This project aims at a significant upgrading of education in the first three grades of the secondary level. It is being pilot tested in 12 schools. Components of the project include curriculum reform, acquisition of equipment and teaching/learning materials (including textbooks), teacher training, and institutional strengthening of the MoE, in particular the MIS. Training of teachers and school administrators has started and work is also ongoing on the design and costing of repairs of special pilot and non-pilot schools.</p>
<p>4. Guyana Education Access Project(GEAP).</p>	<p>DFID (grant)</p>	<p>Approximately US\$14.6 million</p>	<p>This project supports MOE's policy of implementing a common curriculum in the first three grades at the secondary level. It will be closely articulated with the SSRP which has similar objectives. Curriculum/texts etc. developed for the SSRP pilot schools will be introduced into schools in these two towns. Some school improvement planning and teacher training strategies will be common to both projects. Approximately 3000 students, a considerable proportion of whom would be under-achieving male students, will benefit from the project.</p>

<p>5. Guyana Basic Education Teacher Training Programme (GBET).</p>	<p>CIDA</p>	<p>C\$4.5 million</p>	<p>This project focuses on strengthening the system for in-service unqualified primary school teachers. Because of the large numbers of unqualified teachers in the remote hinterland and riverain areas, the project will lay emphasis on enabling the teacher training institute to develop a distance education capacity to offer in-service training through a combination of print-based learning modules, local tutorials, and a summer session that will be classroom-based. The project will also provide for technical assistance in testing and measurement, and in the training of school inspectors and principals.</p>
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