

Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

Education Sector Plan 2018-2020



Government of Sierra Leone

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Education Sector Plan 2018-2020

Getting It Right – Service Delivery, Integrity and
Learning in Sierra Leone



Government of Sierra Leone

OUR VISION

We have a vision of an appropriately educated, entrepreneurial and innovative citizenry, tolerant, productive and internationally competitive.

OUR MISSION

To provide opportunities for children and adults to acquire knowledge and skills, as well as nurture attitudes and values that help the nation grow and prosper.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This document is the product of many individuals and organisations. The political leadership provided by the Minister of Education, Science and Technology – Dr. Minkailu Bah and his two Deputies gave those working the needed reassurance that their efforts would not be in vain. The partners, in particular UNICEF, DFID, EU and the World Bank provided the support needed for the work to move ahead at speed. Whilst the GPE, through its visits, reports and communications, kept the work on the right track.

The many, representing different groups of stakeholders, who participated in the district level consultation meetings and the national workshops kept the feet of those working on this document firmly on the ground and ensured that the contents are realistic. They displayed an encouraging eagerness to fully own not just what is written down on paper but also the implementation of the activities. It is safe to say that what is in this document reflects the views of Sierra Leoneans and their aspirations for improving their education system

Leading the putting together of the document was a committee led by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, with strong representation from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, key development partners and senior staff of the Ministry. The team has displayed admirable technical leadership and true ownership of the process.

Those doing the drafting were in all but one case nationals. They came from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, the university world and the Sierra Leone diaspora.

Leading the team was A. C. T. Dupigny (PhD). He was supported by Dr. Adlyn Johnson, Dr. Bidemi Carrol, Dr. Sheka Kamara, Lansana Fofanah, Warue Kariuki, Reginald King, Holima Samai,

Samuel Johnson, John K. Ansumana, Horatio Nelson-Williams, John Sankoh, Marie Nielsen and Dr. Abdul Mansaray.

Making up the teams that led district level consultations were directors and other senior staff of the Ministry supported by interns from the Office of the Deputy Minister I.

Teams from the Office of the Deputy Minister I, which also functions as the President's Recovery Priorities Coordination Office provided support to the drafting team throughout the process and so deserve a special mention. Thanks also to staff of the Planning and Policy Directorate who readily provided required data and statistical information.

Those participating in follow-up, internal review and 'tidying up' were M. S. Sesay and Marie Nielsen.

Special mention goes to the Paramount Chiefs who have shown commendable commitment throughout the process and who will help to monitor implementation of the contents of this document.

To all named and unnamed who have in one way or another contributed to the making of this document, the Government of Sierra Leone, through the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology extends its grateful thanks.

PREFACE – MINISTER’S MESSAGE

This is Sierra Leone’s third Education Sector Plan in the last two decades. Each has been unique. This particular document is unique because it follows our first, and hopefully only, national attack by the Ebola virus. The outbreak of the Ebola virus almost brought the nation to its knees but Sierra Leoneans are resilient people and notwithstanding the many deaths, the near breakdown of the health system and almost total collapse of the economy, Sierra Leone has emerged stronger, even if a little singed, from the experience.



I am proud to state that despite the fact a number of students and teachers were lost to the virus, education continued to be provided in one form or another throughout the period of the epidemic. This made it easier to get education fully underway, the minute the nation was declared Ebola-free and children were allowed to return to school.

The ESP that is being replaced by this document did not anticipate an Ebola outbreak but many of its proposed interventions proved to be valid and were adapted to meet both Ebola and post-Ebola needs. Needless to say, there were a number of activities and interventions that were not possible during and immediately after the end of the epidemic. It follows that the epidemic has caused delays in implementation and made necessary modifications of the ESP so that it can be better aligned with post-Ebola realities and at the same time take into account lessons learnt from the functioning of the system during the period.

The sub-title of this document – “Getting it Right – Service Delivery, Integrity and Learning in Sierra Leone” is a statement of my Ministry’s focus for the period 2018 to 2020. It is our belief that even though we have made notable advances, especially in the last year, some improvement in service delivery and hence public perception of my Ministry and its work is still possible.

I am aware that everyone is happiest when learning is seen to be taking place in our schools and colleges. I am equally aware that corrupt practices in our institutions of learning and in our examinations start creating doubt in our minds and that of others outside about the actual learning that is taking place. I am convinced that implementation of the interventions detailed in this document will not only go a long way to significantly improving learning in our schools and colleges but equally importantly start laying to rest concerns about the integrity of our examinations, our schools, colleges, teachers and officials of my Ministry.

It is my hope that you will only enjoy reading through the content of this document but also start to get an understanding of education in Sierra Leone, its challenges and myriad opportunities.

Dr. Minkailu Bah

Minister of Education, Science and Technology

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The provision of **quality education** is considered a key factor in accelerating the future growth and development of Sierra Leone. Improving basic education for all children is essential, but the contributions of higher institutions cannot be overlooked, as well as the ability of the sector to meet and fulfil the growing need for skilled labour in the workplace.

In the post-Ebola period the MEST has demonstrated that rapid sector improvements are possible, but several underlying challenges and constraints need urgent attention in order to transform learning outcomes, such as low qualifications among the existing teacher workforce, systems integrity issues, and inadequate resources.

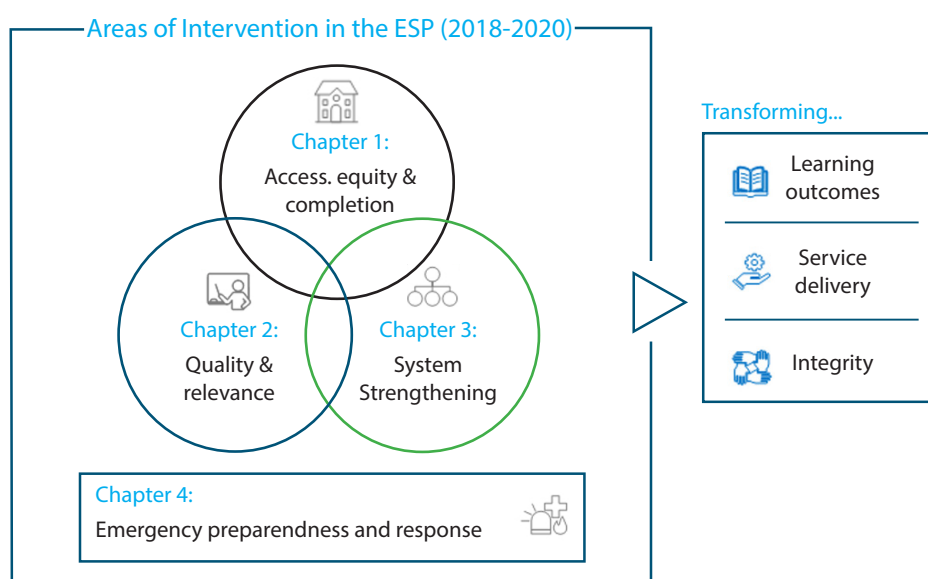
This 2018-2020 Education Sector Plan (ESP) is intended to be a transition document between the 2014-2018 ESP and the 2021-2025 ESP. Even so, it is not just an update and extension of the current ESP, but is an improvement that recognises the weaknesses of the document it is replacing and takes into cognizance lessons learnt from the devastating Ebola epidemic, that put schools to a close for a period of nine months and brought Sierra Leone to its knees. It recognises that quality education is dependent on a number of frequently overlooked factors that can have a catastrophic effect on efforts to achieve quality if left unaddressed. It is by no accident therefore that the sub-title for this ESP is “Getting it Right – Service Delivery, Integrity and Learning in Sierra Leone” with 3 over-arching targets:

- *Tangible improvement in education service delivery by achieving a minimum increase of 10% in the service delivery rating in 2020 relative to the 2018 baseline¹.*
- *Improved systems integrity by cases of malpractices reported by the MEST Examinations Monitoring Teams going down by 80% between 2018 and 2020 and the number of results withheld by WAEC decreasing by 50% over the same period.*
- *Improved learning, demonstrated by at least a 10% increase in the share of primary and JSS students meeting minimum Learning Assessment standards in English Language and mathematics appropriate to their grade level by 2020 (relative to a 2017 baseline)², and a 7% increase in the West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (WASSCE) English Language and mathematics pass rates by 2020 (relative to a 2017 baseline).*

All other interventions/activities described in this ESP contribute in one way or another to the achievement of the above outcomes, and include interventions across four areas: i) Access, equity and completion, ii) Quality and relevance, iii) Systems strengthening, vi) Emergency preparedness and response. The links are graphically illustrated below.

¹ A new service delivery survey will be introduced to allow MEST to hold itself against tangible improvement measures of its own service delivery performance and improvements.

² A national learning assessment is provided through the Leh Wi Learn DFID funded programme.



Strategic outcomes and interventions in the ESP 2018-2020

i) Access, equity and completion: The Government of Sierra Leone has a commitment to attain Universal Primary Education by the year 2020. Over the past five years access to education has improved, but despite relatively high gross enrolment rates at the primary level, significant repetition and drop-out rates at the upper primary levels, secondary and above (in particular among girls and students from low income households) remain a concern. According to the Education Act of 2004, the MEST has decided to make basic education ‘free and compulsory’, but affordability still remains as one of the biggest challenges facing the education sector. Other critical challenges include significant overcrowding in existing education facilities, no secondary school facilities in some Districts/Chiefdoms, and lack of basic water and sanitation facilities in many schools.

To improve access, equity and completion rates in the education system, the ESP aims to:

- *Increase access to free GoSL pre-primary education for children 3 to 5 years old from 11% in 2016 to 15% in 2020 by developing a costed action plan to guide the expansion of pre-primary education services, including strategies for expanding public pre-school education in primary schools and increasing opportunities through other forms of services, such as pre-schools, nurseries, and community-based non-formal pre-primary/ Early Childhood Development centres.*
- *Increase the entry and completion rates in primary school from 75.4% in 2016 to 85% in 2020 by reducing the cost of schooling to parents by streamlining the disbursement process of grants to schools to ensure that funds reach the beneficiaries in a timely manner, and providing additional support to the most vulnerable communities through a targeted school grants programme.*
- *Improve the school feeding programme for GoSL/GoSL-assisted primary schools by strengthening integrated service delivery at school level, program design and institutional capacity with support from development partners. This will include exploring partnership collaborations with strategic partners and donors to realise an effective integration of strategies to promote community participation and local procurement from small holder farmers.*

Efforts will also be made to promote the school garden concept to supplement the food in schools as well as using farmers' fields to train local communities and schools on best production methods. The possibility of encouraging commercial farming and establishment of a processing factory is also being discussed.

The school feeding programme is intended not just to provide balanced and regular meals for school children but also a means of encouraging enrolment and completion of school.

- *Increase the transition levels from primary to JSS from 83% in 2015 to 92% in 2020 and GER at JSS level from 61% to 75% over the same period by expanding the tuition support for girls at JSS level, formalising the policy for re-entry of teenage mothers to the school system, and ensuring all schools are safe for girls through curbing sexual violence and exploitation in schools.*
- *Increase equitable access to senior secondary education from 27.6% GER in 2016 to 30% and GPI from 0.9 to 0.97 over the same period by providing scholarships to the most vulnerable groups of SSS students, in particular girls, the poor and children with disabilities.*
- *Improve school infrastructure in primary, JSS and SSS levels by maintaining and constructing additional fully functional classrooms to reduce severe overcrowding, clean water facilities, toilets (separate for boys and girls), and ramps for children with disabilities. New JSS and SSS school facilities will also be considered in areas of the country with critical gaps.*
- *Increase equitable access to Technical and Vocational Education by developing a plan for implementing the existing TVET policy, operationalising of the NCTVE, reviewing the financing system for TVET, and strengthening public/private partnerships in the provisioning of TVET.*
- *Increase equitable access to higher education by 0.2% additional GPI in 2020 relative to 2016 by developing a higher education strategy to consolidate policies for addressing equitable growth at the higher education levels, provisioning of scholarships to the neediest students (including the poor and students with disabilities), and continuing grant support for females in STEM (Science, Technology, English and Mathematics).*
- *Improve literacy rates for youth and adults from 51% in 2016 to 56% in 2020 by expanding the number of non-formal learning centres across the country with strengthened links allowing pupils to better transition from the non-formal to the formal education system, providing accelerated primary education for older children and youth aged 10-15 years old, and increasing and regularising the funding for non-formal and adult education.*

ii) Quality and relevance: Student learning is recognised as the most critical outcome in education systems. High levels of achievement are the result of several interacting factors. Whether students learn what they need to learn and reach their full potential as productive members of their societies depend on factors of quality of and relevance. However, current examination results and the level of mastery of basic literacy and numeracy among early grade pupils (EGRA/EGMA) can be improved. Rapid improvement relies on the ability to appropriately address a set of fundamental sector challenges, including the very low level of qualifications and motivation among existing employed and voluntary teachers, the significant number of unapproved schools operating below the MEST minimum standards, and a growing number of observed integrity breaches in the school system.

To improve the quality and relevance of the education system and its constituent programmes and attain the highest possible level of integrity and performance, the ESP sets out to:

- *Improve the performance and assessment of students* by ensuring that at least 50% of all pupils attending basic education or learning centres have sufficient learning materials (notebooks, exercise books, ledgers, pens, rulers, etc.), distributing new and updated textbooks in core subjects for primary school children and at minimal cost for pupils at the JSS level, conducting an annual sample-based learning assessment for selected levels in English Language Arts and mathematics, implementing the revised curriculum for primary and JSS (whereby the recently launched lesson plans are built), undertaking studies in assessment, performance and employment of learners, and equipping science laboratories in select secondary schools.
- *Ensure all schools in operations are approved and comply to the minimum quality standards* set by MEST by revisiting the 2004 Education Act and 2010 Education Policy, communicating the standards clearly, and working closely with all schools (especially those awaiting approval), to drive quality improvements and adherence.
- *Ensure the education sector is safe and free of corruption* by reducing examination malpractice rates by 20% in 2020 by developing a national strategy and action plan, and ensuring that 100% of schools implement measures to prevent school related economic and sexual related offences by sensitising learners on their rights and referral channels at JSS, SSS, TVET, HEIs and learning centres.
- *Improve teacher and head of school/institution competency, work orientation and commitment to their jobs*, with 75% of teachers being trained and qualified for their employment, inspected and evaluated by the year 2020, by promoting ICT usage for all teachers, lecturers and students in teaching and learning, providing support for innovative pre-service education programmes, developing and implementing standards and competencies for teachers, providing induction programmes for newly qualified teachers, providing in-service teacher training through continuous professional development, supporting teachers to develop and use essential tools such as lesson plans for all English and mathematics teachers at the SSS levels, recruiting and deploying teachers for needed subjects and for needy areas, and providing structured supervision, inspection and monitoring of teachers.

iii) System strengthening: Efficient service delivery and good governance are at the heart of a strong and high-performing education sector. The education sector in Sierra Leone is expanding rapidly and increasing in complexity. An institutional response to identified national needs for better quality outcomes is the Teaching Service Commission, established to address all matters relating to teachers. Its proper functioning will require systemic changes in a number of regulatory and oversight roles and functions at central and district levels. The ESP will support the development and implementation of policy guidelines, processes and tools for improved teacher management and teacher performance. The School Feeding Programme is another innovation in the education system, aimed at increasing student retention and learning. These initiatives are designed to ultimately strengthen the education system and will therefore require clear definition of roles, strong inter-ministerial collaboration, dynamic partnerships and credible evaluation and accountability measures.

To strengthen the education system, the ESP aims to:

- *Fill all key positions at MEST headquarters, in the District Education Offices (DEOs) and Teaching Service Commission (TSC) by obtaining support to staff up the highest priority MEST professional staff vacancies for a minimum period of 2 years, initiating a headhunting strategy for MEST interns, and securing the support necessary for TSC to be able to fill key positions and become fully functional.*
- *Develop and maintain clean payroll records and teacher allocation through better records management and systems, and as far as possible reduce reliance on voluntary teaching support.*
- *Improve the MEST service delivery rating by 10% in 2020 relative to 2018 by disseminating the MEST Service Charter widely and conducting annual education service delivery surveys, providing capacity development trainings based on a comprehensive MEST staff development programme, providing inputs and resources to i) make possible the release of WASSCE results to schools within a maximum period of 50 working days and ii) carry out analysis of the performance of schools and candidates in the exams, introducing Performance Based Financing for schools, colleges, polytechnics and universities, and providing support for regulators as well as timely monitoring of the operations of educational institutions.*
- *Ensuring timely, reliable and accurate data and information on the sector performance by equipping and empowering each District Education Office to collect and analyse data in the districts, enabling Paramount Chiefs to participate in the education monitoring/ validation process and produce termly reports on the on education in their Chiefdoms, and establishing a 'one stop shop' for all available MEST data on education (EMIS).*
- *Ensure that a full/comprehensive diagnostic sector analysis is carried out within the lifetime of this ESP.*

iv) Emergency preparedness and response: The past Ebola epidemic that affected thousands of families, teachers and school-aged children across Sierra Leone has demonstrated the need and importance of ensuring that the education sector is prepared to face and minimise the impact of future contingencies.

To increase the emergency preparedness, the ESP aims to:

- *Develop an Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan, Handbook, and Phone Directory that will be available in at least 75% all Educational Institutions.*
- *Ensure readiness to act according to the Emergency Preparedness and Response plan by sensitising all actors using a wide range of media, training of key stakeholders (including DEOs, Councils, Partners, Head Teachers and Teachers) in emergency response and humanitarian support, establishing strong coordination with the Situation Room for real time data and information dissemination and further disseminate information through the Ministry's EMIS and Website, and providing adequate emergency response kits and emergency supplies to the DEOs. To minimise the costs, existing structures and systems will be leveraged as far as possible to perform the outlined activities.*

Organisational delivery model

The ESP does not only require a focused set of interventions but also an organisation that is set up to implement, monitor and deliver as required. Based on lessons learned from the implementation of the President's Recovery Priorities post Ebola, the MEST has decided the following operating model for the implementation of the ESP strategy from 2018-2020:

- The ESP implementation will be based on a detailed 3 year implementation plan and supporting targets set for each Directorate.
- A regular meeting or stocktakes cycle will govern the implementation of the ESP, ensuring progress tracking and rapid issue resolution. This includes the Executive Management Team (Chaired by the Minister, and includes the Deputy Ministers, PS, and CEO), the Inclusive Management Team (Chaired by the PS/CEO, and includes the Deputy Ministers when their duties allow them, heads of Directorates and relevant Directorate members). Weekly working groups for each Directorate supported by a Coordinating Office will ensure day-to-day progress and delivery. At the district level, the Deputy Director for Education in the district will chair a team that includes key local council officials, a key civil society representative, and representatives of key partners working in the district.
- The Planning and Policy and the Inspectorate/Quality Assurance Directorates will conduct regular monitoring and evaluation, leveraging support from the District Education Offices, the Situation Room, Paramount Chiefs, Local Councils, etc.
- Several mechanisms will ensure close coordination and involvement of development and implementing partners for wider consultations and ensuring the successful implementation of the ESP. At the HQ/national level partners involvement will continue through membership of working groups, as well as representation in various teams/committees and the Education Development Partners (EDP) meeting. The donors'/partners' coordination desk will continue and further strengthen its work.
- The collaboration and working model with key stakeholders, such as the Local Councils, Line Ministries Departments and Agencies, the TSC, etc. will be strengthened.

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AfDB	African Development Bank	MEST	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
ASC	Annual School Census	MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
BECE	Basic Education Certificate Examination	MoFED	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
CEO	Chief Education Officer	MTR	Mid-Term Review
CPD	Continuous Professional Development	NFE	Non-Formal Education
CSR	Country Status Report	NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
DCD	Donor Coordination Desk	NPSE	National Primary School Examination
DDD	District Deputy Director	P/DC	Partner/Donor Coordination
DEOs	District Education Offices	PBF	Performance Based Financing
DFID	Department for International Development	PC	Paramount Chief
ECBVI	Education Centre for the Blind and Visually Impaired	PCDGP	Per Capita Gross Domestic Product
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education	PIN	Personal Identification Number
ECD	Early Childhood Development	PPCR	Primary Proxy Completion Rate
EDF	European Development Fund	PPD	Planning and Policy Directorate
EDPs	Education Development Partners	PQTR	Pupil Qualified Teacher Ratio
EGMA	Early Grade Mathematics Assessment	PRD	Partners Registration Desk
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment	PRO	Public Relations Officer
EMIS	Education Management Information System	PRP	President's Recovery Priorities
EMT	Executive Management Team	PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
ESP	Education Sector Plan	PRU	Public Relations Unit
EU	European Union	PS	Permanent Secretary
EVD	Ebola Virus Disease	PSC	Public Service Commission
GATE	Girls Access To Education	PSS	Psycho-Social Support
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	PTR	Pupil Teacher Ratio
GEC	Girls Education Challenge	REDI-SL	Re-vitalizing Educational Development in Sierra Leone
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate	QAD	Quality Assurance Directorate
GIZ	German International Cooperation	SES	Socio Economic Status
GoSL	Government of Sierra Leone	SLWS	Sierra Leone Writers Series
GPI	Gender Parity Index	SMS	Short Messaging Services
GTI	Government Technical Institute	SO	Strategic Objective
HQ	Head Quarter	SRT	Situation Room Team
HR	Human Resource	SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
HRM	Human Resource Management	SSS	Senior Secondary School
HRMO	Human Resources Management Office	STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
HTC	Higher Teachers Certificate	TEC	Tertiary Education Commission
ICT	Information Communication Technology	TLM	Technical Leadership Management
IDB	Islamic Development Bank	TLMs	Teaching and Learning Materials
IMT	Inclusive Management Team	ToR	Terms of Reference

IP	Implementation Plan	TSC	Teaching Service Commission
JICA	Japanese International Cooperation Agency	TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
JSS	Junior Secondary School	UN	United Nations
LAN	Local Area Network	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
LCs	Local Councils	USD	United States Dollars
LeC.	Learning Centres	WAEC	West African Examinations Council
LGFD	Local Government Finance Department	WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation	WASSCE	West African Senior School Certificate Examination
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation	WFP	World Food Programme

INTRODUCTION

Preamble

This Education Sector Plan (ESP) is being developed at a time of transition in Sierra Leone, when it is moving beyond recovery from a devastating epidemic and catastrophic collapse of the economy. It is these events that have necessitated an update of the preceding ESP and the development of this document. In this regard, and for reasons stated later, it is important to note that this ESP is primarily a transition document that puts in place the foundation for a 2021-2025 ESP.

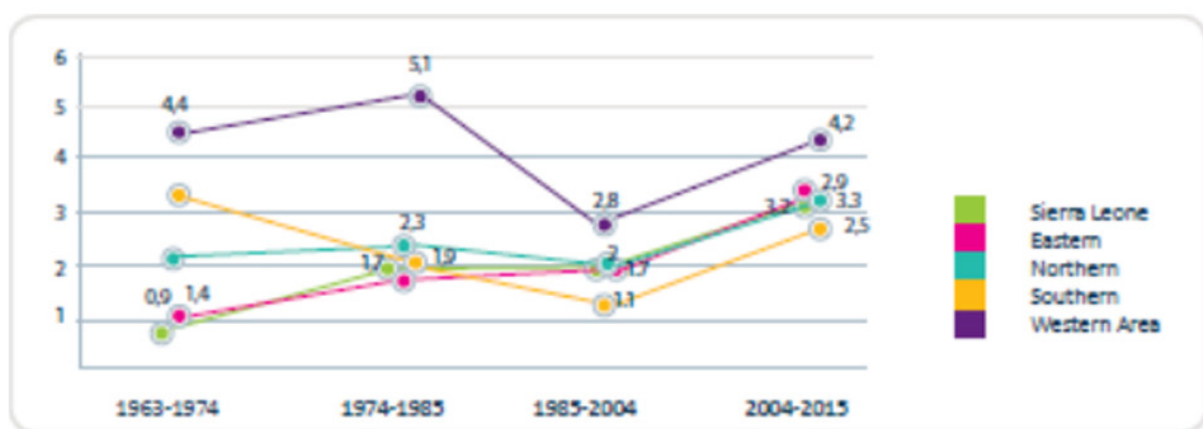
Where is Sierra Leone and What is it like?

On the western side of Africa, Sierra Leone is a small coastal nation of approximately 72,000 square kilometres and 7 million people. Bordering the country are Liberia and Guinea. The country is divided into four regions, 14 districts, 19 local councils and 149 chiefdoms. The main tribes are the Mende, Themne, Limba, Loko, Mandingo, Susu, Koranko and Fullah. The Krios who reside largely in the Western Area are the descendants of freed slaves.

Like many developing countries, Sierra Leone has a young and fast growing population. According to Sierra Leone's 2015 Population and Housing Census – Summary of Final Results – “40.9 percent are less than 15 years, and only 3.5 percent are 65 years and above. The working age population (15-64 years) represents 55.6 percent.” The speed at which the population is growing is clearly seen from the current growth rate.



Sierra Leone – Annual Population Growth Rate 1963 - 2015



Source: Statistics Sierra Leone – 2015 Population and Housing Census – Summary of Final Results

Although Sierra Leone is overwhelmingly more rural than it is urban in terms of land mass, just 59% of the population live in rural areas. The young and able-bodied are still migrating to the city and mining areas in large numbers causing some small villages to be abandoned and threatening agricultural production.

What is the Socio-Economic Status of Sierra Leone

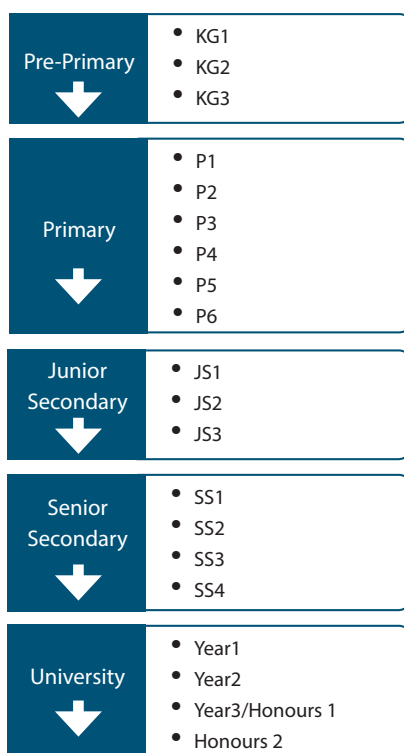
The vision of the Government of Sierra Leone (GOSL) as articulated in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper III (The Agenda for Prosperity 2013-2018) is for Sierra Leone to become a middle-income country by 2035. The GOSL's vision was for Sierra Leone "to become an inclusive, green country, with 80 percent of the population above the poverty line. It would have gender equality, a well-educated, health population, good governance and rule of law."

Sierra Leone's economy is not particularly strong but is fairly resilient. "The period 2014-2016 constituted a serious economic trial for the Government of Sierra Leone. The years 2014 and 2015 were especially devastating in light of the unprecedented outbreak of the Ebola virus disease (EVD) that happened during these two years, coupled with sharp decline in the country's leading export commodity, iron ore that occurred at the same time. The economy came to a virtual standstill during this protracted twin crises..." "The GDP plunged from 20.7 percent in 2013, to 4.6 percent in 2014 and -20.7 percent in 2015."

The incidence of poverty is high. The 2011 Sierra Leone Integrated Household Survey estimated that 52.9% of the population is poor according to the 'less than a US dollar a day' definition of poverty.

What does Education in Sierra Leone look like and what is its contribution to the Human Development Index (HDI)

Sierra Leone operates a 6-3-4-4 system of education as shown in the diagram below:



There has been overall progress in access and quality of education in the last decade. More and more children have been enrolling at every level (See Annex III) but still many children do not start primary schooling at the official age of 6 years and too many of official primary school age are out of school (estimates vary but is approximately 10% ³). The large number of children over the official age contribute to the high Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) which stood at approximately 130% in 2016 and even higher Gross Intake Rate which was estimated in excess of 150% in 2016. It should be noted that many families still do not register births, causing heads of schools to end up guessing ages of children. Unsurprisingly, this makes net rates rather unreliable at present. Happily, there are ongoing Government campaigns for birth and civil registration which could improve this situation.

School level completion rates are moderate but encouraging and increasing consistently which is evidence of increasing efficiency of the system. In 2016 for example the primary completion rate stood at approximately 74% whilst that for the junior secondary level stood at 61%.

Pass rates in the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) conducted end of school level examinations continue to increase slightly annually. For the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) taken at the end of junior secondary schooling, pass rates reached approximately 74% in 2016 as compared to 71% in 2015. For the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE), the percentage of candidates with passes qualifying them for entry to universities, polytechnics and teacher colleges has improved from 26% in 2015 to 28% in 2016. There is a strong conviction, therefore, that improvements in pass rates are possible with the implementation of the interventions detailed in this document. More information and data on performance in WAEC examinations and learning assessment is provided later in the 'quality and relevance' chapter.

An issue of concern is the increase in the number of reports of examination malpractices coming from MEST, independent and civil society monitors of WAEC conducted examinations. The universities as well have reported increased cases of attempts to cheat. It appears that students, parents, teachers and various others are resorting to questionable and unacceptable practices to try and beat the system. Cognizant of the many negative consequences and the implications for good governance and accountability, the Office of the President and the Ministry have instituted a number of measures aimed at bringing the situation under control. These current measures will be augmented by those detailed in this document.

The literacy rate has been steadily improving over the years. The 2015 Population and Housing Census results indicate that the literacy rate for those aged 10 years and above is approximately 51.4% but there is an alarming gap between males and females with the literacy rate of males being 59.4% whilst that for females is 43.9%.

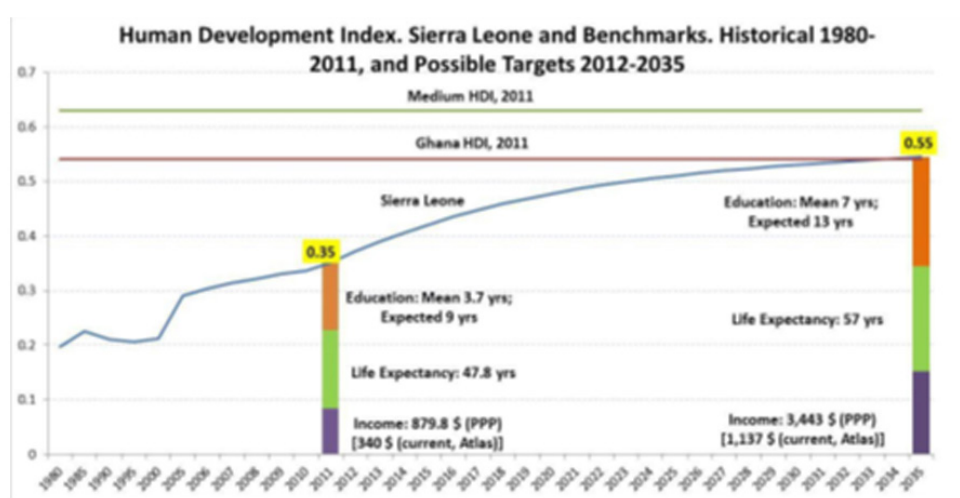
In alignment with the vision for development spelt out in The Agenda for Prosperity, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) also developed an Education Sector Plan (2014-2018): Learning to Succeed (ESP), which focused on the achievement of three goals: (1) improvement of access, equity, and completion; (2) improvement in quality and relevance of what is taught and learnt; and (3) strengthening of education service delivery.

³ According to the 2015 CFSVA, 10% of girls and 9.9% of boys are out of school

Unfortunately, before the implementation of the PRSP III or ESP could really take root, Sierra Leone was hit by an Ebola epidemic of an unprecedented scale as indicated earlier. Over 8,000 cases were reported resulting in almost 4,000 deaths between the month in 2014 when the first case was reported and March 2016 when the epidemic was declared over by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

As well as the devastating effect of the epidemic on the economy indicated earlier, the social sectors like health and education also suffered badly. Schools were closed for almost 8 months, and the 2014/15 academic year, which should have started in September 2014 only started in April 2015. The Ebola crisis highlighted the fragility of both the education and health systems.

Importantly, the Ebola epidemic has thrown completely off-track moves to bring about the improvement in the Human Development Index (HDI) for Sierra Leone spelt out in the Agenda for Prosperity and shown diagrammatically below:



Source: Government of Sierra Leone – The Agenda for Prosperity

Notwithstanding the set-back caused by the Ebola epidemic and economic downturn, it is possible to reach a mean of 7 years of education before 2035. Successful implementation of interventions detailed in this ESP and the one that follows should allow us to reach the mean up to 10 years earlier than projected.

As part of its plan to get back on track after the crisis, the GoSL launched a recovery and transition program. The early recovery period from July 2015 to March 2016 focused on the health, education, social protection and private sector. The second transition plan was a 10-24-month plan (to end in July 2017) which added the water, energy and governance sectors to the others mentioned earlier. In education, the early recovery focused on three broad areas: (1) ensuring that schools were safe and prevent cases of Ebola in schools by ensuring that schools followed infection prevention and control (IPC) guidelines and providing basic IPC equipment (thermometers, WASH facilities etc.); (2) support enrollment of kids in school by waiving tuition and exam fees and establishing a school feeding program; and (3) accelerating learning by implementing an accelerated syllabus with teacher training and making simple upgrades to structures.

Achievements, Challenges, Emerging Issues and Lessons to be learnt from ESP Implementation during Period 2014 – 2016

In 2017, a mid-term review of the current ESP (2014-2018) was carried out to document progress made during the 2014-2016 period. This section summarises the findings from that review in terms of achievements and challenges. Table 1 shows the progress made on the key indicators for strategic objective 1 by comparing baseline levels with actual data on 2016 and the target for 2018. While most indicators are off-track, the targets for gender parity in access to primary and pre-primary levels of education were met. Access to junior secondary schools and senior secondary schools appear to have gone down from their 2011 levels, which may be because of the school closures and increased rates of teenage pregnancy during the Ebola outbreak as the enrolment rates at this level have been on the rise.

Table 1 - Progress on Indicators for Strategic Objective 1 (SO1): Increase Access, Equity, and Completion at all levels of Education

Indicators	Baseline 2011	Actual 2016	Target 2018	STATUS AS OF 2016
Strategic Objective 1: Increase access, equity, and completion at all levels of education				
S.O. 1.1 - All children access and complete primary education				
Proxy Primary Completion Rate (by gender and location)	73%	74%	100%	Off-Track
GPI based on Completion Rate	0.92	0.96	0.95	Met
Gross enrolment rate (by gender and location)	124%	130%	119%	Off-Track
S.O. 1.2 - To increase access to preschool for children aged 3-5				
Pre-primary Gross Enrolment Ratio (by gender and location)	8.4%	11%	22%	Off-track
GPI based on Pre-Primary GER	1.07	1.1	1.0	Met
S.O. 1.3 - To increase equitable access to and completion of junior secondary school				
Transition rate from primary to JSS	77%	83% (2015)	87%	On-Track
JSS Completion Rate	57%	64%	75%	Off-Track
Gross Enrolment Rate JSS	67%	61%	88%	Off-Track
S.O. 1.4 - To increase equitable access to senior secondary schools (SSS)				
Gross Enrolment Rate Secondary	35%	28%	37%	Off-Track
Gender Parity Index for GER	0.73	0.79 (2015)	0.82	On-Track
Location Parity Index for GER	TBD	No data	TBD	Issue
S.O. 1.5 - To increase equitable access to technical and vocational schools				
Ratio of TVET to SSS enrolment of LCs with smallest and largest TVET enrolments	TBD	No data	TBD	Issue
S.O. 1.6 - To increase equitable access to higher education institutions (HEIs)				
Students in public HEIs per 100,000 inhabitants (by gender and location)	528	No data	650	On-Track
S.O. 1.7 - Improve literacy rate for youth and adults (15+)				
Adult literacy rate (by gender and location)	42%	51% ⁴	63%	Off-track

⁴ Literacy rate – for population aged 10 and above, 2015 census

Table 2 shows progress made on Strategic Objective 2 pertaining to quality and relevance of education. While the basic education curriculum was revised, nationwide implementation is still lagging. One challenge that MEST faces is the lack of data and a system to assess learning or quality. Work is currently being done in designing a learning assessment framework and assessment instrument, which should help close this gap. Teacher management is still an issue with many teachers still lacking the minimum qualifications to teach and large disparities in the pupil teacher ratio amongst local councils. The latter can be solved by a more rational method of allocating teachers to schools.

Table 2 - Progress on Indicators for Strategic Objective 2 (SO2): Improve the Quality and Relevance of Education at all levels

Indicators	Baseline 2011	Actual 2016	Target 2018	STATUS AS OF 2016
Strategic Objective 2: To improve the quality and relevance of education at all levels				
S.O. 2.1 - To improve learning environments for all				
% of schools or other institutions that meet physical structure minimum standards	30% (Est.)	45% (Est.)	85%	Off-Track
S.O. 2.2 - To reform the basic education curricula				
Curriculum Revised	Arrangements for revision commenced	Curriculum Revised, but not in use	New curriculum in use	On-track
S.O. 2.3 - To improve literacy and numeracy skills at primary level				
% of children with literacy skills that 'meet expectations'	Not started	Not started	60%	On-Track
% of children with numeracy skills that 'meet expectations'	Not started	Not started	60%	Off-Track
S.O. 2.4 - To improve quality and distribution of teachers				
% of primary teachers who have received training in reading instruction	No data	47%	70%	On-track
% of primary teachers with TEC or better	50%	61%	80%	On-track
% of JSS teachers with HTC (Sec.) or better	43%	72%	85%	On-track
LC Parity in Primary Pupil-Teacher Ratio	0.36	0.4 (2015)	0.8	On-track

Table 3 shows progress on the strategic objective related to strengthening the systems for education service delivery.

Table 3 - Progress on Indicators for Strategic Objective 3 (SO3): Strengthen Systems for Effective Delivery of Education Services

Indicators	Baseline 2016	Actual 2018	Status as of 2016
S.O. 3.1 - Improve Communication and Coordination			
Public Relations Unit (PRU) of MEST revitalised and external communications strategy developed.	Not yet	PRU fully functional and strategy in use	In progress
Comprehensive Information Communications Technology (ICT) plan developed.	Not yet	ICT plan in use	In progress
S.O. 3.2 - Develop Consistent, Coherent, Enabling Policies and Legislation			
TVET policy finalised	Achieved: TVET Policy approved and in use	Policy developed and available on MEST website	Partly Met
Minimum Standards for schools and institutions developed	On-going	Policy developed and available on MEST website	Partly Met
S.O. 3.3 - MEST plans and manages its own human resources			
Competency framework covering all grades and roles within MEST	Not yet	Competency framework in use	Initial discussions
Staff development programme exists and being implemented	Not yet	Programme in use	Some preliminary work
All officers have annually agreed objectives which are used as basis for annual performance assessment.	On-going	Objectives based performance assessment	In part
MEST fully staffed		90% of vacant positions filled	Off-Track
S.O. 3.4 - Establish effective, functioning systems for teacher management			
Functional Teaching Service Commission (TSC)	On-going	Fully-funded and decentralised TSC	On-going
Registration and licensing	On-going	Policy guidelines and tools developed	Off-track
Recruitment and management of teachers	On-going	Policy guidelines developed	Off-track
Payroll management	Not yet started	Teacher payroll management transferred to the TSC	Off-Track
S.O. 3.5 - Improve strategic and operational planning for development and service delivery			
Donor coordination entity established	On-going	Established and staffed fully	On-going
Annual education calendar	On-going	Produced and distributed before the start of the year	On-going

Indicators	Baseline 2016	Actual 2018	Status as of 2016
S.O. 3.6 - MEST has the capacity to collect, manage and use current data and evidence to inform its own work and that of other stakeholders			
Decentralized EMIS	On-going	EMIS is partly decentralized	On-going
S.O. 3.7 - Structures, systems and roles are in place to effectively address decentralisation			
Operational Guidelines for financial and budgetary issues exist	Partly in place	Developed and in-use	On-going
Number of meetings between MEST and Local Councils		Meetings held regularly	Off-track
S.O. 3.9 - Build the capacity to monitor performance and supervise quality improvement at all levels			
National minimum standards developed	Not yet	Standards exist and rolled out to all schools	Off track
Number of school visits by inspectors	<1 a term	Each school is visited at least once a term	Off track
Percent of schools that meet minimum standards	Standards not yet established	75 percent of schools meet set minimum standards	On-going

The 2018 – 2020 ESP and Sustainable Development Goal No. 4 (SDG4)

Sierra Leone associates itself with and endorses all of the main international goals for education that are relevant to it. In this regard, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) works closely with relevant arms of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED), which is a fusion of the Ministries of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, and the Office of the President. In order to ensure alignment between the country's international commitments for education, national priorities, as spelt out in various documents, and this ESP, the team responsible for the drafting of this document included those individuals from MEST and MoFED working on international commitments and national priorities for education.

One key international agreement on education to which Sierra Leone is committed and which guides interventions and activities detailed in this document is the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by the UN General Assembly in September 2015. The 2014 – 2018 ESP was developed prior to "September 2015 when the World adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)." (Neyestani-Hailu, 2016). The main SDG education goal is SDG4. It "calls upon all nations to: ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all."

As Neyestani-Hailu points out in the UNESCO-BREDA Education 2030 Brief of October 2016, from 1990 to 2000, "the Education for All (EFA) agenda promoted access to, quality and relevance of basic education through both formal and non-formal means until 2015. The Millennium Development Goals overshadowed this agenda by narrowly focusing on primary education and gender parity in education." Sierra Leone was a signatory to the achievement of both the EFA Goals and MDGs and tried as best as it could to fulfil its international obligations with the limited resources at its disposal. The scope of SDG4 is much greater than the MDG for education as is apparent from the fact that it focuses on 'inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all' and has as its targets the following all of which, with the exception of 4a and 4b are to be achieved by 2030:

SDG4 Targets

- 4.1 Quality primary/secondary education for all
- 4.2 Early childhood & pre-primary education
- 4.3 Equal access to TVET & higher education
- 4.4 Relevant skills for work
- 4.5 Gender equity/equality & equal access for all
- 4.6 Youth and adult literacy
- 4.7 Global citizenship
- 4.a Safe & inclusive learning environments
- 4.b Scholarships for higher education
- 4.c Teachers' training and working conditions

(A more detailed version of the targets is to be found in Annex V)

This ESP takes full cognizance of SDG4 and its associated targets. Unlike the 2014 – 2018 ESP which focused largely on the primary and secondary sub-sectors, it covers all the subsectors from pre-primary to tertiary and non-formal education in the areas of situation analysis, strategies and interventions. It also gives attention to TVET and skills training as well as greater emphasis of pre-primary education, both of which were quite low profile in the preceding ESP. This is all clearly shown by the intervention statements, their targets and indicators. There is no SDG4 target that is not directly or indirectly addressed by one or more of the interventions to be implemented under this ESP. For example, the issue of quality primary/secondary education for all receives attention in both Chapters 1 and 2 as do early childhood and pre-primary education as well as TVET, etc. matters. The interventions do not only help us to meet SDG targets but also Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) targets for education and our PRSP III (Agenda for Prosperity) goals.

As already indicated, the alignment of the ESP and SDG4 has been made possible by the fact that the unit at the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED) responsible for monitoring progress on the SDGs and the entity at MEST responsible for monitoring progress and providing updates on the SDG indicators for education are involved in the drafting of this document. At the same time, every attempt is made to keep this ESP realistic and its targets achievable. It recognises the fact that the lifetime of this update poses limitations on what is achievable. It also recognises the fact that the current dire economic situation poses challenges that are compounded by serious manpower and skills capacity constraints. Even though work has commenced on interventions leading towards the achievement of SDG targets, it is a fact that for many targets to be achieved by the current target date of 2030, partners would need to significantly increase their support.

Context and Rationale for Rapid Updating of ESP

The above clearly details the context for the development of the 2018 – 2020 ESP i.e. a devastating Ebola epidemic, economic collapse, education at a virtual standstill, new and innovative methods of working / functioning coming into play, ESP interventions having to be postponed and/or abandoned, new interventions and priorities not detailed in the ESP coming into play, and a need to transition back from emergency priorities to a period of accelerated growth/development. In particular the Ministry, stakeholders and the partners regard the period of transition from recovery back to 'normality'/'development' as an opportunity to carry out re-prioritisation and quickly update the 2014 to 2018 ESP so that it better prepares the system for situations of emergency and the mushrooming and troubling integrity issues that threaten to engulf the system. Additionally, the tremendous difference in the economic situation of the country as projected and the real situation following a virtual economic collapse, necessitated a review, revision and an update of the content of the 2014 – 2018 ESP. Such is the magnitude of the integrity challenges and the accompanying negative impact on access, retention, completion, learning and overall well-being of the education system that delaying action is likely to result in a very unhealthy situation for education in Sierra Leone. The Office of the President shares the integrity concerns expressed in this document and the need for urgent action. In this regard, he has instituted action that goes beyond the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology to include other players shown in Annex VI. 'School Feeding' is a high level Presidential priority for education requiring significant amounts of financial and other resources. 'School Feeding' is totally absent in the 2018 – 2020 ESP. Only through updating can it receive coverage in the ESP. The bottom line is that there are major issues and new priorities that need immediate attention which are not covered at all in the 2014 – 2018 ESP.

Developing a completely new ESP requires a comprehensive sector diagnosis which would include a full public expenditure analysis of the sector as well as detailed sector and trend analyses and a new simulation model. Based on similar work done in the past, all of this cannot be accomplished in less than 12 months. The foregoing being the case, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, together with its partners, decided to prepare this plan which provides a sound foundation for the preparation of the next ESP by the government that comes into office after the 2018 elections.

This ESP is given a lifetime of only 3 years because it is planned that by 2019 a comprehensive sector diagnosis would have been carried out and work started on developing a brand new sector plan which would be informed by the sector diagnosis. Implementation of this new sector plan would start in 2021. It follows that this document, the 2018-2020 ESP, is intended to be primarily a transition document that sets the foundation for an ESP 2021-2025 even though it contains elements that make it to stand out from other transition documents.

Methodology

The methodology employed for the development of the ESP was as follows. A supervisory/oversight committee with representation from the GoSL (MEST and MoFED), civil society and key partners/donors was established. This committee was chaired by MEST which also appointed the ESP Development lead.

In order to commence the work, the oversight committee called for a detailed review of the 2014 – 2018 ESP and a comprehensive review report. This fitted in with the need for a mid-term review of the ESP and the commencement of a low level sector analysis. A team made up of national and international consultants was quickly assembled to carry out both tasks. To expedite the review report drafting process, the team went on a short retreat.

So that it could be more reflective of the thinking and concerns of the public, the review mentioned in the preceding paragraph was informed by district level consultations and a national workshop. Details of participants at the district level workshops can be found in Annex VI. Findings from the review report together with key recommendations from the national workshop, inputs and suggestions from partners on the review report, interventions and activities during the Ebola and post-Ebola recovery periods as well as incomplete and delayed but important interventions from the 2014 – 2018 ESP, have all guided the drafting of this document. The first/preliminary draft of this document was used for district level consultations and inputs. The revised draft resulting from accommodating inputs acceptable to the GoSL was shared with the MEST, the GPE and all partners for additional scrutiny and quality assessment prior to further revision and finalisation.

The 2018 – 2020 ESP - Content

This ESP focuses on continuing, expanding and sustaining improvements already made under the ESP (2014-2018) in access and equity, quality and relevance, and system strengthening. In addition, it includes a new focus on strengthening the system's emergency preparedness that will ensure better response to shocks such as disease epidemics, natural disasters, and insecurity. Most importantly, this ESP takes cognizance of the financial realities following the virtual collapse of the economy and the mushrooming lack of integrity threatening to engulf the education system. As should already be apparent from the early part of this introductory chapter, lessons learnt from all that took place during and immediately after the Ebola epidemic pervades this document. In particular the very effective manner in which the system operated, with dedicated Working Groups for all MEST key recovery priorities, regular meeting cycles, close leadership oversight and guidance through the weekly Heads of Working Group meeting, etc. during the period receives much attention. The very high level concern over the lack of integrity pervading the system also greatly informs the content of this document. Overall, this ESP focuses on robust, sustainable, new and innovative solutions to the challenges, old and new, that plague the system. It also takes cognizance of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) No. 4 and the attainment of associated goals.

A key difference between this ESP and the immediately preceding ESP is that this takes greater cognizance of the theory of change. Thus, this ESP is structured so that it has an overall goal supported by strategic outcomes that would allow the achievement of that goal whilst at the same time each strategic outcome has interventions and activities that would make achievement of that strategic outcome possible. In the preceding ESP, interventions were based on objectives rather than outcomes.

It needs to be noted that every effort has been made to prioritise and keep the number of interventions and activities manageable given the limited resources and capacity available. Thus, starting with an initial total of sixty (60) interventions, eighteen (18) were removed following extensive discussions, consultations and re-prioritisation. It should also be noted that the interventions retained in this final version of the ESP are those which a very large cross-section of many stakeholders – market women, bike-riders, school and college students, teachers, traditional leaders, civil servants, university lecturers, local council representatives, development partners, business people, etc. – insisted should be retained in the document during a well-attended national ESP finalisation workshop.

THEMES

1 - Access, Equity and Completion

Preamble

Education plays a key role in the development at individual, community and national levels. It can be a catalyst for accelerating economic growth and development especially in low-income countries. Education can also bridge social and economic inequalities, by providing equal access to education for all children. Aware of the great benefits of education and the capacity to transform society, the Government and people of Sierra Leone have invested in the education sector with a view to expanding opportunities towards providing education for all.



The GoSL has a commitment to attain Universal Primary Education (UPE) by the year 2020. The government also has a commitment to providing basic education; 6 years of primary education and 3 years of Junior Secondary Education (JSS) to all children. In partnership with development partners, there is the drive towards improving basic, secondary, technical and tertiary education, through expansion of access, strengthening retention, increasing completion, promoting gender parity, improving quality, and ensuring efficiency in the management of education. To attain the set goals, the Government has decided that basic education in Sierra Leone should be ‘free and compulsory’ to the extent stated in the Education Act of 2004.

Access

More children are enrolling in school, with increased school population over the last decade as the nation began to stabilise following the war. The number of schools has risen, from a total of 7,972 in 2011/2012 to 8,031 schools in 2013 and 8,784 in 2015/2016; an increase of 812 schools in three years. The highest increase was at primary school level where there were an additional 434 schools.

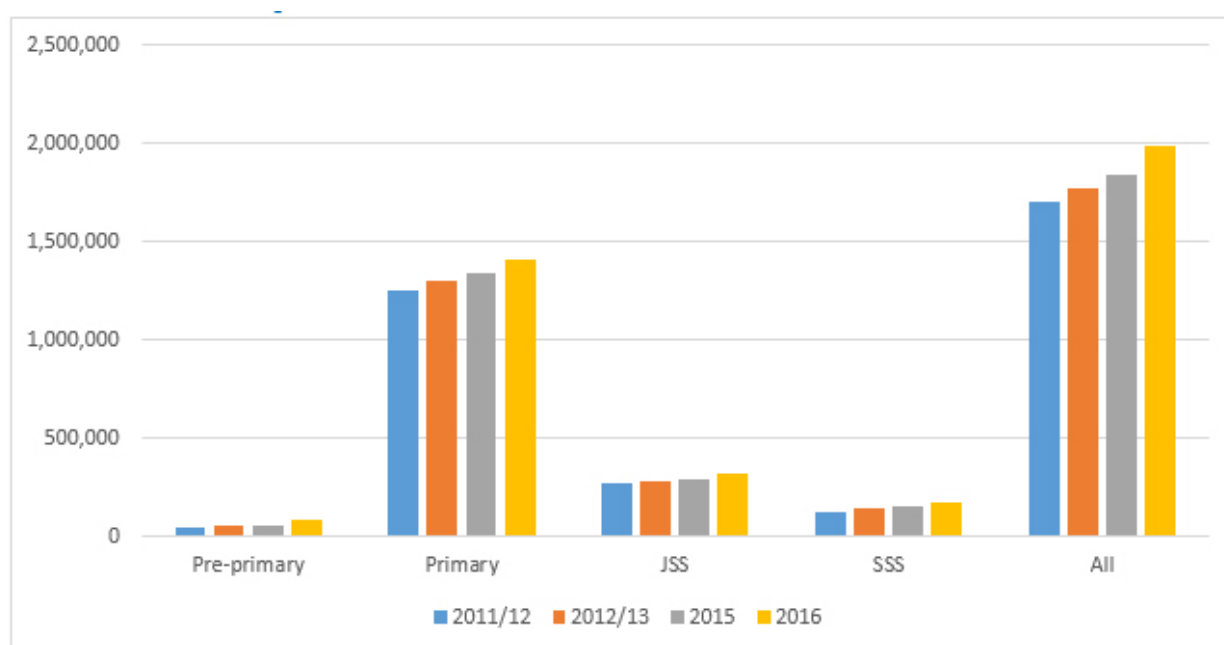
The issue of disparity in enrolment receives more detailed attention in the section on equity that follows but it is worth noting in this section that there are disparities in accessing education between regions with regard to provision of facilities and type of facilities available. Western region is the smallest geographically but with the highest population density, as it includes the capital city of Freetown. In addition to having the highest number of schools, Northern region has the lowest percentage (15.7%) of makeshift classrooms, indicating that most of the enrolled students attend lessons in permanent structures. Eastern region has the highest percentage of makeshift classrooms at 24.3%.

Table 1.0a - Number of School by Region and Level

Region	Preschool	Primary	JSS	SSS	All	% of All
East	208	1,435	204	57	1,904	21%
North	224	2,402	433	84	3,143	35%
South	157	1,583	211	59	2,010	23%
West	511	901	297	141	1,850	21%
National	1,100	6,321	1,145	341	8,907	100
% All School	12%	71%	13%	4%		

Source: Table taken from ASC 2016 (Provisional)

Total enrolments of children and youth from pre-school to SSS have also risen steadily, from 1,765,188 in 2011/2012 to 1,981,273 in 2016 as is shown in the chart below.

Fig. 1.0 – Trends in Enrolment at School Level 2011/12 – 2015/16

The steady increase in enrolment at all levels over the years is a clear indication that the interventions to improve access have been successful. Keeping fees at a reasonable level, constructing more classrooms and schools in remote areas that previously possessed none, using traditional leaders and local people to convince others about the benefits of schooling, etc., have all borne fruit. The challenge is now getting students to stay in school until basic education has been completed and getting those who are out of school to return and start or complete their schooling.

Gross Enrolment Rates (GER) at primary level is above 100%, at 125.5% in 2015; an indication of a significant number of over-age and under-age children enrolled at this level. At JSS level, the GER stands at 61%, although this forms part of basic education, which is expected to be free and compulsory.

However, at pre-primary level enrolments have remained low, with a GER of 11% in 2016, while enrolments have remained low at SSS level (with 28% in 2016) and low participation in TVET and higher education.

Disparities in overall enrolment statistics exist at the district, local council and chiefdom levels. The School Census Report and the CSR both provide details on disparities at levels below the regional level. Northern region has the highest percentage of school students enrolled nationally at 36.6%, Eastern region is at 20.8%, Southern at 21.7%, and Western at 20.9%.

Many children with disabilities are not enrolled in schools. As indicated later in the section on 'equity', some children are giving their physical disability as a reason for being out of school. In the draft 2015 Annual School Census Report, 25,339 out of a total of 1,841,252 students (i.e. 1.4%) enrolled at all levels of schooling reported some form of disability as shown in the table below:

Table 1.0b: Enrolment of Students with Disability by Disability Type, Sex and Level of Schooling

Level	Hearing disability		Learning disability		Physical disability		Speech disability		Visual disability		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Preschool	89	89	142	151	131	95	136	140	79	66	577	541
Primary	1,922	1,818	3,206	3,321	1,754	1,538	1,853	1,457	2,146	1,326	10,881	9,460
JSS	234	222	471	531	494	328	187	122	286	286	1,672	1,489
SSS	44	39	60	14	208	127	35	14	129	49	476	243
National	2,289	2,168	3,879	4,017	2,587	2,088	2,211	1,733	2,640	1,727	13,606	11,733
	4,457		7,896		4,675		3,944		4,367		25,339	
% of Total	17.6		31.2		18.4		15.6		17.2			

Source: Annual School Census 2015 – Draft Report

Given the number of children with disabilities that are seen out of school in villages and towns there is every reason to believe that more children with disabilities are out of school than enrolled in school. The table below also seems to hint that this could be the case with out-of-school-children (OOSC) households having a higher percentage of individuals with disability than non-OOSC households.

Table 1.0c: Disability by OOSC Household Status and Gender (%)

Type of Disability	Non-OOSC household			OOSC household		
	Male [n=1,224]	Female [n=1,181]	Total [n=2,405]	Male [n=3,307]	Female [n=3,163]	Total [n=6,470]
No disability	99.3	99.3	99.3	98.5	98.8	98.7
Visually impaired	0.3	0	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.3
Deaf and dumb	0.2	0	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.3
Physically impaired	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.6	0.4	0.5
Hearing impaired	0	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.3
Mental problem	0	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1

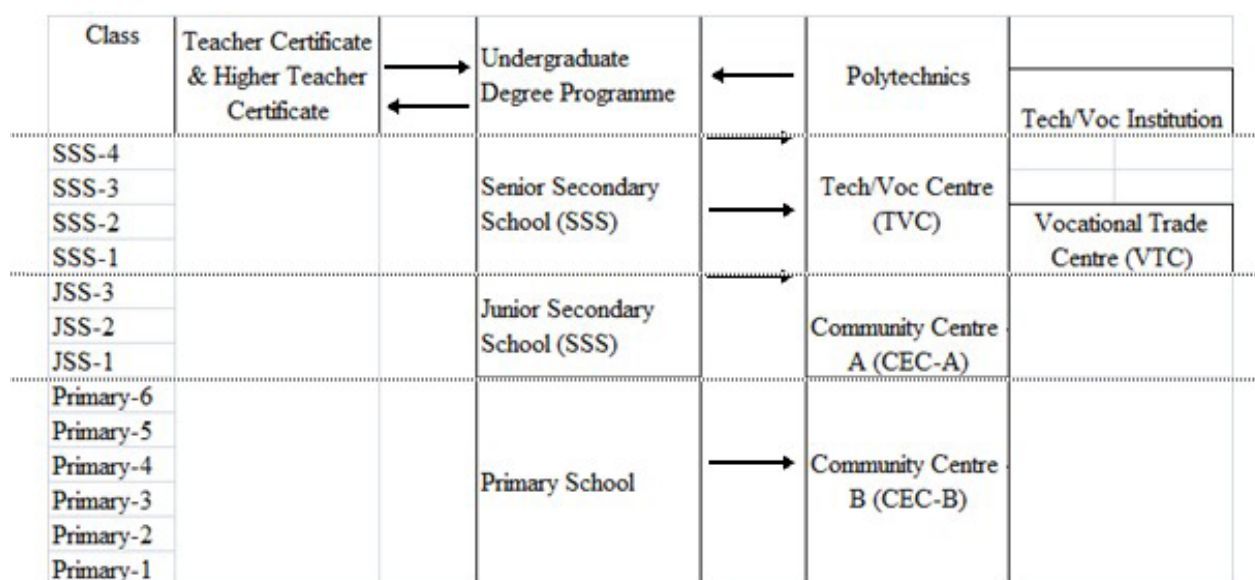
Source: A National Assessment of the Situation of Out-Of-School Children in Sierra Leone

Every effort is made by the GoSL to ensure that Ebola orphans, Ebola survivors and victims of disasters, such as the recent mud-slide in Freetown, do not lose out on education because of their mishap. In this endeavour they are greatly assisted by partners but the GoSL remains the main provider of support. In this regard, it ensured that all Ebola orphans and Ebola survivors had access to schooling and were not subjected to discrimination or embarrassment. The integration of Ebola orphans and survivors has been so successful that few, if any, know if their school or college has an Ebola orphan or survivor enrolled. No one has yet claimed to be out of school because of Ebola.

In the case of the recent mud-slide disaster, the Ministry made it possible for known orphans to have free schooling. It also ensured that children of those with families that had survived the disaster and moved away to another area were provided with schooling in their new area of residence. On the advice of experts, it also shut down schools in locations deemed to be unsafe and provided urgent/emergency temporary schooling for some whilst accommodating those that wished in schools situated far away from the unsafe locations. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and the GoSL as a whole have learnt valuable lessons from the Ebola epidemic and mud-slide disaster and in this ESP is contained elements of what the Ministry intends putting in place in readiness for future emergencies.

Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET), especially the vocational aspect, span all levels of education as is apparent from the structure of the educational system shown in the diagram below and the table that follows. Additionally, it is worth noting that TVET programmes are not offered exclusively by traditional TVET institutions shown on the right of the diagram, schools and universities also offer subjects/courses/ programmes that can be termed 'TVET'. This means that enrolment in TVET institutions tend to be less than enrolment in TVET programmes.

Fig. 1.1: Structure of Education System of Sierra Leone



Source: Situation Analysis Study of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Sierra Leone

Table 1.0d: Level of Education Covered by the Different Types of TVET Institutions

TVET Institutions	Level
Community Education Centre – B (CEC-B)	Non-formal/Primary
Community Education Centre – A (CEC-A)	Primary to JSS
Vocational Trade Centre (VTC)	JSS to early SSS
Tech/Voc Centre (TVC)	JSS to SSS
Tech/Voc Institutions (TVI)	SSS to post SSS below Tertiary
Polytechnics	Post SSS to Tertiary

Source: Derived from - Situation Analysis Study of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Sierra Leone

Getting total enrolment in TVET programmes tends to be difficult because of the range and type of institutions offering them but getting enrolment in TVET institutions tends to be more straightforward. The ‘Situation Analysis Study of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Sierra Leone’ report of 2015 states – “In 2008, when the last survey of technical vocational institutions was conducted, there were 370 such institutions registered with MEST. However, a hundred or more did not register with MEST and the number of registered students was 27,055.”

Data for the situation analysis study mentioned in the preceding paragraph was collected from TVET institutions below polytechnic level in four (4) districts and the Western Area (Urban and Rural). This makes it less comprehensive than the data collected in 2008 which was based on data collected from a larger number of institutions nation-wide. Even so it seems logical to conclude/assume, from the enrolment of 15,131 from just 126 institutions below polytechnic level from just the 4 districts and the Western Area, that total enrolment in TVET institutions has increased since 2008. (Note that there are a total of 14 districts, including the Western Area – Urban and Rural) in Sierra Leone).

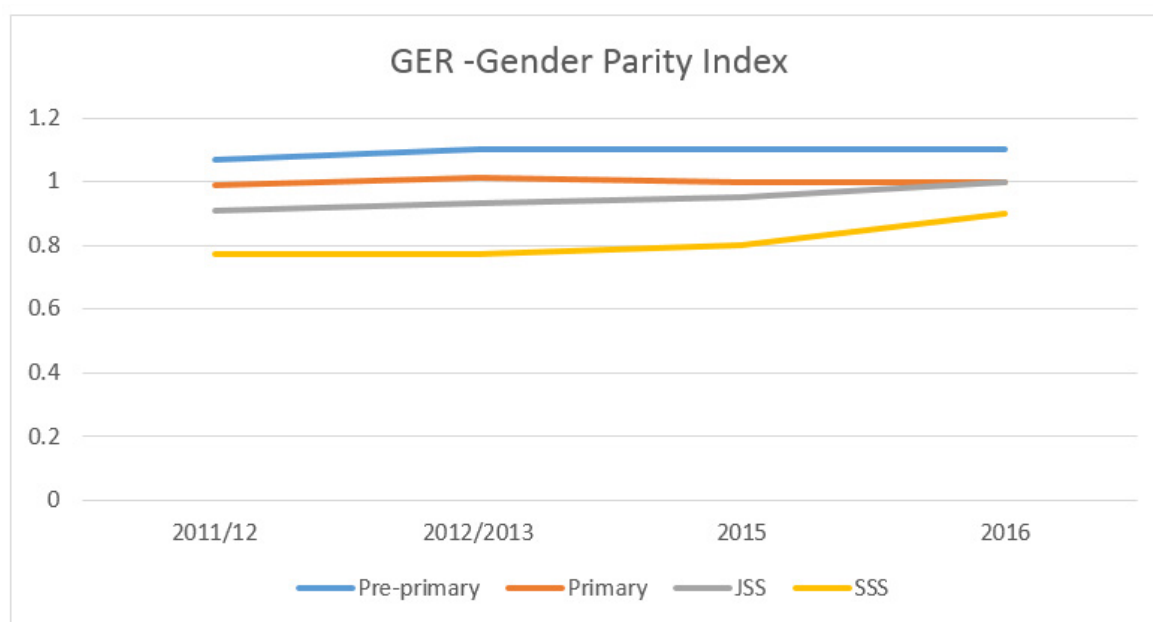
Enrolment in tertiary level institutions is increasing rapidly, largely because a greater number of students are successfully completing senior secondary schooling. For example, in the 2011/12 academic year, the total number of students enrolled at the then two public universities (University of Sierra Leone and Njala University), polytechnics and teacher colleges doing certificate, diploma, teacher certificate, under-graduate and post-graduate programmes was 31,103 according to the Tertiary Education Commission. For just 2015 and 2016 combined, the total number of senior secondary school students qualifying, through performance in the WASSCE, for entry into undergraduate, teacher certificate, diploma and certificate programmes alone in these same institutions was 28,453, according to analysis of performance in the 2016 and 2017 WASSCE. Given that the total number of GoSL scholarship awards for each public tertiary level institution per year is in the hundreds rather than the thousands and given the fact that university and college fees are beyond the reach of many families, it is clear that many will currently not continue their education beyond senior secondary school level simply because of cost. With the introduction of the student loan scheme now in the pipeline, the current barrier will be lowered and the pressure will increase on the institutions, in particular the public universities, which are already struggling to accommodate successful applicants.

Equity

Issues of inequalities cut across gender, physical status, socio-economic status, geographical locations, rural/urban and ability. From the discussions at district level, and the Country Education Status Report, one of the challenges for most children to access and remain in school is the cost indicating that the greatest inequalities have to do with affordability of education. Children from more wealthy households in urban areas are more likely to attend and complete school than those from poorer families in rural areas.

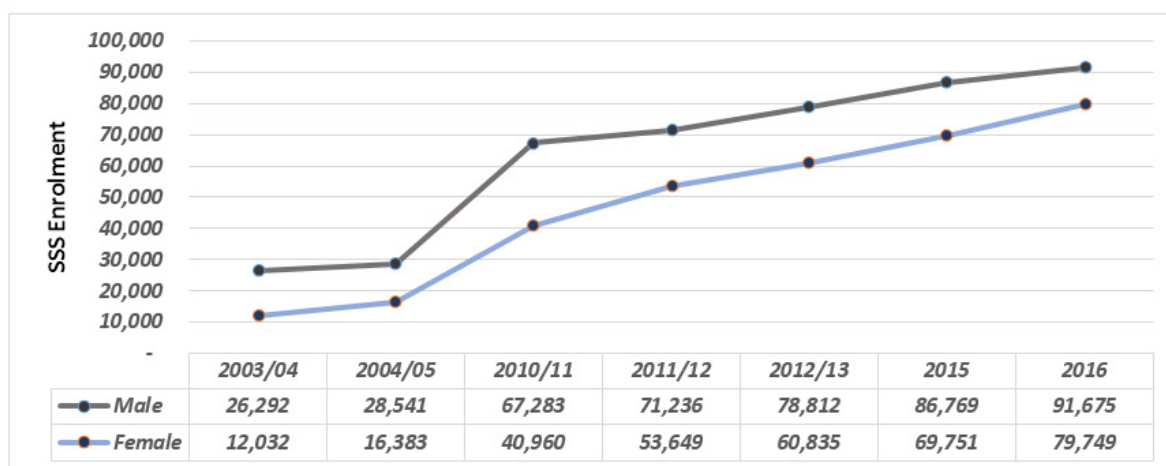
While gender parity has been achieved at the pre-school and primary levels, with more girls enrolled than boys and at both the pre-primary and primary school levels, the gap increases at JSS, and becomes conspicuous at SSS, TVET, and tertiary level. The Gender Parity Index (GPI) at pre-school level is in favour of girls at 1.1, while there is gender parity at primary and almost parity at JSS level. At SSS level, girls are disadvantaged in comparison to boys, with a GPI of 0.9. This can be seen from the chart below which shows the increasing favourable trend in gender parity from the 2011/12 to the 2015/16 school year.

Fig. 1.2 – Trend in Gender Parity Index at School Level from 2011/12 – 2015/16



If the trend shown in the chart below continues, there is every possibility that in the next 5 to 6 years, gender parity will also be achieved at the senior secondary level. Achievement of this goal of gender parity will be greatly aided by successful implementation of this ESP and in particular relevant activities detailed in the Implementation Plan.

Fig. 1.3 – Trend in Enrolment at the Senior Secondary Level 2003/04 – 2015/16



Due primarily to cultural practices and a resistance to the introduction of Western education by Christian missionaries, the Northern Region lagged behind the other regions in enrolments in schools for many years. As a consequence of interventions targeting the Eastern and Northern Regions in the last two decades, the Northern Region has now caught up with and gone beyond the other regions in terms of general enrolment at the primary and junior secondary levels, it still lags behind the others in terms gender parity especially at the post-primary level. At the same time it should be noted that there are significant differences between the districts that make up the Northern Region. For example, the Bombali District which houses the capital of the Northern Region has secondary schools in which more females than males are enrolled and a GPI that is as high as those of districts in other regions.

Until relatively recently, schools were not constructed and teachers were not trained with the needs of children with disabilities in mind. For example, it is only in the last 2 years that it has become a MEST policy for all schools to have ramps for the physically disabled and toilets that are disabled friendly. In fact 5.4% of respondent children interviewed whilst collecting data for the 2016 GoSL and UNICEF National Assessment of the Situation of Out of School Children in Sierra Leone gave disability as a reason for being out of school. The inclusive education policy currently should contribute to a more even playing field for children with disabilities as far as education is concerned.

Geographical differences in enrolments are also evident. Table 2.0, below, indicates that the Northern region has the highest number of students enrolled at primary and JSS levels. However, the Western region which includes Freetown had the highest numbers at pre-primary and SSS levels. Southern region, although it has higher numbers enrolled at primary level than Eastern region, it has the lowest numbers at pre-primary, JSS and SSS levels. In terms of total school enrolments, Southern Region has the lowest numbers of children enrolled.

The unavailability of school age populations by district and region makes comparability in terms of GER by district and region, difficult. The Ministry is currently appealing to the national statistics authority, Statistics Sierra Leone (SSL), to generate the needed tables from the database of the recently conducted Population and Housing Census. On the needed tables being generated, the necessary computations will be carried out and enrolment disparities identified by district and region.

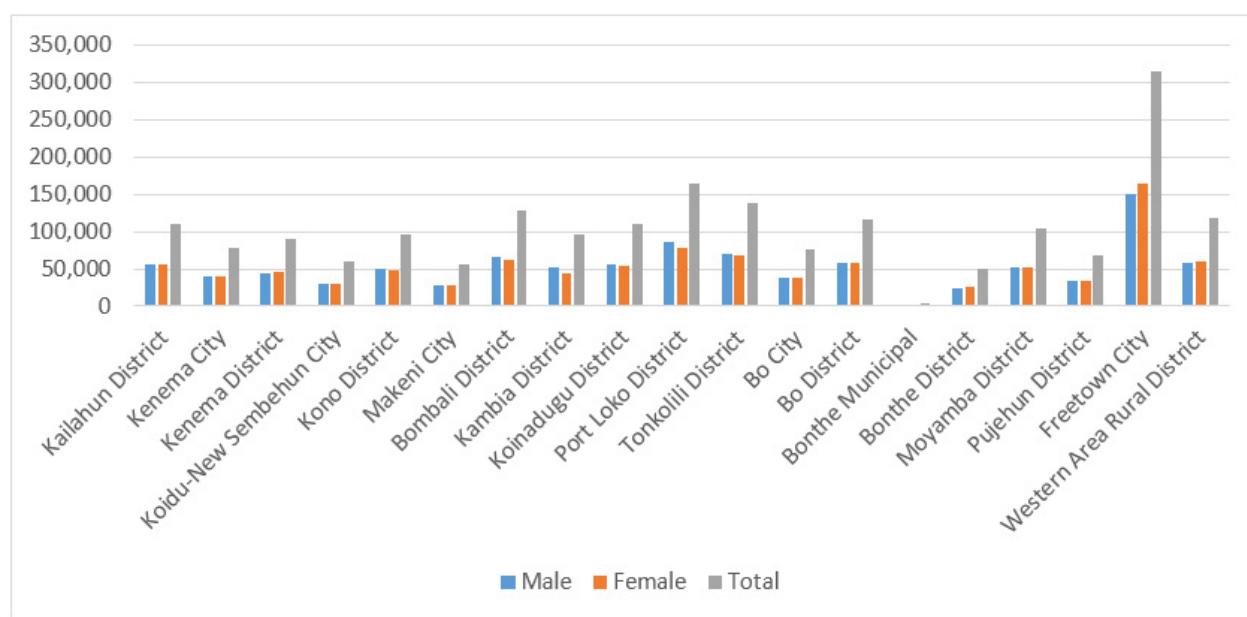
Table 1.0e: Total School Enrolment by Region and Level

Region	Preschool		Primary		JSS		SSS		All	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
East	8,164	9,244	160,125	163,879	31,545	32,465	18,476	13,550	218,310	219,138
North	7,667	8,451	269,075	254,944	57,204	49,060	26,491	19,572	360,437	332,027
South	5,583	6,523	161,056	168,254	28,965	26,948	11,674	10,666	207,278	212,391
West	16,748	18,543	111,922	123,269	44,250	45,965	35,034	35,961	207,954	223,738
National	38,162	42,761	702,178	710,346	161,964	154,438	91,675	79,749	993,979	987,294
	80,923		1,412,524		316,402		171,424		1,981,273	
G/B Ratio	1.1		1.0		1.0		0.9		1.0	

Source: MEST Annual School Census Report - Provisional

Disparities also exist in enrolments between rural and urban areas, with the towns and cities having more schools and higher enrolments than the rural areas. For example, Freetown has more schools than the rural Western district; with 1279 schools in Freetown compared to 571 in rural Western Area. The same pattern is observed, with school enrolments. It is also important to observe that in the cities, there are more girls enrolled in schools than boys. That is evident in Kenema, Makeni, Bo and Freetown cities.

Fig. 1.4: 2016 Total Male and Female School Enrolments by Local Council



Source: Annual School Census 2016 - Provisional

It is expected that there would be some correlation between the number of schools in a district and the number of students enrolled in that district. As the table below indicates, this is largely the case i.e. the percentage of national enrolment and percentage of national total of schools are similar in most cases. It can be argued that in instances where the correlation is less than expected it is due to differences in school sizes which tend to vary widely i.e. some schools could have enrolment in excess of a thousand each whilst others could have total enrolments that are less than a hundred each. Note the variation in student to school ratio for the different local councils. It appears that some local councils have fewer but larger schools.

Table 1.0f: 2016 School Level Enrolment and Number of Schools by Local Council

Council	Total Enrolment	Total No. of Schools	Student: School Ratio	% of National Enrolment	% of National No. of Schools
Kailahun District	110,760	462	240	5.6%	5.2%
Kenema City	79,115	253	313	4.0%	2.8%
Kenema District	89,634	527	170	4.5%	5.9%
Koidu-New Sembehun City	60,914	158	386	3.1%	1.8%
Kono District	97,025	504	193	4.9%	5.7%
Makeni City	55,238	143	386	2.8%	1.6%
Bombali District	128,246	636	202	6.5%	7.1%
Kambia District	96,025	419	229	4.8%	4.7%
Koinadugu District	110,177	526	209	5.6%	5.9%
Port Loko District	164,331	753	218	8.3%	8.5%
Tonkolili District	138,447	666	208	7.0%	7.5%
Bo City	75,594	253	299	3.8%	2.8%
Bo District	117,018	587	199	5.9%	6.6%
Bonthe Municipal	3,762	21	179	0.2%	0.2%
Bonthe District	50,214	271	185	2.5%	3.0%
Moyamba District	105,103	571	184	5.3%	6.4%
Pujehun District	67,978	307	221	3.4%	3.4%
Freetown City	314,294	1,279	246	15.9%	14.4%
Western Area Rural District	117,398	571	206	5.9%	6.4%
National	1,981,273	8,907	222		

Source: Annual School Census 2016 - Provisional

Children with disabilities are particularly disadvantaged when it comes to accessing education because many of them are unable to freely and safely enter and navigate through the school structures. In addition, there is a lack of appropriate facilities, teaching/learning materials and trained teachers to meet the needs of children with disabilities. As per the 2015 School Census, 25,339 disabled students were enrolled at different levels of the school system, the majority of them (20,341), are enrolled in primary school. The aforementioned census identified the most common disabilities among children enrolled in schools to include hearing and visual impairment, physical disabilities, speech and learning disabilities. It is worth noting that children with disabilities are disadvantaged in terms of teachers trained to meet their learning needs as well as in terms of teaching and learning materials. The analysis being carried out as part of the process of developing an inclusive education policy will help to provide information necessary to better meet their needs.

In terms of approved and unapproved schools, which impacts on financing and resources from government, there are also regional differences. Western region has 50% approved schools, which is the highest of all districts, but is only slightly higher than the national average of 41%. East and North have the lowest rates, where only 35% of the schools are approved. In many instances, unapproved schools serve low-income households, which renders children in these communities more vulnerable and at risk of not enrolling or dropping out of school.

In terms of provision of opportunities for accessing TVET institutions there is a seeming regional bias with the Western Area having far more institutions than each of the other regions. There is also a bias towards urban areas that results in relatively few TVET institutions being found in rural areas. The sample of institutions selected for the 2015 dated Situation Analysis Study on TVET in Sierra Leone reflected the same bias as the table below shows.

Table 1.0g: Distribution of Institutions by Region and District

Region	District	Institutions
East	Kenema	15
North	Bombali	5
North	Portloko	3
South	Bo	37
Western Area	Western Urban and Rural	66

Source: Derived from – Situation Analysis Study of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Sierra Leone

The fact that the majority of TVET institutions are private with a focus on making profit explains in part the regional and urban bias.

The table below shows the distribution of enrolment by type of TVET institution and sex in the aforementioned study.

Table 1.0h: Enrolment in TVET Institutions by Type of Institution and Sex - 2015

TVET Institution	Male	Female
CEC-A	237 (20%)	947 (80%)
CEC-B	202 (21.3%)	747 (78.7%)
TVC	1,326 (32.7%)	2,731 (68.3%)
TVI	2,605 (42%)	3,599 (58%)
VTC	646 (23.6%)	2,091 (77.4%)

Source: Situation Analysis Study of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Sierra Leone

The table above indicates that there are more female than male students registered in TVET institutions covered by the 2015 situation analysis study. There is no reason to believe that the situation is drastically different in other TVET institutions not covered by the study and the likelihood is that more females are enrolled in TVET institutions than males nationwide but this needs to be confirmed by a more comprehensive study.

Every region of Sierra Leone has tertiary level institutions registered with the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC). Just 4 out of 14 districts appear to lack institutions registered with the TEC. The majority of registered institutions are from the Western Area according to TEC records.

Unlike the situation with TVET institutions, female enrolment in the public universities and teacher training colleges in Sierra Leone, is much lower than male enrolment. This is illustrated in the table below:

Table 1.0i: Enrolment in the Public Universities, Teacher Training Colleges and Bonthe Technical Institute by Location and Sex – 2011/12 Academic Year

Tertiary Education Institution	Location	Male	Female	Total
University of Sierra Leone:	West	6,123	3,285	9,408
FBC		3,341	1,143	4,484
COMAHS		635	821	1,456
IPAM		2,147	1,321	3,468
Njala University (NU)	South	4,022	2,132	6,154
MMCET	West	2,842	1,487	4,329
Eastern Polytechnic (EP)	East	2,286	1,268	3,554
Northern Polytechnic (NP)	North	1,734	1,200	2,934
Bonthe Technical Institute (BTI)	South	54	28	82
Port Loko Teachers College (PLTC)	North	834	580	1,414
Freetown Teachers College (FTC)	West	2,115	1,113	3,228
TOTAL Enrolment		20,010	11,093	31,103

Source: Tertiary Education Commission (TEC)

A major contributory factor to the large difference in enrolment between males and females at university and teacher training colleges, is the fact that far fewer females than males sit and pass the WASSCE with sufficient 'credits' to gain entrance. For example, in 2017, out of the 5,728 school candidates meeting the WASSCE 'credits' requirement for entrance to university only 2,392 were female. Even though there is a deliberate positive bias towards the award of GoSL scholarships to girls wishing to enter college or university, as the table below shows for the 2015/16 academic year, males still receive far more awards than females. The gap can only be bridged by getting more girls to enter and successfully complete senior secondary school.

Table 1.0j – 2015/16 GoSL Grant-in-Aid Award for Selected Tertiary Level Institutions by Sex

Institution	Male	Female	Total
Njala University	285	140	425
Fourah Bay College	420	135	555
COMAHS	99	73	172
IPAM	287	225	512
All	1,091	573	1,664

Source: MEST GIA Award Unit

Completion

Although completion rates have risen at all levels, there are still many children who do not complete school. At primary school level the Proxy Completion Rate (PCR) was 75.3% in 2015, while those for JSS and SSS were 40.6% and 22.2%, respectively. Many of the students do not only fail to complete the levels of education within the required number of years but also fail to complete schooling at all, due to a high level of repetition. According to the Annual School Census (2015), repetition rates at primary school level were 12.6%, 11.3% at JSS and 6.7% at SSS level. The schooling of girls in particular is adversely affected by too many repetitions.

It is not uncommon for girls in remote rural areas to start schooling at 8 instead of the official starting age of 6. If they repeat 2 times at the primary level, by the time they complete primary schooling they could be 16 years of age. Our age distribution data tells us the foregoing is possible and that a significant number of children at the primary level are above the official age range for the level as the chart below shows.

Fig 1.5 – Age Distribution of Students Enrolled in Primary School in the 2015/16 School Year



With the currently low completion rates, it is evident that many children who start school in a given year, drop out before the end of the cycle. High repetition and drop-out rates are indicators of inefficiency within a system that is striving to accommodate all school age children. Children repeating a grade, for example, take up spaces that would have been taken by other children progressing to the next grade. At the same time it is essential that all concerned ensure that learning takes place at all times particularly as those dropping out of the school system most likely leave the school without acquiring the necessary literacy and numeracy skills for effective participation in the country's growing economy.

TVET programmes vary in quality, duration and demand. Except for programmes done under the NCTVA, there is no standardisation especially for those at certificate level. Most students who start the short programmes complete them. Cost is the main barrier to students completing TVET programmes. Even TVET institutions receiving subvention from the GoSL are known to charge fees that make it difficult for poor students to complete their studies.

Fees charged by universities are much higher than those charged by TVET institutions yet the great majority of those starting university complete their programmes of study even those without GoSL scholarship. The student loan scheme that is on the horizon will, it is anticipated, make the number of students unable to complete their programmes because of cost even fewer.

Achievements

In the area of access, equity and completion there are accomplishments worth highlighting. These include:

- There have been significant increases in the number of schools across sub-sectors, from the pre-primary to the senior secondary and tertiary levels. As mentioned above, the number of schools has risen in the last three years by 812 of which 434 were primary.
- Reflecting the demographic trends of the country population there has been a marked increase in the total number of children and youth enrolled in school. Growth in enrolments has been highest at pre-primary level, at 35%, compared to 6% at primary and 10% at both JSS and SSS.
- The gender disparity gap at pre-primary and primary school level has been bridged with Gender Parity Index (GPI) now standing at 1.1 and 1.0, respectively.
- At JSS, the GPI has improved, from 0.91 in 2012 to 0.96 in 2015, an indication that with more effort gender parity can be realised at the JSS level in the next five years. At SSS level, the GPI improved from 0.59 in 2010 to 0.74 and 0.77 in 2015.

Challenges

Despite the many achievements, a significant challenge still remains - stabilising the sector after the Ebola crisis which almost drove it to its knees and disrupted learning for almost a year. The emergency response and post-recovery interventions through the Presidential Recovery Programme have ensured not only resumption of schooling but also recouping of time lost during the crisis. It is imperative that stabilisation of the sector involves mainstreaming of the interventions into the longer-term plans to ensure the gains achieved are not lost.

There are other challenges to enrolments, retention and completion. Some of those presented in the consultations at the district level include poverty, which makes it difficult to afford the cost of schooling. In spite of the fact that primary school education is free, schools continue to charge levies for various activities, including payment of community teachers not included on the MEST payroll. The cost of education as a major deterrent to enrolment and retention is confirmed in the 2015 CFSVA, which states that the main reasons for parents not enrolling their children in school is due to lack of money (35%), fear of EVD (28%), no functioning school in the village (21%), children not interested in school (9%), and parents not interested in school (6%).

Similarly, a 2008 UNICEF survey of children 6 to 15 years old across 54 communities found that the inability to raise the amount of money required for school fees prevented 56 percent of out-of-school children from attending. The children most at risk were orphaned children, those being exploited or abused and disabled students.

The other challenge linked to cost is what communities reported as delayed and insufficient subsidies from MEST. Non-availability of schools in some communities and hence long distances from home to school was also a challenge. At higher levels, the issue of early and sometimes forced marriages, sexual harassment by male teachers and/or male students, early pregnancies etc., affected the retention of girls at JSS and SSS levels, contributing to gender disparities.

Furthermore, according to the 2016 Government of Sierra Leone and UNICEF Assessment of the Situation of Out-Of-School Children, nearly three out of every ten out of school girls (28.6%) are excluded from education as a result of teenage pregnancy.

Strategic Outcomes, Key Indicators and Interventions

Within the short duration of this Education Sector (2018-2020), the Ministry of Education plans to focus its attention and resources on key strategic outcomes. The MEST will prioritise the following strategic outcomes under this theme:

- 1.1 – All Children enter school and complete primary education
- 1.2 – Increased access to pre-school for children 3 to 5 years old
- 1.3 – Improved school-feeding programme for primary schools
- 1.4 – Increased transition rates from primary to Junior Secondary School (JSS), and equitable access to JSS
- 1.5 – Increased equitable access to Senior Secondary School (SSS)
- 1.6 – Improved school infrastructure at primary, JSS and SSS levels
- 1.7 – Increased equitable access to Technical and Vocational Education
- 1.8 – Increased equitable access to higher education
- 1.9 – Improved literacy rate for youth and adults

Strategic Outcome 1.1: All Children enter school and complete primary

Table 1.1: Key Outcome Indicators for Strategic Outcome 1.1

Indicator	2015	2020
Percentage of 6-11 years old out of school	27%	15%
Completion rates	75.4%	85.0%

Our strategic outcome of having all children entering and completing primary education may not be achievable by 2020 for many reasons but it is essential that steps are taken towards its achievement in this ESP. It is possible to amend the strategic outcome to read “more children enter and complete primary education” but that would not be reflective of the Ministry’s real desire or overall goal. In fact the intention of the Ministry is to carry this strategic outcome over to the next ESP by which time it should be achievable if the interventions commence during the lifetime of this ESP.

One of the challenges that need to be addressed is that of drop outs and out-of-school children as a whole. As indicated in the 2016 report – A National Assessment of the Situation of Out-Of-School Children in Sierra Leone, there is still a large number of school age children outside the school system. This includes those who have never enrolled in school and those who have dropped out. In fact many out-of-school children were in school at some point and many who have never been in school will enter at some point. A key challenge is keeping those who enter long enough to complete schooling. Just as in the case of repetition, a high percentage of drop outs results in significant system inefficiency.

Statistics indicate that kids from poor communities across Sierra Leone in particular are less likely to attend and perform well in school compared to kids from more privileged backgrounds. MEST is committed to ensuring that kids with all backgrounds, abilities, and from different communities get the same opportunity to obtain their basic education.

Intervention 1.1a: Reduce the cost of schooling to parents and households by ensuring school subsidies are reviewed and disbursed on time.

One of the deterrents/barriers to enrolling and completing school, identified in the Country Status Report (2013) and confirmed during the ESP Mid Term Review consultations at the district level, is the cost of education. Even though primary education has been declared free and compulsory in the Education Act of 2004, schools continue to charge various levies to parents. These levies, most of them approved by the Community/Teacher Associations (CTAs), range from: Development fees, school colours, pamphlets, assignment fees, report cards, to payment for “practicals” in science subjects. There are also additional costs such as uniforms, books and transportation. They all contribute to increasing cost of education and to exclusion of children whose parents cannot afford. For the large number of children currently attending unapproved schools with no support across the country, the ability of families to cover total costs of schooling (including teacher salaries) is a particular concern.

To address the issue of equity in accessing primary education and exclusion of some children from attending school, the GoSL has intervened through provision of subsidies to schools. Public schools have been receiving subsidies from government, but issues have been raised on adequacy and timeliness of disbursement of funds to schools. MEST will therefore work with MoFED on streamlining the disbursement of grants and subsidies to schools to ensure adequate funds reach schools in a timely manner. The extent and measures currently possible for streamlining will be discussed and agreed jointly by MEST and MoFED but could involve automating certain processes, MoFED making use of MEST WhatsApp groups and Situation Room monitors to get information to districts and schools quickly, making greater use of the MEST Website, etc. This streamlining should reduce the cost of schooling to parents, whilst at the same time government should be better able to meet its obligation to provide free and compulsory primary education.

In addition to the above, the MEST will evaluate the effectiveness of introducing a policy directive on unapproved charges levied by schools, with a view to completely removing them and ensuring that primary if not all of basic education is actually free. Due to financial constraints at a national (as well as school) level, this intervention is to be considered alongside the Performance Based Funding intervention proposed in the System Strengthening chapter of this document (See intervention 1.3.3.2bv), which proposes a method of funding which can be aligned with this and result in schools receiving more funds in a timely manner. The normal subsidy mode described here will continue until the PBF takes off.

The office of the CEO will lead this intervention with the support of the Planning and Policy Directorate. The main risk associated with this intervention is the availability of additional GoSL funding if the present subsidies are found to be inadequate for running the schools, but the risk can be reduced by early discussions with MoFED on ceilings and requiring proprietors to bear part of the cost of running their schools. There is also the risk of information not being provided in a timely manner which should be addressed by the alternative ways already suggested for sharing information.

Intervention 1.1b: Encourage and motivate parents and communities to have children start primary schooling at the official starting age of 6 years

Many children in Sierra Leone do not start primary schooling at the official age of 6 years. The reason given by parents and communities for this fact include the following:

- i. The primary school is far away and there is no one to take the child to school and back
- ii. The route to school is too difficult and dangerous for a 6 year old
- iii. The cost associated with sending another child to school is challenging
- iv. The lack of sensitisation on starting primary schooling at official age
- v. The correct age of the child is not known

Enrolment in Class 1 / Grade 1 of primary school in Sierra Leone is high even though many do not enter at the official age of 6 years. This is reflected by a Gross Intake Ratio (GIR) that is well above 160%. (The values differ depending on whether the UN Population Division numbers or the Statistics Sierra Leone numbers are employed as denominators but in both cases the GIR values are well above 160%).

Starting primary school above the official age is a disadvantage that is amplified by repetition and results in large numbers of drop outs and out-of-school children as well as an unacceptable level of illiteracy.

The intervention will focus on:

- Finding ways to address the concerns of parents and communities.
- Implementing a community led initiative to enrol all 6 years olds into school within a week at the beginning of each school year.
- Providing incentives for the enrolment of predefined groups of children such as: children with special needs, orphaned children, including Ebola orphans, and children living in the most remote areas.

The Primary Division of the Programmes Directorate will work with the Inspectorate together with the MEST PRO on this intervention with oversight by the Office of the Chief Education Officer. Involvement of Local Councils and traditional as well as community leaders would be essential to minimise the risk of low uptake/participation.

Strategic Outcome 1.2: Increased access to pre-school for children 3 to 5 year olds

Table 1.2: Key Indicator for Strategic Outcome 1.2

Indicator	2016	2020
GER	11%	20%

The pre-primary education sub-sector is far from being fully developed to accommodate more children age 3 to 5 years. Currently, the GER is just 11%, and most of the children enrolled at this level are in urban centres and especially the major towns and cities in the country. To improve enrolments, take advantage of the associated gains in learning, reduce the number of pre-primary aged children entering at primary level, and free school-age siblings from foregoing their education to take care of younger brothers and sisters, there is a need for more pre-schools attached to primary schools, independent pre-schools and nurseries, and community-based pre-school/Early Childhood Development centres. Currently 85 of 149 chiefdoms lack pre-primary schools. It will therefore be important to create both supply and demand for this level of education, by working with the local authorities with few or no pre-schools. One advantage with having children enrolling in pre-primary schools is that it brings about enrolment in primary schools at the official age. In this regard, a recent study has found that 82.1% of children with pre-primary education enrolled in Class 1 were of the official age. In the long run, the plan is to have a pre-school centre in all existing schools and all communities.

Intervention 1.2a: Develop a policy and costed action plan to guide expansion of quality pre-school education and improve MEST capacity to deliver

As part of implementing the ESP (2014-2018), the MEST has piloted cost effective community-based Early Childhood Development models since late 2015, through the Revitalization of Education in Sierra Leone (REDiSL) and the MEST-UNICEF Community-based Early Childhood Development Pilot Project. The pilots have included the establishment of Early Childhood Development centres covering 2,000 young children in 22 communities across Port Loko, Bombali, Koinadugu and Moyamba, providing free non-formal pre-primary opportunities for the most disadvantaged young children, whose families could not afford fee-based pre-primary education services. Results and lessons learned indicate that cost effective models are possible, and can inform decisions regarding sustainable large scale roll-out of the pre-primary level.

Based on the positive results obtained through the current pilots, MEST would like to finalise the Early Childhood Education Policy to guide the expansion of pre-school education in Sierra Leone. This will include the finalisation of Minimum Standards and the Curriculum to ensure quality is maintained in the following pre-primary expansion across the country.

This activity will be led by the Programmes Directorate, and implemented by the Section in-charge of Early Childhood Education, with support from the Planning and Policy Directorate. Risks could include financing of the full implementation, as well as delays in finalising the ongoing documents, but support could be provided under the REDiSL project, and partners such as UNICEF.

Intervention 1.2b: Develop strategy and costed action plan for expansion of public pre-school education in existing primary schools, and continue the development and piloting of community-based cost effective pre-primary education models

One of the identified ways of expanding provision of pre-school education in other countries with high enrolments at this level, is to establish centres within existing public primary schools. This expansion can be based on the experience of the pilot project (as described under intervention 1.2a), giving priority to the areas with low coverage of this sub-sector.

In this current ESP, the community-based Early Childhood Development pilots will continue, including the establishment of pre-primary facilities in existing primary schools as well community based solutions. This approach is complementary to the strategy for expanding public pre-school and hence will give the MEST a better chance to achieve its target set for increasing pre-primary education in an equitable manner. In addition, other innovative approaches such as developing picture books for young children, toy making training, and evaluation will be conducted to inform scaling up. MEST will also roll out a plan to the policy on decentralisation in effect, for local councils and Chiefdoms to take more responsibility of providing pre-school and primary education.

The intervention will be led by the Programmes Directorate, and implemented by the Non-formal Education Department with support from Planning and Policy Directorate and partners such as UNICEF (which is the lead UN agencies in this sub-sector). The risk anticipated would be financing for full implementation (beyond ongoing pilots) and staff time and technical capacity, which could be addressed through partnership with UNICEF under the REDiSL project and other potential partners.

Strategic Outcome 1.3: Improved school-feeding programme for primary

Table 1.3: Key Indicator for Strategic Outcome 1.3

Indicator	2016	2020
An efficient community based school feeding model linked to local production and procurement	Direct cash transfers to schools	Efficient model based on global best practise standard and in line with established national policy

The education system has for many years struggled with a large number of repeating students, drop-out, as well as low attendance rates. Statistics also indicate a clear link between income levels and the ability to attend and perform well in school, and is partly a result of the high costs associated with sending and equipping kids for school. In addition, Ebola has put extra pressure on vulnerable families. Nationwide primary school feeding (and especially in a post-Ebola context) should result in significant benefits (as also seen in other countries), including the opportunity and incentive for poor families to send their kids to school, reduced child hunger, improved attendance rates among students, as well as better children attentiveness and learning outcomes.

In 2016, as part of the President's Recovery Priorities Programme, MEST launched nationwide school feeding for all students in primary Government and Government assisted schools, reaching ~650,000 pupils (term 2, 2017) with a hot meal two days per week. However, several challenges made the implementation difficult, such as lack of resources and capacity at the School Feeding Secretariat, availability of funds, as well as challenging processes and delays in the disbursement of funds to schools.

Intervention 1.3a: Improved and expanded government-led school feeding programme through the establishment of strong partnerships

As the government-led and run school feeding programme aims to provide a social safety net for vulnerable school children and also a stable and increased demand for smallholder farmers and their harvests, efforts will be made to improve programme coverage and quality to maximise the benefits not only to the school children but also to the communities. In spite of the government's commitment to implement an effective program, the recently launched community based school feeding model is facing a number of challenges detailed in the preceding section i.e. currently insufficient capacity at the School Feeding Secretariat, start-up processing delays in availability and disbursement of funds to schools, etc. Guided by national policy and global best practices, the government together with partners will explore opportunities, strengthen and enter new partnerships to advance the vision of the National School Feeding Program. The draft National School Feeding Policy, to which numerous program stakeholders have contributed to – once completed, endorsed and adopted – will provide a platform to guide the implementation of the nationally-owned and funded School Feeding Program. The policy will articulate sustainability mechanisms, in line with the globally recognised school feeding standards, as well as clear roles and responsibilities of stakeholders at the national, district, and school levels – both governmental and non-governmental.

Sustainability mechanisms will be built into nationally owned school feeding programs from the outset. A fundamental component of this process is the systematic strategy for strengthening institutional capacity. This transition strategy will include clearly defined milestones, timing, targets, and benchmarks for the transition. This actionable path forward will be clearly communicated to all stakeholders, including communities, teachers, and parents. The draft national policy when completed and endorsed will provide a basic outline for such a plan, which will be expanded into a fully-fledged, comprehensive roadmap that can be measured along the 5 global standards⁵ captured in the globally endorsed partnership analysis of school feeding. To ensure efforts at strengthening design and implementation is evidence based and analytical, government will seek support from partners to carry out the System Assessment for Better Education, a process designed by the World Bank to assess the strength of education programs accompanied by a road map and action plan.

In line with the sustainability mechanisms articulated in the draft national policy, partners will focus direct support on technical assistance to develop strong implementation systems, ensure sustainable supply chain networks, and promote quality monitoring. In this regard, the Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) will encourage and develop Public Private Partners (PPPs). While the government works on securing stable funding, partners will also fund select activities through a process of joint analysis using the System Assessment for Better Education Results (SABER) to assess the status of the school feeding program and to map out the priority areas of support. (SABER, is a multi-domain initiative developed by the World Bank to conduct in-depth analyses of interventions that quantitatively and qualitatively impact education results. SABER collects comparable data on the policies and institutions of education systems around the world and benchmarks them against good practices. SABER's aim is to give all parties with a stake in educational results a detailed, objective, up-to-date, easy-to-understand snapshot of how well their country's education system is oriented toward delivering learning, based on measures that can be easily compared across education systems around the world.)

⁵ *Stable Funding, Policy, Institutional Capacity and coordination, Design and Implementation, and Community Participation.*

One key SABER domain is SABER-School Feeding. The SABER exercise will result in the development of an action plan for guiding the mobilisation of additional partner support for school feeding.

Partner program support will be guided by two inter-interlinked activities - technical support to the Sierra Leone national school feeding policy and programmes and the strengthening of partnerships and coalitions with key stakeholders and players for sustainable, nationally-led school feeding in Sierra Leone

Under the first activity training and technical support aimed at increasing capacity of key staff in the National Secretariat will be delivered. Support will be given to ensure that the policies, tools, and guidelines are evidence-based, contextual, and informed by operational good practices. Based on needs analyses, partners will be invited to provide financial assistance for equipment and hardware to promote activities towards this objective.

The second activity will aim at strengthening the network of governmental and non-governmental / private support to school feeding in general and the School Feeding Secretariat of MEST in particular. Outputs will include an advocacy portfolio to engender further civic and political support; partnership agreements, and joint funding agreements; as well as trainings, mapping of key stakeholder strategies and interventions, etc. In particular, the Government will take advantage of the knowledge and expertise of those that have been successfully implementing school feeding programmes in and out of Sierra Leone in developing countries environments.

Strategic Outcome 1.4: Increased transition from primary to JSS, and increase in GER at JSS level

Table 1.4: Indicators for Strategic Outcome 1.4

Indicator	2016	2020
Transition Rates	88%	92%
GER	61%	75%

According to government policy, basic education comprises 6 years of primary education and 3 years of JSS, and is free and compulsory to the extent stated in the 2004 Education Act. The GER at JSS level has remained below 70%; going from 65% in 2013 to 67% in 2016, where the transition rate of girls (85%) is lower than for boys (88%). To ensure 9 years of basic education for all, it will require concerted effort, to address both demand and supply issues to ensure expanded access at JSS level.

Intervention 1.4a: Expand the tuition support program for girls at JSS level to improve gender parity

To address gender disparity and girls' participation issues at JSS level, it is important to tackle the socio-economic barriers in education for girls and increase their retention and completion rates. The previous ESP proposed to expand a tuition support programme for girls with the aim of making JSS tuition completely free. In this regard, Girl-Child Support, the tuition support programme for girls, was expanded to cover tuition in all three years of JSS, where previously, only three terms in JSS1, two terms in JSS2, and one term in JSS3 were covered.

The MEST will continue the all year coverage tuition support programme for girls at the JSS level, and ensure that the right target group is reached and funds are disbursed in a timely manner.

The Office of the CEO will provide leadership to ensure effective implementation of the programme, with the Secondary Education department taking an active role. The main risk in implementation is to ensure a timely disbursement of funds to schools, whereby MEST will work closely with MoFED to mitigate this challenge.

Intervention 1.4b: Formalise the policy for re-entry of teenage mothers into the school system

The country has one of the highest rates of teenage pregnancy with early pregnancies being one of the factors contributing to girls dropping out of the school system especially at secondary school level. This drop-out rate is one of several contributors to the wide gender gap at higher levels of education. It is therefore important to address this issue and facilitate re-entry of these girls into the school system.

MEST will formalise the existing re-entry policy and guidelines. This means girls will be allowed to attend specially created centres for pregnant school girls. After giving birth and fully recovered they will be encouraged to return back to school and continue with their formal education. MEST will facilitate the re-entry of adolescent mothers who dropped out of school due to pregnancy. This will be achieved through an accelerated learning programmes to young mothers and girls who dropped out of school for various other reasons, to go back to school. MEST will ensure that schools are sensitised to support the re-entry of these girls.

The Office of the CEO will manage and supervise this implementation in liaison with Non-Formal Education Department. MEST will take advantage of the impetus from the President's Recovery Priorities Programme and engage with the relevant partners such as UNICEF through the Girls Education Challenge (GEC) project and DfID through 'Leh Wi Lan' to mitigate the risk of lack of staff time during implementation.

Intervention 1.4c: Ensure all schools are safe for girls through curbing sexual violence and exploitation in schools

Schools should be a safe environment for all kids (boys and girls) to come, enjoy and learn. Cases of sexual violence and exploitation are from time to time reported, with additional cases passing in silence and never reported, and is a serious concern of the Ministry. No case of violence in any school should be tolerated or left unaddressed.

To protect children from sexual abuses within schools and to ensure those that break the set rules and regulations are sanctioned, MEST will develop child protection mechanisms and guidelines. It will also ensure mechanisms are in place for taking legal action against those within and outside schools involved in sexual violence and exploitation of school girls. In the meanwhile, through the GATE project, MEST is building the capacity of school leaders (principals and deputy principals, peer mentors, guidance counsellors and adult school mentors) to monitor and report on violence in schools and ensure schools are safe for girls. At JSS level, a small amount of funding is being provided to support schools to implement actions that promote school safety and retain girls in school.

Linked with the above will be Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE). Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) is one of the strategic prongs towards realising the full potential of adolescents and youth and, when implemented correctly, can reduce adolescent pregnancy which could in turn reduce drop-outs. CSE is defined as a right-based and gender-focused approach to sexuality education, whether in school or out of school. The Government of Sierra Leone is committed to the implementation of CSE and policies related to its implementation will be in the revised National Education Policy. Age appropriate CSE will be integrated in the curriculum through the main subject areas from Upper Primary School to Senior Secondary School. The government is committed to scale-up and strengthen the existing CSE training (Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health and Life Skills) to Primary School teachers and expand this to Upper Primary School (UPS), Junior Secondary School (JSS), Senior Secondary School (SSS), technical and vocational institutions, teacher training colleges and out of school learning Centres

The Non-formal Education Directorate will lead the intervention, with implementation support from the Programmes Directorate, the Guidance and Counselling Unit, UNFPA and UNICEF. They will work closely with organisations such as FAWE and others implementing projects on girls' education. Risks include facing challenges related to the existing legal systems and structures, but stronger linkages and positive change could be created with the support from Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and partners.

Strategic Outcome/Result 1.5: Increased equitable access to senior secondary education

Table 1.5: Indicators for Strategic Result 1.5

Indicator	2016	2020
GER	28%	32%
GPI	0.9	0.96

Enrolments at the senior secondary levels are low, with a GER of 27.6% in 2015 and a GIR of 27.9%. The gender gap widens as students' progress to higher levels of education. At SSS level, the GPI has remained lower than at junior secondary levels, although it has improved greatly from 0.59 in 2010 to 0.77 in 2013 and 0.9 in 2016. A lot needs to be done to improve enrolments and ensuring equity by expanding facilities and supporting vulnerable children at risk of not enrolling or dropping out due to cost of education. Particular attention needs to be paid to closing the gender gap at the SSS level and improving the GPI from 0.9 to 1.0.

Intervention 1.5a: Ensure equity by providing scholarships to SSS students satisfying predefined criteria

Reasons for the relatively low GPI index at the SSS level are many, but could include financial constraints of families, long travel distances to the upper level schools, early marriage or pregnancies, etc.

To obtain a better gender balance through the entire education system, MEST will work in partnership with non-state actors in the provision of scholarships for the neediest SSS students to cover non-tuition related costs of schooling, like the cost of uniforms. MEST intends to ensure greater representation of the under-served; the poor, girls and children with disabilities, at SSS level, through the provision of school grants and scholarships. To do so, a clear strategy, systems and mechanisms for identifying the most vulnerable and channeling the support will be established.

The Office of the CEO will lead this initiative, with implementation support from the Programmes department. MEST will work in partnership with relevant partners, such as the DfID funded Leh Wi Lan project, which focuses on improvement of secondary education and especially for girls. Inadequate staffing may be a challenge to realising the desired outcomes, but with the proposal to staff up core functions within MEST, and support from partners and other government institutions, this challenge will be addressed.

Strategic Outcome 1.6: Improve the infrastructure of primary, JS and SS schools

Table 1.6: Indicators for Strategic Outcome 1.6

Indicator	2016	2020
% of Primary school classes with more than 50 students	NA	25%
% of JSS classes with more than 40 students	NA	20%
% of SSS classes with more than 40 students	NA	15%
% of primary schools meeting the MEST students per WASH facility ratio	NA	60%
% of JSSs meeting the MEST students per WASH facility ratio	NA	75%
% of SSSs meeting the MEST students per WASH facility ratio	NA	80%

A large percentage of schools in both rural and urban areas lack basic infrastructure and facilities that will enhance teaching and learning. This includes lack of classrooms to accommodate all students, separate toilets for boys and girls, access to clean water and ramps for children with special needs.

Intervention 1.6a: Construct additional fully functional and equipped classrooms and facilities to accommodate current and projected demand as well as phase out double-shift schooling

Under the President's Recovery Priorities Program (PRP), the construction of classrooms was accelerated during the period 2015/2016 and 2016/2017. With funding from donors, 144 new blocks with a total of 432 fully furnished classrooms were constructed by March 2017. The newly constructed classrooms are disability friendly, with ramps for the physically challenged children. An additional 215 classrooms are in progress, funded by the Islamic Development Bank (IDB).

Increasing access remains a priority, as well as reducing the number of overcrowded classrooms. In particular it will be important to increase the capacity of the junior and senior secondary sub-sectors in rural areas. MEST, in partnership with development partners, local councils and communities will continue to:

- Maintain and construct additional fully functional and equipped classrooms in existing schools from primary to SSS levels. This will ensure that a better classroom/pupil ratio is achieved in the most overcrowded schools.
- To accommodate the current and projected secondary school population, construct 1) New JSS facilities in districts with shortage of JSS, and especially in those Chiefdoms where JSS facilities are currently lacking, and 2) New SSS facilities to ensure adequate provision in all Districts.

When children have easy access to clean water, it keeps them safe from several water-borne diseases like typhoid and cholera. It also improves hygiene practices, including hand washing. Increased access to potable water improves the teaching and learning environment. All classroom construction will be accompanied by provision of potable water facility as necessary.

Functional toilets, and separate toilet facilities for boys and girls, is a critical factor in retaining students (especially girls) in school. In this regard, all classroom construction will be accompanied by provision of toilet facilities as necessary.

The Planning and Policy Directorate will lead in the implementation of this intervention.

The most significant risk would be inadequate financial resources. However the MEST believes decongestion of classrooms has significant benefits, in particular in those cases with severe overcrowding, and will enable an improved learning environment that can promote better student learning outcomes, as well as decreasing the risk of spreading diseases (as experienced during the Ebola outbreak). As resources are limited, it naturally follows that prioritisation is important for both government and development partners. In addition, MEST will also engage early with MoFED on budgetary allocations and ceilings, but increased allocation cannot be guaranteed. MEST is also receiving support from the EU, which will include rehabilitation/upgrade of new classrooms and WASH facilities at the JSS level. Public/private partnerships will also be considered as a source of funding and support at all levels.

A risk that has been recognised is that some communities use the toilets provided for schools and cause damage.

Intervention 1.6b: Ensure all new schools and classrooms have WASH facilities and at least 15% of existing schools have ramps for students with disability

Inclusive education for children with special needs among normal children is still a new phenomenon in Sierra Leone. In this regard it is worth noting that analysis of data collected for the 2015 annual school census revealed that only 14.3% of schools 8,784 schools had toilets with ramps for the disabled. This fact is not unexpected given that it is only recently that it has become a requirement and policy for all schools to have ramps. Ramps for the disabled will contribute to the inclusiveness of mainstream schools for this category of learners.

As resources are limited, MEST will be informed by the needs assessment carried out in 2016 and the findings of research carried out in 2017 prior to the development of an inclusive education policy. Schools with the biggest need for installations of ramps will be at the top of a prioritised list. This intervention will be undertaken from pre-primary to the SSS level.

The Planning and Policy Directorate will be in charge of this intervention, in collaboration with implementing partners focused on this area. The biggest risk of this intervention is a lack of funding, but resources could potentially be obtained from partners and NGOs particularly focused on supporting the disabled or pupils with special needs.

Strategic Outcome 1.7: Increased equitable access to Technical and Vocational Education

Table 1.7: Indicators for Strategic Outcome 1.7

Indicator	2016	2020
Policy implementation plan in place and effectively implemented	No	Yes
NCTVE operationalised	No	Yes

Much has been stated in the equity section of the preamble to this chapter and so is not repeated here but it is worth noting that the current Technical/Vocational institutions at all levels are not meeting the needs of a growing economy that is gearing towards industrialisation and middle income country status. Graduates from the vocational/technical institutes, colleges, polytechnics and universities do not adequately meet the growing demand for technical skills, especially in mining and natural resources industry, and large-scale commercial agriculture sectors. Local capacity needs to be developed to reduce the cost of importing foreign labour for positions that could easily be filled by trained Sierra Leoneans. To address this shortage of qualified human resources, it will be important to expand access to TVET, through improving existing capacity and expanding where necessary.

Intervention 1.7a: Develop an implementation plan for the TVET policy

MEST, aware of the challenges in the TVET sub-sector enacted The Education Act of 2004, which established the National Council for Technical and Vocational Education (NCTVE) to coordinate TVET and advise government on TVET activities. In 2013, a TVET policy was developed and in 2015 a situational analysis of the sub-sector was carried out.

The TVET department of the MEST will provide leadership in the development of a plan for the re-visitation and subsequent implementation of the policy, incorporating into the plan the recommendations from the situational analyses carried out by GIZ, with the full involvement of MEST, under the EU-financed project as well that carried out by the IDB project. Potential bureaucratic hurdles may slow down the process, but could be mitigated through early discussions and agreement on processes and procedures.

Intervention 1.7b: Formal constitution and operationalisation of NCTVE

The current TVET sub-sector is facing issues in terms of fragmentation, lack of coordination and unregulated systems that limit its effectiveness and potential.

To resolve the current inefficiencies and myriad challenges, MEST will constitute and operationalise the National Council for Technical and Vocational Education (NCTVE) as per the recommendations resulting from the collaborative work with GIZ and the IDB project.

The TVET department of MEST will take leadership in ensuring the operationalisation of NCTVE as per earlier mentioned recommendations. There are risks of not reaching agreements on the structures, composition, roles and hosting of the multi-ministerial unit, but these could be mitigated through involvement of organs like the State House in facilitating early discussions.

Intervention 1.7c: Strengthen and streamline Public/Private Partnership in provision of TVET

Leveraging public/private partnerships is critical for the development of TVET sub-sector, and especially in a country with serious manpower gaps in growing sectors such as mining, agriculture and even the service sector.

With the private sector being a big consumer of the skills acquired from the TVET sub-sector, it will be critical to have a well-defined framework of partnership for it to contribute to growth and a functioning tertiary education system. This will form part of the discussions with GLZ.

This process will be led by the TVET department in MEST, working in close partnership with GLZ. Potential difficulties in making the partnerships work and sustaining them will be mitigated through the ways agreements are managed.

Strategic Outcome 1.8: Increased equitable access to higher education

Table 1.8: Indicator for Strategic Outcome 1.8

Indicator	2016	2020
GPI	a	a + 0.2

Sierra Leone has three (3) public universities with 6 constituent colleges, one (1) public-private partnership university and one (1) wholly private university. Six other tertiary level institutions offer undergraduate degree programmes in affiliation with one or the other of the two public universities, whilst twenty-two (22) institutions offer certificate and diploma programmes accredited by the National Council for Technical, Vocational and other academic Awards (NCTVA).

The fully accredited 5 universities and constituent colleges together with the institutions offering affiliated degrees offer in excess of one hundred first degree programmes and close to that number in Masters programmes. Thus for example, in 2016, a constituent college of the University of Sierra Leone – Fourah Bay College and another public tertiary institution - Njala University where offering a total of sixty-five (65) undergraduate/first degree programmes and fifty-seven (57) Masters programmes.

Growth in enrolments in higher education has almost remained at the same level over recent years, with low female enrolments at university level. In 2013/2014, the number of students in universities was 30,687, lower than the previous year with 31,381 students. The number of women enrolled in universities is much lower than that of men, with women constituting only 39.5 % of the total population. The percentage of women enrolling at university level has been rising, for example, from 37.6% in 2012/2013 to 39.5% in 2013/2014. This increase is higher in universities, compared to the polytechnics. These gender disparities are also seen in the Teachers Colleges.

The role of higher education in the development of a country cannot be over-emphasised, as it provides required skilled manpower, promotes development of knowledge through research and teaching. It is therefore important for Sierra Leone to ensure that higher education is of high quality and making its contribution to the country's achievement of middle income country status.

Intervention 1.8a: Develop a higher education strategy/framework to consolidate the policies for addressing equitable growth, quality, and relevance

There is currently no comprehensive strategy for higher education. The TEC carries out occasional analyses of the situation. It will be requested to update its most recent analysis whilst the MEST in collaboration with the TEC, develops and implements a higher education strategy to address issues of equitable growth, quality, and relevance.

The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) will lead the development of the strategy, with oversight by the Higher Education, Science and Technology Department (HEST) at MEST. A challenge could be the coordination of the process, but could be solved by ensuring TEC plays the coordination role. Risks also include getting the constituent universities to agree on the strategies and framework, but could be mitigated through involvement of organs like the State House in facilitating the early discussions.

Intervention 1.8b: Provide better targeted financial support (scholarships/grants/loans) to the neediest students, and continue support for students with disabilities as well as females in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)

Access to higher education remains a challenge to students from the poorest quintile and the gender disparity at this level is significant. Females continue to be severely underrepresented, especially in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) related courses at the tertiary level.

MEST will develop and implement a clear strategy to ensure financial support (grants or potentially loans) is better targeted to the neediest students, and continue grant support for females in STEM. This will be achieved through a revised criteria and screening processes to ensure that neediest students receive a much greater percentage of scholarships. Support of females enrolling in STEM courses will also be increased with the goal of increasing SSS and tertiary level enrolment, completion and pass rates in these areas. A quota system will be considered to increase overall female enrolment at the tertiary level.

The Office of the PS will lead this initiative, with implementation support by the Grant-In-Aid Unit. They will work in consultation with MoFED to streamline the scholarship system to ensure the neediest students can access the funding. Risks may include the ability to select the right recipients, and mitigation could include careful definition of the categories to identify the neediest upfront of the programme, whereby the selection of candidates can be made.

Strategic Outcome 1.9: Improved literacy rate for youths and adults

Table 1.9: Indicators for Strategic Outcome 1.9

Indicator	2016	2020
No. of centres	50	60
Improved literacy rates	51%	56%

With the high illiteracy rates, many children and youth out of the school system, and high drop-out rates, it is important to expand learning opportunities through non-formal approaches. It is also essential that the non-formal system works in such a way that it enables pupils to enter or re-enter back into the formal education system where this is possible and beneficiary.

Intervention 1.9a: Provide accelerated primary education for older children and youths aged 10 to 15 years

The accelerated learning model for older children and youth aged 10 to 15 years old, which compresses 6 years of primary education into 3 years, was successfully used after the civil war in Sierra Leone to provide education to the large number of youth who had missed out on schooling. This approach of compressing syllabi, also proved very useful during the Ebola response, to ensure continuation of learning and 'catching up of lost learning time'. During the Ebola outbreak accelerated learning was strengthened by radio programmes which broadcasted lessons nationwide through 41 radio stations. This contributed to ensuring that the majority of children did not lose an entire year in their schooling.

MEST will expand this accelerated / compressed learning programme to cater for those children and youth who have never enrolled and those who have dropped out of the school system. The programme will continue to be through already existing community education centres and schools as well as radio programmes from Education Radio. It will also take advantage of the large number of teachers trained in accelerated learning methods, during the Ebola emergency response and recovery periods. A system will be established to ensure that the children and youth going through this non-formal system will have opportunities to transition to the formal system.

The Non-Formal Education Directorate, in liaison with the primary and secondary education heads and school heads, will ensure the sustainability and effective use of the accelerated programme. Resources to finance the programme is the main risk that the implementation would face, as well as ensuring that a sufficient number of qualified teachers are engaged. However, a large amount of resources have already gone into developing the programme (materials and training of teachers in the Ebola recovery period) and therefore what is required is mainly efficiency in utilisation of already existing resources. Consultations with the Office of the CEO and MoFED will also be important.

Intervention 1.9b: Increase and regularise the funding for non-formal and adult education

One of the major challenges in providing non-formal and adult education is the adequacy and regularity of funding.

MEST will hold discussions with the Ministry of Local Government, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Women's Affairs and other relevant MDAs on how to adequately finance non-formal and adult education. It will also ensure effective coordination of partners working on non-formal education.

During the period 2014 to 2016, 25 non-formal basic skills training and literacy centres were established across the country in response to the Ebola emergency. These cater for out of school youth and pregnant girls at risk of dropping out of school. It is expected that some of the increased funding will go towards the establishment of more centres, to cater for out of school youth and adults.

The Non-Formal Education Directorate will lead on this intervention, with support from the District Deputy Directors and in consultation with MoFED and the Ministry of Local Government in the mobilisation of resources. Funding is the main risk in implementing this intervention. However it is believed that reducing illiteracy rates, streamlining of financing of education, and building on the gains made through partnership with Development Partners in implementation of the President's Recovery Priorities are high priorities that should unlock potential funding for non-formal education. Careful consideration must be given to ensure resources deliver the expected.

Summary Table 1 - Matrix of Interventions and Ratings on Efficiency, Effectiveness, Relevance Appropriateness and Risk

S. O.	Intervention No.	MEST Responsible	Effectiveness*	Efficiency*	Relevance*	Appropriateness*	Risk Rating*	Mitigation
1.1 – All Children enter school and complete primary education	1.1a: Reduce the cost of schooling to parents and households by ensuring school subsidies are reviewed and disbursed on time	TBD	5	5	5	5	M	Early ceiling discussions with MoFED and Proprietors
1.2 - Increased access to pre-school for children 3 to 5 year olds	1.1b: Encourage and motivate parents and communities to have children start primary schooling at the official starting age of 6 years	Inspectorate	4	4	4	5	L	Oversight by Office of CEO
	1.2b: Develop strategy and costed action plan for expansion of public pre-school education in existing primary schools, and continue the development and piloting of community-based cost effective pre-primary education models	Planning and Policy Directorate	5	5	5	5	H	Technical support – REDiSL
1.3 – Improved school feeding programme for primary schools	1.3a: Improved and expanded government led school feeding programme through the establishment of strong partnerships	School Feeding Secretariat, M&E team, Planning and Policy Directorate	5	5	5	5	H	Close collaboration between MEST, partners and MoFED
1.4 – Increased transition from primary to JSS and equitable access to JSS	1.4a: Formalise the policy for re-entry of teenage mothers into the school system	Office of the CEO, the Non-Formal Education Directorate	5	5	5	5	M	Strong partnership with DfID funded projects and existing work with UNICEF (GEC)
	1.4b: Ensure all schools are safe for girls through curbing sexual violence and exploitation in schools	PPD / Gender desk / Quality Assurance Directorate	5	5	5	5	M	Links with NGOs/CSOs
1.5 – Increased equitable access to SSS	1.5a: Ensure equity by providing scholarships to SSS students satisfying predefined criteria	Planning and Policy Directorate	5	5	5	5	M	Staffing of existing key / core functions / positions at MEST, support from partners and other GoSL institutions
1.6 – Improved school infrastructure at primary, JSS and SSS levels	1.6a: Construct additional fully functional and equipped classrooms and facilities to accommodate current and projected demand as well as phase out double shift schooling	Planning and Policy Directorate	5	5	5	5	M	Prioritisation, early discussions with MoFED, public/private partnership arrangements
	1.6b: Ensure all new schools and classrooms have WASH facilities and at least 15% of existing schools have ramps for students with disability	Planning and Policy Directorate	5	5	5	5	M	Prioritisation, Early discussions with MoFED and partners engaged in the area

S. O.	Intervention No.	MEST Responsible	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Relevance	Appropriateness	Risk Rating	Mitigation
1.7 – Increased equitable access to TVET	1.7a: Develop an implementation plan for the TVET policy	HEST + TVET Department	5	5	5	5	L	Build on existing work and support from GIZ
	1.7b: Formal constitution and operationalisation of NCTVE	HEST	5	5	5	5	M	Partnership with GIZ, improved ways of managing the agreements
1.8 – Increased equitable access to higher education	1.8a: Develop a higher education strategy/ framework to consolidate the policies for addressing equitable growth, quality and relevance	Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), Higher Education, Science and Technology Directorate, Planning and Policy Directorate	5	5	5	5	M	TEC takes coordination role, early State House meeting facilitation
	1.8b: Provide better targeted financial support (scholarships/grants/loans) to the neediest students, and continue support for students with disabilities as well as females in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)	Planning and Policy Directorate	5	5	5	5	M	Careful definition of the beneficiary selection criteria
1.9 – Improved literacy rates for youth and adults	1.9a: Provide accelerated primary education for older children and youth aged 10 to 15 years	Non-Formal Education Directorate	5	5	5	5	M	Partnership with Development Partners, leveraging existing materials
	1.9b: Increase and regularise the funding for non-formal education	PPD / Gender desk / Quality Assurance Directorate	5	5	5	5	M	Build on gains from PRP, Partnership with Development Partners

Effectiveness = Extent to which intervention contributes to achievement of a strategic outcome; Efficiency = a measure of the difference that the intervention will make to the achievement of the strategic outcome; Relevance = extent to which the intervention is aligned with the needs to be met through achievement of the strategic outcome; Appropriateness = the extent to which the intervention is the right one to help achieve the strategic outcome. Risk Rating = Estimate of the likelihood of the intervention being unsuccessful on a scale of H – High Risk; M – Moderate Risk ; and L – Low Risk.

Conclusion

With the imperative of providing education as a key factor in accelerating the development of Sierra Leone to a middle-income country status, it is important to expand access and participation at all levels of education. The country also has a legal commitment to providing free and compulsory basic education. For progress to be achieved in the development of basic education, the contribution of higher institutions cannot be over-emphasised. It is therefore a prerogative that growth of basic education goes hand in hand with development of tertiary and higher education. The country's growing needs of skilled labour will also have to be met, and existing gaps filled through the development of Technical and Vocational Education and Training.

The ESP, in addressing issues of Access, Retention and Completion, presents the key strategic results expected at the end of the plan period for each of the 7 sub-sectors. It also proposes interventions which will contribute to the achievement of the results. As this ESP covers a period of 3 years, the focus in the ESP is building on the gains from the President's Recovery Priority Programme (PRP) and interventions that lay the foundation for programmes under the next 5 year ESP.

2 - QUALITY, RELEVANCE AND INTEGRITY

Preamble

An objective of education is to provide a common foundation of knowledge, skills and values for all citizens that will enable them develop to their fullest capacity, derive maximum benefits from membership of their societies and fulfill their civic obligation. Realising the importance of education to the development of the nation and its citizenry, MEST has invested in policies that have increased access to education. The success of these policies and strategies has led to an



exponential growth of learners in not only the primary and JSS levels but also an upsurge in the other levels of education. A rise in the numbers accessing education does not necessarily lead to quality education. In a low income country like Sierra Leone, efforts to provide quality and relevant education have been hampered by challenges and some worrisome issues in some cases in the teaching and learning environments.

One of the main challenges that impede the delivery of quality and relevant education is the large percentage of unapproved schools. In the ASC 2016, nationally out of a total of 8,907 schools, 4,777 schools are not approved. The largest share of unapproved schools was found in Bombali, Kono and Koinadugu District Councils with up to two-third of the schools in theses councils unapproved. These unapproved schools generally are less accountable and are challenged with a lack of conducive learning environment for the learners as they do not receive most of the inputs provided by MEST, including payment of teachers, basic materials, and the provision of school feeding for the pupils. MEST is determined to address the issue of unapproved d schools by approving those that meet or can meet its minimum standards within an agreed length of time and closing those unable to meet the standards after ensuring schools with available spaces are accessible for students of the closed schools.

Poverty is seen as a major reason why children do not participate well in schools. Many students lack basic learning materials such as core textbooks, exercise books, pens, pencils and rulers to use in school, especially at the primary school level. This obviously hinders a student's ability to learn effectively. The MEST realises that it needs to move beyond its normal supply of teaching and learning materials to schools to increasing the quantity and coverage of the support particularly in the area of core textbooks provision.

Statistics provided by ASC bring out disturbing information on the status of teachers nation-wide. 41% male and 28% female teachers in 2016 were either teaching without a teaching qualification or teaching with a qualification below that required for the JSS level. At the SSS level, the situation is worse with 44% male and 53% female teachers having similar problems. Most of the problems detailed above have led to deteriorating standards in education in both rural and urban located schools. At a primary level the results of the EGRA and EGMA test results show that the majority of children at the end of lower primary are only just learning to read and have limited competencies in mathematics for their level.

Other challenges include the neglect of TVET education, ensuring that girls and children with special needs have a full complement of quality and relevant education, production of graduates from Higher Education Institutions whose knowledge and skills acquired are regarded as a mismatch with those required by the job market and girls at the JSS, SSS levels, non-formal education sector and the university that are exposed to sexual exploitation in education institutions by educational personnel.

In the previous ESP, as in the current ESP, quality and relevance in education embody the following elements:

1. Learners who are encouraged and ready to participate and learn by their families, communities and their teachers
2. Teachers who are professionally qualified and trained, motivated, disciplined and equipped with the requisite resources to manage classrooms, facilitate and assess student learning, reduce disparities and achieve quality learning for all students
3. School Environments that are healthy, safe, protective and gender-sensitive, and provide adequate resources and facilities
4. Content that is reflected in relevant curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills, especially in the areas of literacy, numeracy, skills for life employability upon graduation
5. Processes through which trained teachers use learner-centred teaching approaches in well-managed classrooms and schools and skillful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities
6. Outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes, and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in society

Further, three of the major theme goals of the ESP are:

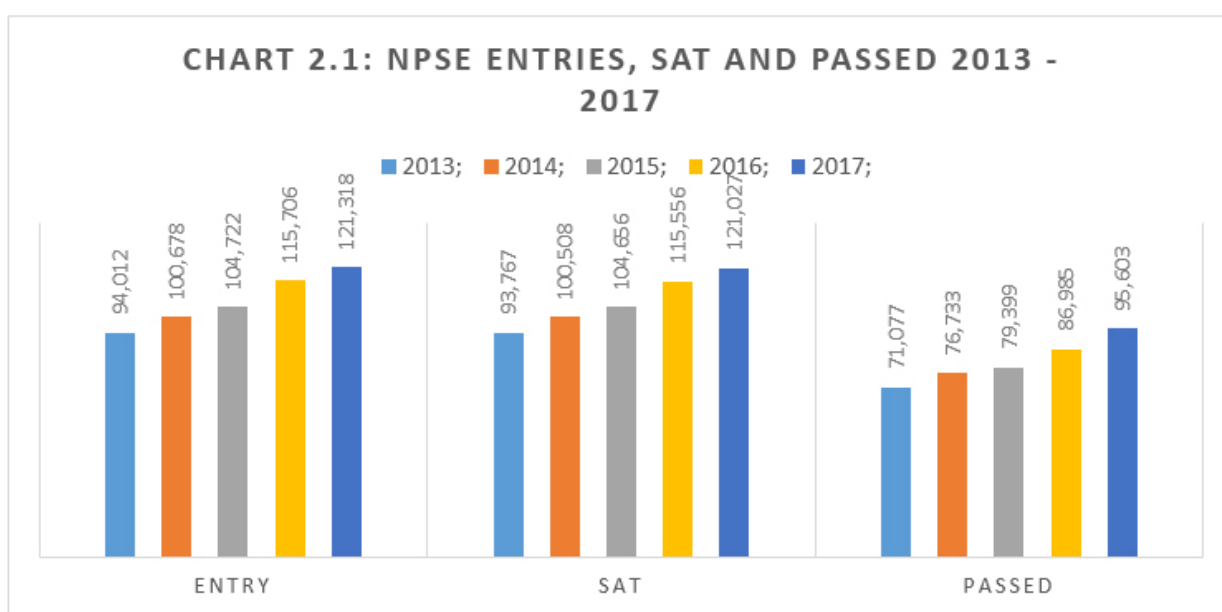
Quality

Quality implies an education system delivering high quality teaching and learning for all participants. The ESP continues to insist on outcomes that lead to the achievement of quality education through the provision of resources in the learning environment, deliverables on teacher training and their impact on the teaching and learning situation at all levels in the education system and an increase in monitoring and inspection of the planned activities of all key stakeholders in the education delivery system.

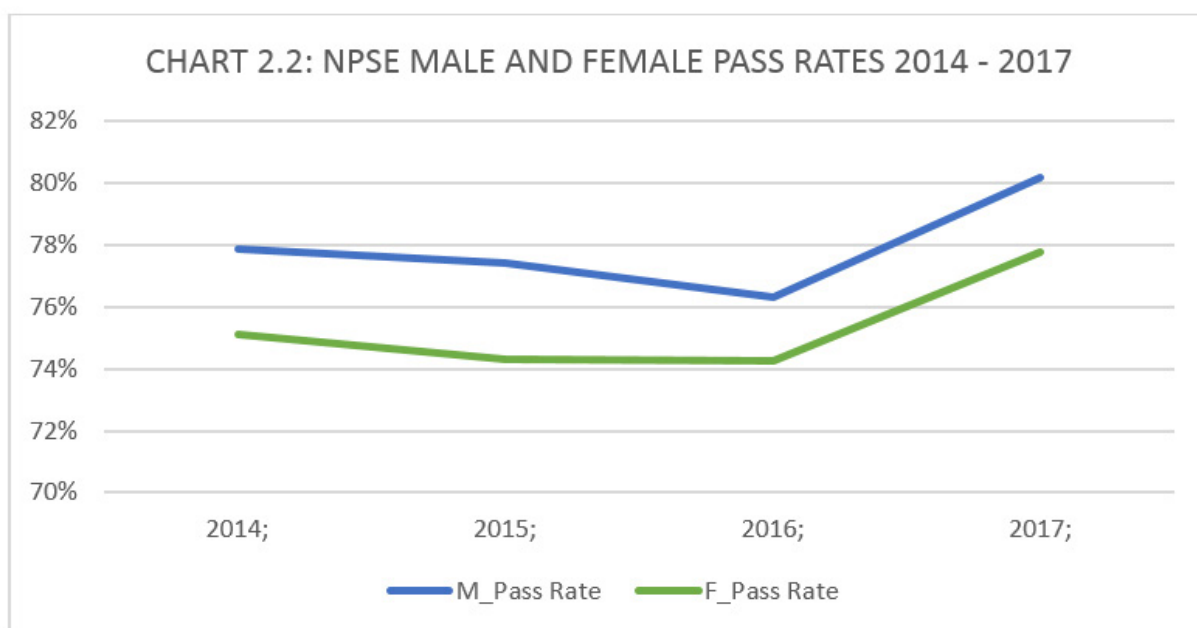
The ESP for the next three year will emphasise strategic outcomes that will work towards ensuring a teaching staff that is motivated and hard working as it is realised that without the teachers being committed to the learners, all the plans and strategies to provide quality and relevant education will be meaningless. Also, in the implementation of the TVET curricula, strategies and programmes will be employed to make sure that youths who make up about 34 % of the population and who are mostly unemployed and unemployable can access well designed, credible and labour market and employment focused TVET programmes using formal, non-formal and even informal modes.

The performance of candidates in school level examinations conducted by the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) provides an idea of the state and quality of teaching and learning in the schools. Even though overall performance in the examinations has been improving, performance in the key subject areas of English Language, mathematics and the sciences has been of concern and there are clear indications that much work still has to be done in the schools. In this ESP therefore much attention is given to improving the teaching and learning situation as well as to monitoring learning through learning assessment tests and analysis of scores and performance in the WAEC conducted National Primary School Examination (NPSE), Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) and West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE). A brief analysis of performance in these examinations follow.

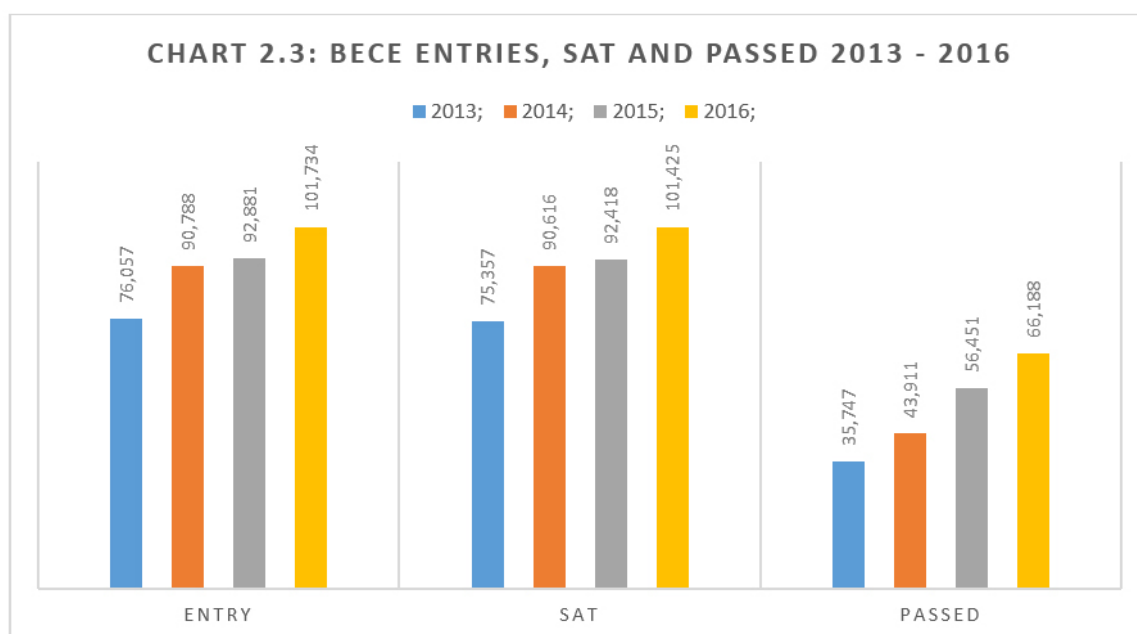
In the National Primary School Examination (NPSE) conducted at the end of the primary level (Grade 6), the number of candidates and number passing have been increasing annually as the chart below shows:



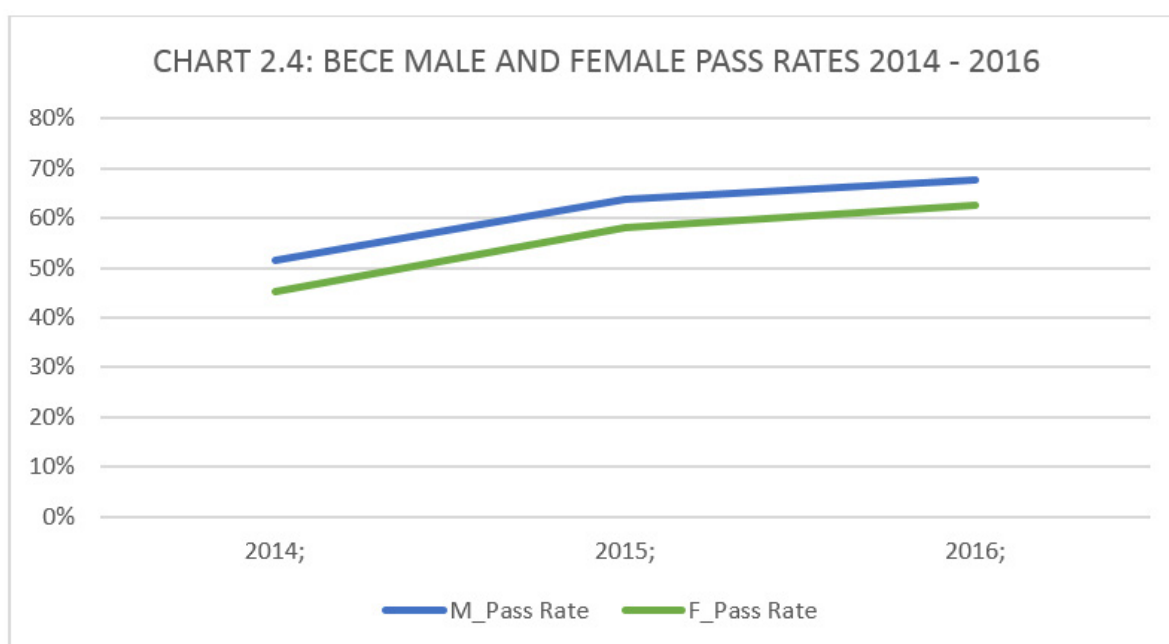
The increases shown above are primarily due to increases in enrolment and improved completion rate at the primary level. The NPSE pass rates shown below have changed just a little over the time period shown but it is noticeable that overall, boys are consistently outperforming girls.



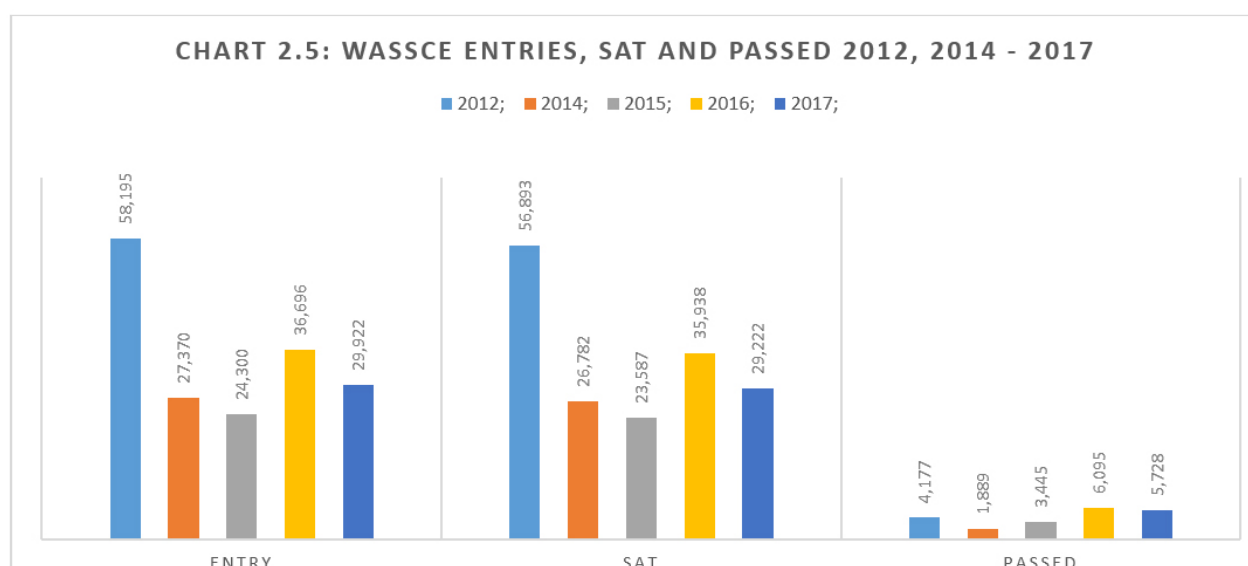
As in the case of the NPSE, performance in the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) conducted at the end of the junior secondary level (JSS3/Grade 9), the number of candidates and number passing have been increasing annually as the chart below shows:



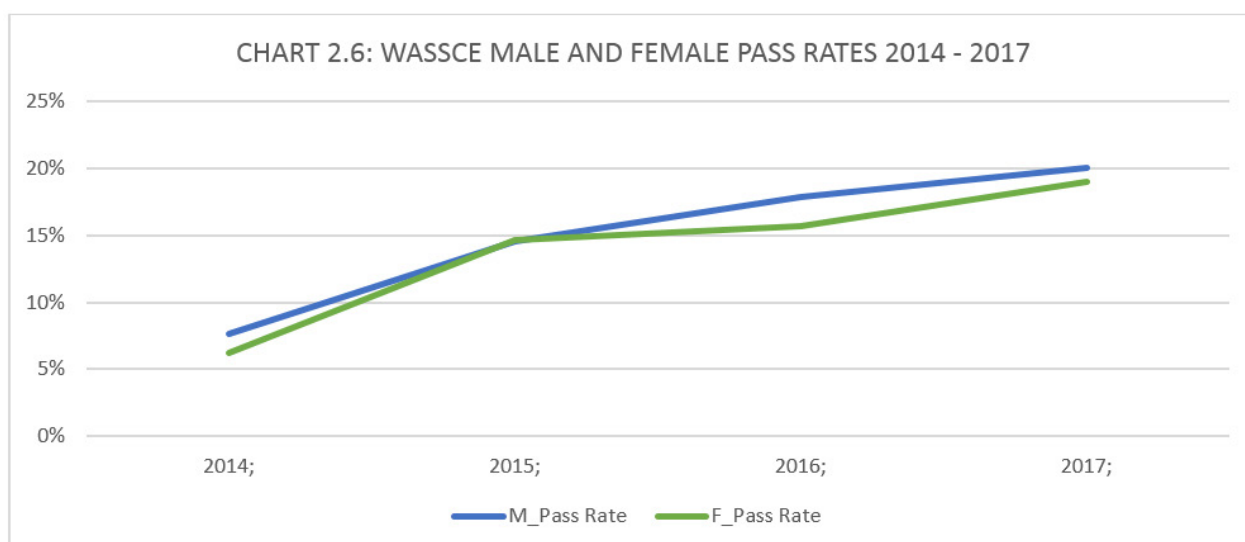
Once again the trend shown above are primarily due to annual increases in enrolment and improved completion rate at the junior secondary level. The BECE pass rates shown below change notably over the time period 2014 to 2016 primarily because of improvements in teaching/ learning which resulted in improvement in the overall quality of performance of candidates. The trend in the overall performance of boys being better than that of girls continues from the NPSE.



The numbers entering, sitting and passing the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) have fluctuated over the last few years as shown in the chart below. This has been primarily due to the fact that the MEST started preventing illegal/mushroom schools from presenting candidates and preventing the entry of individuals that have not qualified to enter senior secondary schools presenting themselves as school candidates. In this regard note the difference between 2012 and 2014.



Between 2014 and 2017, the pass rate in the WASSCE for school students from Sierra Leone changed markedly as shown in the chart below. The change is most marked between 2014 and 2015 and can clearly be attributed to the introduction of the policy that allowed only schools accredited as senior secondary schools by MEST to enter candidates and allowed only students that had met the requirements to enter senior secondary school to sit the WASSCE as school students.



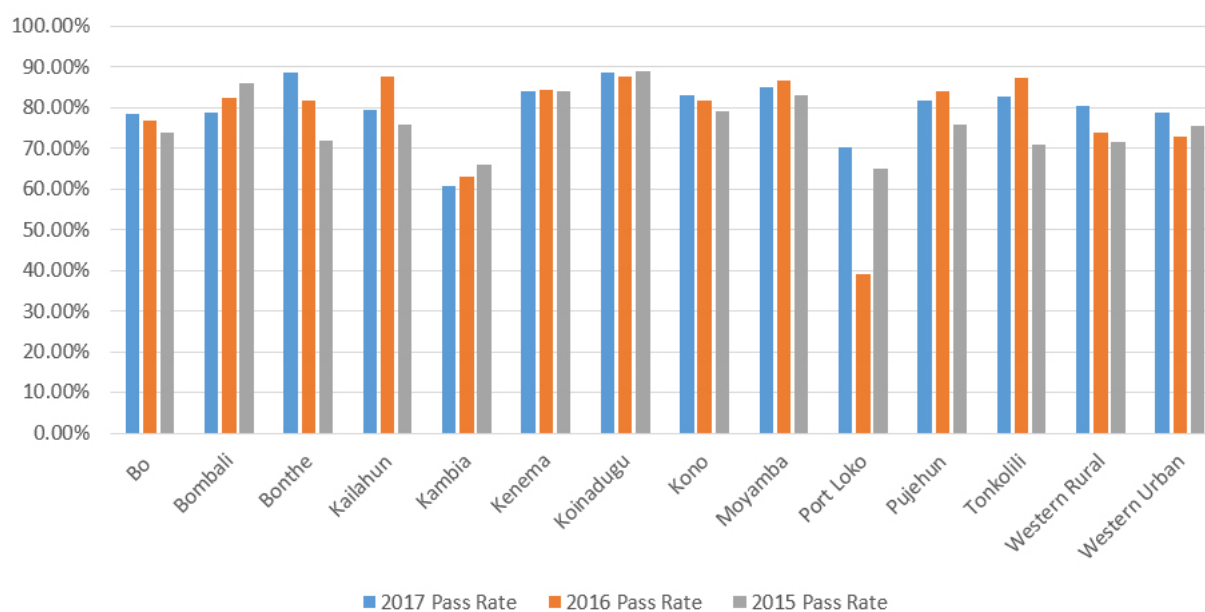
It is worth noting from the above charts that the number sitting and passing the end of level examination, as well as the pass rate, decrease as the level ascends. It is also worth noting that the number of girls passing and the pass rate for girls are consistently lower than those for boys at all levels. Annex VIII shows the tables from which the charts are built.

Using the measurement of pass rates and changes in the same to stimulate discussion and dialogue on learning and measurement of the same is viewed as a necessary step to bring about needed action and ultimately improvement in learning. In order to make it clear that it is not only schools that are accountable for the performance of candidates and schools in WAEC conducted examinations, MEST has commenced the measurement of mean scores and pass rates at district level. These district level scores are discussed with heads of schools, District Education Office staff, representatives of local councils, traditional leaders and stakeholders in general so that all parties can work together to try and address noted deficiencies/challenges. An example of the table that is generated is shown below for the 2017 National Primary School Examination (NPSE). The trend in pass rates of the different districts for the period 2015 to 2017 is also shown.

Table 2.1: 2017 National Primary School Examination Average Test Scores and Pass Rates by District

District	AvgOfQA	AvgOfVA	AvgOfMAT	AvgOfENG	AvgOfGS	AvgOfAGG	Sat	Passed	Pass Rate	Schools
Bonthe	53.55	52.47	51.88	49.37	53.28	260.55	2,061	1,828	88.69%	88
Koinadugu	52.29	50.62	52.44	51.14	50.74	257.18	3,436	3,047	88.68%	146
Moyamba	50.02	51.81	51.86	49.13	52.08	254.88	4,163	3,541	85.06%	206
Kenema	50.69	50.95	51.71	49.92	51.78	254.93	10,124	8,527	84.23%	280
Kono	50.13	51.07	52.00	50.92	50.85	254.97	7,778	6,450	82.93%	208
Tonkolili	50.41	51.47	51.33	49.79	52.22	255.20	7,651	6,334	82.79%	332
Pujehun	49.90	51.30	53.98	48.88	51.69	255.67	2,433	1,989	81.75%	122
Western Rural	49.95	51.01	50.06	51.81	49.67	252.46	10,854	8,724	80.38%	188
Kailahun	47.26	50.30	50.22	47.56	51.79	247.13	5,503	4,370	79.41%	181
Western Urban	50.96	51.05	49.92	53.96	48.85	254.61	25,821	20,350	78.81%	495
Bombali	48.92	49.46	50.49	49.47	50.10	248.43	11,469	9,031	78.74%	253
Bo	48.64	51.10	50.33	49.70	50.39	249.90	11,493	9,033	78.60%	329
Port Loko	46.77	47.64	48.23	47.28	49.21	238.61	12,749	8,947	70.18%	414
Kambia	48.01	47.29	46.56	46.69	48.93	236.19	5,639	3,432	60.86%	250

Chart 2.7: District Level NPSE Pass Rates 2015 - 2017

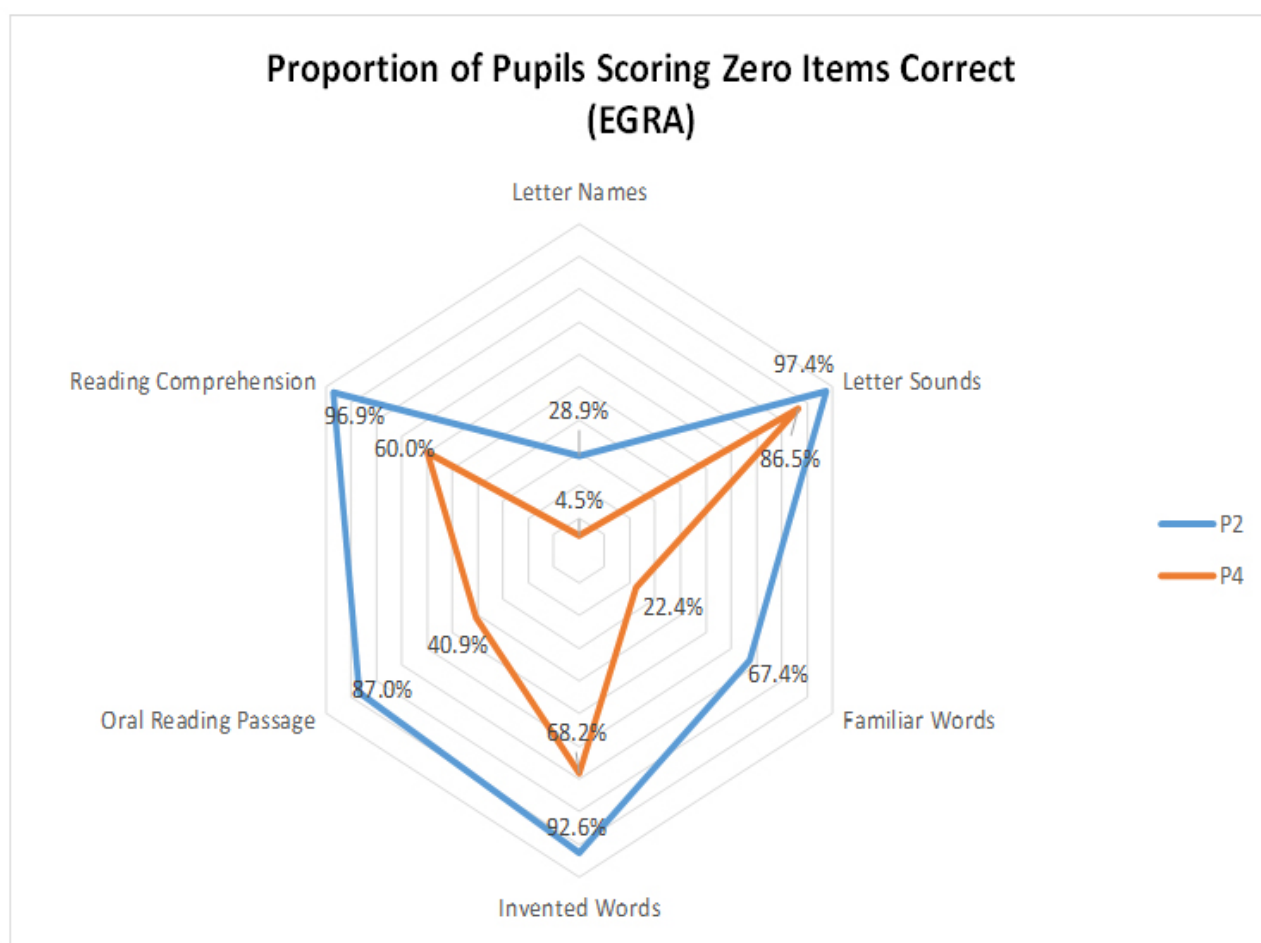


As good as they are for the purpose of selection at the end of a level of schooling, WAEC conducted examinations and the manner in which they are scored, are not designed to provide much useful information on how much learning has taken place. For the purpose of the latter a different type of assessment is required. One such assessment is the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA). In April and May 2014, EGRA and EGMA learning assessment tests were conducted using a nationally representative sample of 2,367 (1,192 girls and 1,175 boys) from 130 primary schools in all 14 districts. Analysis of performance in the EGRA assessment led to the following conclusion:

- i. Primary/Class 4 pupils cannot read a grade- and age-appropriate text fluently and with comprehension
- ii. Pupils in Sierra Leone are not learning how to read in schools
- iii. Pupils in Primary/Class 2 and Primary/Class 4 do not know the letter sounds
- iv. Pupils in Primary/Class 2 and Primary/Class 4 do not have the ability to decode words

The above listed conclusion and others can be derived from the diagram shown below:

Fig. 2.1 – Proportion of Pupils Scoring Zero Items Correct - EGRA



Based on the above findings, it was recommended that greater attention be given to reading in the first 2 years of primary schooling. In fact it was specifically stated that “in the first years, learning to read should be the key target of Sierra Leonean primary schools.”

Having had time to reflect on the study and findings, the GoSL is now giving greater attention to teaching and learning in early primary school and early grade reading is a major intervention under the now ending GPE funded Revitalisation of Education Development in Sierra Leone (REDi_SL) Project.

As a follow-up to the early grade reading intervention and a check on whether the findings of the 2014 study still holds true, another EGRA using the same class levels will be conducted during the lifetime of this ESP.

Assessment of learning is not only being limited to early primary grades. Assessments are also being carried out at the middle and upper primary grades as well as the junior and senior secondary levels. At the junior and senior secondary levels, the nature and type of assessment carried out by the Leh Wi Lan Project made it possible to place participants into one of four performance categories with category one being the lowest and category four the highest. The preliminary results indicate the following for the English Language assessment:

- i. 7% of JSS2 and 13% of SSS2 pupils typically demonstrate skills linked to performance band 4 i.e. the highest band
- ii. A vast majority of pupils in both grades fall within performance bands 2 and 3
- iii. Approximately 8% of JSS2 and 4% of SSS2 pupils typically demonstrate skills linked to performance band 1 i.e. the lowest band
- iv. Boys perform significantly better than girls and the gap in their performance appears to widen as they move from JSS2 to SSS2
- v. Across both grades, pupils from the richest households (i.e. top 20% pupils based on a household asset index) perform significantly better than pupils from the poorest 20% of households

For the mathematics assessment, the preliminary results indicate as follows:

- i. 7% of JSS2 and 12% of SSS2 pupils typically demonstrate math skills linked to performance band 4 i.e. the highest band
- ii. A vast majority of pupils in both grades fall within the lower performance bands 1 and 2
- iii. 37% of JSS2 and 25% of SSS2 pupils typically demonstrate skills linked to performance band 1 i.e. the lowest band
- iv. Across both grades, boys perform significantly better than girls and the gap in their performance appears to widen as they move from JSS2 to SSS2
- v. Across both grades, pupils from the richest households (i.e. top 20% pupils based on a household asset index) perform significantly better than pupils from the poorest 20% of households

In addition to the above and the extract shown in Annex VII of this document, a fuller learning assessment report from the UK funded Leh Wi Learn project is now available.

It is apparent from the analysis of performance in the WAEC conducted examinations and the Learning Assessment scores, that many students are not learning as much or as well as hoped. A thorough causal analysis is yet to be carried out but factors having to do with location, socio-economic background and school administration are beginning to emerge. It has been noted for example, with regard to performance in WAEC conducted examinations, that a change of headship of a school from someone with poor administrative and organisational capacity to someone that is much more competent not only results in improvement in the running of the school but also improvement in the performance of candidates from that school.

It is possible through the use of technology to bridge some of the learning gap between students receiving education in areas that are well provisioned in terms of qualified and competent teachers as well as teaching and learning materials and those attending schools in areas that are starved of both. In this regard, greater use of ICT in teaching, learning and training will be encouraged during the lifetime of this ESP with the view to using this platform to reach schools and students struggling to access good quality teaching and learning. In particular, MEST will encourage the development of an ICT strategy and actions based on this strategy working in collaboration with other relevant MDAs and interested partners. Note that the intention is not to replace or make the teacher redundant but rather to augment and ultimately provide the teacher with an additional tool.

This ESP will complement the gains and achievements in the implementation of quality and relevant education during the years 2014-2016. These include: significant improvements in the learning environment especially after the re-opening of school after the nine months closure of schools after the Ebola virus disease through some strong and vibrant strategies and interventions such as: provision of safe water through bore holes construction in schools, reducing overcrowding through classroom construction and refurbishment including the provision of furniture, the use of radio and television to teach on the primary and secondary school curricula accomplished during the closure of school.

Relevance

Relevance requires a curriculum that is well matched with the developmental needs of the pupils and delivering graduates with relevant skills and competencies to contribute to national development. It also involves the formulation and implementation of education programmes that satisfies the learner and the expectations of the job market. During the life-time of the ESP, targets set will ensure that the curricula for the various levels and forms of education will implement national priorities for education, and focus on ensuring “a chance for every child to learn” in an enabling environment.

Relevance in education received a big boost with the launching of the framework for basic education and the revision of the core subjects including French at the JSS and primary levels of education. The importance of Pre-primary education to improvement in access to school at the right age and school readiness is recognised and this level of education has received significant improvement in the quality of its services through the approval by MEST of a new policy framework and the minimum standards that the schools should operate within. MEST has embarked on a major teacher policy reform through the establishment of the Teaching Service Commission, a semi-autonomous government institution that MEST has devolved to some of its key functions relating to teachers’ core functions.

Integrity

Integrity is built on an education sector that is free of corruption and upholding high standards of ethics and professionalism. Reports of corrupt practices by administrators, teachers, lecturers and other key personnel of the education sector have led to MEST including integrity as a component of the theme: quality and relevance. Lack of integrity is inconsistent with the national goals of education which is to produce citizens that will contribute to the growth and development of the nation through their knowledge, skills and the right attitude to work and life. It is expected that education will imbibe in teachers, students and other personnel of the education sector right conduct and ethical behaviour. New interventions have been written into the document that will help minimise the occurrence of this cankerworm in the education system.

Strategic Outcomes and Interventions

Within the short duration of this Education Sector (2018-2020), the Ministry of Education plans to focus its attention and resources on key strategic outcomes. The MEST will prioritise the following strategic outcomes under this theme:

2.1 – Improvement in the performance and assessment of learners

2.2 – All legally existing schools approved and comply with GoSL stipulated minimum quality standards

2.3 – The education sector is safe and free of corruption

2.4 – Teachers are competent/ professionally qualified, equitably distributed, motivated and demonstrate high performance standards

Strategic Outcome 2.1: Improvement in the performance and assessment of learners

Table 2.1 – Key Outcome Indicator for Strategic Outcome 2.2

Indicator	2017	2018	2020
Revised curricula implemented in schools	25%	50%	100 %
Percentage of learners meeting learning assessments for their levels	a%	a% + 5 %	a% + 10 %
Percentage of WASSCE School Candidates passing English Language and mathematics	a%	a% + 3%	a% + 7%

Intervention 2.1a: Conduct annual sample-based learning assessment for selected pupil levels in English Language Arts and Mathematics

Mastery of English language and numbers/mathematics is crucial for making progress in life in Sierra Leone. Being illiterate and innumerate puts an individual at a significant disadvantage in making headway in life. Currently MEST uses performance in examinations to gain insight into whether or not a child is 'learning'. Unfortunately, examinations are not designed to give needed information on any learning difficulties that a student might be experiencing and they come at the end of a cycle by which time irreparable damage could have been done.

In a bid to address the alarming failure rates in examinations and in order to obtain an earlier and deeper understanding of what learning is taking place, the MEST is embarking on annual sample-based learning assessments in English language and mathematics. These assessments, conducted in the primary, JSS and SSS cycles will provide needed information to assess whether learning is taking place and inform remedial and other corrective measures that are necessary. These measures will involve a variety of things, key amongst which would be TLMs, learning support and training. That the measures taken are effective should become apparent in the pass rates in the two subject areas and in the level of literacy and numeracy of the products of the system.

The Office of the CEO will provide oversight of this intervention, with the implementation lead by the Learning Assessment Unit, supported by the resuscitated Curriculum Unit/Basic Education and the Inspectorate for quality assurance. The risk associated with this intervention is relatively small, but includes sustained resources from the GoSL, and the necessary level and donor programme support is essential. Ensuring that the unit has high visibility, and that findings are constantly shared and communicated can mitigate the risk.

Intervention 2.1b: Undertake curriculum revision/updating and reform as necessary

Curriculum must serve the needs of the students far beyond simply passing examinations. A new basic education curriculum framework has been launched that provides better assessment and early diagnosis of weaknesses in teaching/learning. It has been revised in the core subjects at the JSS levels and on thematic issues at the primary and pre-primary levels. However, as much as curriculum design is important, curriculum implementation is vital to the achievement of quality and relevant education.

Curriculum implementation at the pre-primary and basic education levels will be performed throughout the lifetime of the updated ESP, supported by the introduction of new (aligned) lesson plans for all teachers teaching grade 1-9 English and mathematics.

ATVET policy has also been launched, and the TVET curricula will be revised to include programmes offered at the formal and non-formal areas including an apprenticeship system and on-the-job and off-the-job training. Curricula in the HEIs will also be revised and implemented.

The Office of the CEO will provide oversight of this intervention, supported by the Programmes/ Curriculum Unit. The risk in the implementation of the curricula at all levels is the coordination of the activities, especially as there is no expert currently employed in MEST specifically in charge of curriculum matters. The Curriculum Development Unit should be revitalised and given the responsibility of coordination of curriculum review and implementation, and will help mitigate this risk.

Intervention 2.1c – Stimulate greater interest and uptake of the sciences by stimulating interest in the sciences starting at the early primary level and supporting the establishment/rehabilitation of equipped science laboratories, starting with two secondary schools per district

A country can only develop technologically if it invests in science and mathematics. Interest in the sciences is dwindling with the sciences becoming increasingly regarded as difficult and only for the most able students. Additionally, there has been a steady deterioration in science facilities in

the schools and colleges for decades. Unsurprisingly, Sierra Leone continues to perform poorly in science and mathematics subjects at BECE and WASSCE levels. In most of the HEIs, the intake of students into the Science, Engineering Faculties and B.Sc. Education programmes is dwindling every year.

MEST intends stimulating interest and liking for science starting at the early primary level and equipping laboratories from the JSS levels up to the HEIs levels including TVETs, in a phased manner starting with selected JSSs and SSSs. These targeted JSS and SSS schools will serve as schools of excellence for students showing marked aptitude/talent in science and/or mathematics and/or technology. The schools will be selected based on their physical condition, record of their administration, quality of staff, past performance of students and quality of their proposal/application to become a school of excellence.

In order to ensure optimum use of facilities and equipment, training will be provided for relevant staff of each selected institution.

The Higher Education Science and Technology Directorate (HEST) will undertake this intervention, with support from the secondary division. The risk in the implementation of this intervention is that it may not be attractive to donors. However, MEST will work to find the means to invest on this very important intervention.

Intervention 2.1d: Undertake studies in assessment, performance and employability of learners

One of the challenges identified in the ESP Mid-term Review was that there was no research to find out the efficiency, effectiveness and appropriateness of the interventions. WAEC supplies information on the performance of students in end of year public examinations at the three levels, but there is little information on the performance and relevance of assessment of students within the levels.

MEST will clarify and define the relationship between the curriculum, assessment and performance of learners at the various school grades, from pre-primary to SSS and at the Learning Centres and Community Centres. At the HEIs and TVET levels, MEST will empower researchers to conduct tracer studies on the relevance of the curricula to the aspirations of students and the realities of the labour market. Research will be undertaken on the performance of children with special needs and female students. MEST has to work with TSC and HEIs to ensure that assessment procedures are well understood.

The Higher Education, Science and Technology Directorate (HEST) will lead this intervention, with implementation by researchers at the HEIs and support from NCRDC. Risks to the implementation of this intervention could include a lack of expert capacity when needed to carry out the studies, but will be mitigated by early search and network expansion.

Strategic Outcome 2.2: All legally existing schools approved and comply with GoSL stipulated minimum quality standards

Table 2.2 – Key Outcome Indicator for Strategic Outcome 2.2

Indicator	2017	2018	2020
% unapproved schools	Awaited	25%	0%

Intervention 2.2a – Take the necessary actions to ensure that 100% of educational institutions in operation meet MEST minimum standards together with other requirements spelt out in a revised/updated 2010 Education Policy

Many schools have in the last two decades commenced operation without following the stipulated procedures and without permission from MEST. The requirements can readily be discerned from the 2004 Education Act and the 2010 Education Policy. MEST has not insisted on the closure of these institutions and the consequence has been a large number of unapproved schools and sub-standard institutions operating across the country.

During the lifetime of this ESP, the MEST will have the existence of all educational institutions regularised. This will require amongst other things a re-visitation of relevant portions of the 2004 Education Act and 2010 Education Policy and proposal for amendments/updating as necessary. Those institutions that satisfy or are able to meet the requirements of the Education Act of 2004 and the 2010 Education Policy as well as MEST developed minimum standards, including those stated in the Inclusive Education Policy presently being developed, within a stipulated period of time will be officially registered and allowed to continue operations.

In the meanwhile it should be noted that whilst some concerns had been expressed by a few members of the Inclusive Management Team (IMT) of MEST, it is now the opinion of the team that through employment of strategies proposed, getting the percentage of unapproved schools down to zero by end of 2020 is possible and is a must. Whilst approved schools can apply for financial assistance after 3 years of successful and continuous operation, the government is not obliged to provide financial assistance to all that apply and all schools applying must meet the conditions in operation at the time of application. Additionally, the Ministry has noted that increasing numbers of schools in urban areas seeking approval are private and express no interest in receiving financial assistance from the GoSL that requires them to meet certain conditions.

With strong communications of the minimum standards, complemented with a stringent process at MEST to review and take all school applications into account, MEST aspires to drive schools to the right level of quality standard and sees any closure as the last possible resort. However, the schools that are unable to meet the requirements before the stipulated time will be closed if non-essential and their students transferred to other nearby similar institutions able to accommodate them. Essential institutions that for some reason are unable to meet the requirements will be taken over by MEST or a designated proprietor able to get the institution to meet the requirements within a given time-frame. This could for example be inclusion in a private school network of high standard.

Amongst other things, this intervention requires wide consultations, sensitisation and dissemination of the regulations/requirements and the minimum standards. The Quality Assurance Directorate with the support of the Planning and Policy Directorate will lead on this intervention. This intervention

will initially require the full time attention of at least one staff member of the Quality Assurance Directorate and one other from the Policy and Planning Directorate for a period of approximately 18 months, if the desired result is to be achieved.

The Quality Assurance Directorate / Inspectorate will oversee this intervention, with support from Programmes. Having unrealistic 'minimum standards' and inadequate dissemination of standards are risks that need to be avoided. Wide and extensive consultations and a well-planned dissemination strategy that makes use of the MEST Website and Education Radio, amongst other things, can reduce the risk.

Strategic Outcome 2.3: The education sector is safe and free of corruption

Table 2.3 – Key Outcome Indicator for Strategic Outcome 2.3

Indicator	2016	2018	2020
% of educational institutions implementing measures to prevent School Related Economic and Sexual Related Offences	NA	60%	100 %
Reported malpractices as a % of that reported in 2018	NA	a	a x 20 %

Intervention 2.3a: Sensitise learners on their rights, responsibilities and referral channels in regards to corruption and exploitation at primary, JSS, SSS, TVET, HEIs and Learning Centres

Schools and educational institutions are to be bastions of safety for all learners, and ensuring a safe learning environment for all kids in Sierra Leone is critical for healthy development, learning and positive progression of every individual. Exceptions from this cannot be tolerated! However, the lack of integrity by some education personnel, in particular those exploiting their roles to obtain economic gains or sex from providing grades at all levels in the education sector, is a worrisome issue that MEST intends to attack head on.

Better prevention in schools and supporting institutions must be rapidly established, with strong sensitisation and referral channels. Several things are possible – they include enforcement of the code of conduct for teachers, use of suggestion boxes, use of relevant 'hot lines', etc. The unit responsible for implementation of the intervention will provide a list of proposed actions.

The Guidance and Counselling Unit of MEST will be in charge of the implementation of this intervention, with support from relevant institutions in the area. Risks to this intervention could be inadequate levels of sensitisation relative to the magnitude of the issue being address, as well as referral channels not be available in all institutions/locations.

Intervention 2.3b- Develop and implement a National Strategy and Action Plan on Examination Malpractices, Unethical and Corrupt Practices in Education

The vision and mission of the ESP strongly oppose examination malpractices, which lead to numerous weak students completing their education without achieving the required level expected from them.

The vision also opposes all kinds of unethical and corrupt practices in education. This is why a national strategy and action plan on eradication of examination malpractices, unethical and corrupt practices in the education sector is to be developed and implemented.

The strategy paper and action plan will include guidelines on measures that can be adopted to prevent and stop examination malpractices both in school and national examinations as well as other corrupt and unethical practices present in educational institutions at all levels. MEST will have to work with outside agencies like the Anti-Corruption Commission, Office of National Security, State House, etc. to ensure that such a strategy comes up with suitable policies that can bring about an end or drastically minimise its occurrence in our education system.

This intervention involves a shared responsibility but is to be led by the Directorate of Programmes. Once the strategy is in place, the office of the CEO will be in charge of executing this intervention. Programmes and the Higher Education, Science and Technology directorate (HEST) will provide support. Examination malpractices include many parties involved such as parents, learners, teachers, examiners and other examination personnel. This may lead to a risk of compromise on the strategy. The mitigating factor is that MEST regards this development as worrisome and is strongly driven to eradicate it.

Strategic Outcome 2.4: Teachers are competent/ professionally qualified, equitably distributed, motivated and demonstrate high performance standards

Table 2.4 – Key Outcome Indicator for Strategic Outcome 2.4

Indicator	2016	2018	2020
% of trained and qualified teachers in employment as teachers	NA	a%	75 %
% of schools with full allocation of qualified teachers	NA	a%	TBD
% of teachers inspected and evaluated	NA	a%	75 %

The teaching profession is accountable not only to the Government that pays its salaries but to all stakeholders in education. This is because education is the most costly enterprise of the Government of Sierra Leone.

The arm of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology with the greatest involvement in the monitoring of teachers and schools, the Inspectorate, is to be strengthened not just in terms of numbers but also with skills that will facilitate data driven decision making and the use of simple tools that allow better prioritisation of schools to monitor and support.

Strengthening the Inspectorate will further allow it to concentrate on its core functions of monitoring the functioning of schools, providing needed support and advice as well as providing guidelines and inputs to serving teachers and principals. As it is being transformed to a Quality Assurance Directorate, the necessary schedules, tools and indicators necessary for quality supervision and monitoring will be built.

Interventions for efficient teacher management will be informed by the processes and outcomes of the national teacher payroll verification exercise, policy guidelines and tools for teacher recruitment, promotion and deployment, and strategies for decentralised teacher management that include mechanisms to facilitate communication from the districts to the centre. The use of modern technological tools will be critical for developing and maintaining a credible teacher payroll and records system.

Intervention 2.4a - Establish and implement a system for the professional development, induction and continuous development of teachers and school heads making use of what has been learnt from interventions such as the lesson plans introduced in 2017

There has been a spate of programmes and activities designed to equip teachers with new knowledge and skills to increase their performance in the classroom and enhance student learning. These activities have been generally one-off and of short duration, disjointed and uncoordinated and without a clear vision of their long-term impact on change in teacher behaviour. Reforming teacher development requires an evidence-based, holistic, transformational approach that takes into account policies and procedures, roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders in the teacher career continuum, from the stages of their initial preparation and induction to in-service training and ongoing professional development. A credible and sustainable systemic approach will underpin the vision of teacher development, one in which a composite set of mutually-enhancing, rather than stand-alone, disparate interventions, will form the basis of reform in this component of the ESP.

At the core of teacher development is a set of requirements for effective teacher performance, defined in terms of professional standards and competencies that will guide teacher training curricula, and continuous development programmes.

A national framework for inducting newly qualified teachers into the profession has not yet been developed. Induction programmes are typically organised by individual schools with high expectations of teacher performance and student achievement. Incoming teachers require administrative and professional mentoring support to develop their confidence and prepare them to apply their knowledge and skills in a novel situation. Recognising induction as a process in a teacher's career path, the TSC will engage with pre-service institutions and schools to develop a national framework for induction and orientation of new teachers at this early stage of their career.

Many teachers still lack the relevant qualifications for the levels in which they are teaching. More important than the qualifications for teachers are for them to become teachers with quality to help their students learn. Quality teachers should have the requisite subject matter knowledge, pedagogical skills and attitudes for effective teaching, a strong understanding of child development, effective communication skills, a strong sense of ethics, and a capacity for renewal and ongoing learning. In-service training should include training in all of these and other critical areas.

Among key interventions by the TSC to improve the quality of teachers in service will be the development of policy guidelines and a national framework for continuous professional development to ensure that every teacher has access to opportunities for training that will be consistent with identified needs. The TSC will work to establish and implement teacher standards and competencies.

To support teachers, in particular weaker teachers, the MEST developed and introduced lesson plans for the primary and JSS levels in English language and mathematics during the President's Recovery Priority Programme period. This was followed by a nation-wide lesson plan induction training for >40,000 teachers at primary and JSS levels.

Further support for teachers will be provided as part of the CPD to ensure that the lesson plans are fully understood and effectively used. Once lesson plans and other supporting materials are developed for SSS level, English and mathematics teachers at the SSS level will also benefit from similar support. Output indicators are to be established so that it is possible to assess whether these trainings have had a positive effect on the ability of the teachers, or whether the training has contributed to improving students' learning outcomes.

In order to provide training for so many teachers, the TSC will consider a training of trainers (TOT) approach, among others, and make a choice on which is most appropriate and likely to yield the best results. The TSC will lead on this but will work collaboratively with the Inspectorate Directorate, teachers and teacher colleges to ensure that the trainings are successfully accomplished, monitored and deliver the expected impact, with funding support from donors such as the EU and DFID. The most significant risks to this intervention are likely the large number of teachers that are currently not qualified to teach (whereby a regular CPD intervention in itself might not be sufficient to reach the required improvements), as well as the large number of teachers currently not on the payroll, with potential limited motivation to learn and develop. These issues are underlying larger sector challenges that need separate resolution, but may limit the potential impact and reach of this intervention in the short term. The risk can be mitigated using Evidence-based planning through R&D (baselines, SITAN, mechanisms for coordinating interventions) as well as policy guidelines for teacher development.

Intervention: 2.4b - Develop and implement a set of reforms in pre-service education that are consistent with norms and standards for effective teacher performance

Implementation of this intervention during the lifetime of the preceding ESP was minimal. This ESP gives high priority to revitalising pre-service teacher education programs to improve the quality of graduate teachers for the future.

The MEST will support distance education for the unqualified teachers teaching in remote rural areas at the primary and JSS levels. Grant in aids will be provided for all student teachers and innovative strategies will be employed to ensure that HEIs move from emphasis on not only content but also emphasis on modern paradigms of learning and pedagogy. In addition, the TSC, in collaboration with MEST, will lead a process to develop teacher professional development policy guidelines and professional standards as a basis for improving teacher education programs.

The Directorate of Higher Education, Science and Technology (HEST) will work collaboratively with the TSC and HEIs, particularly the teacher training institutions to ensure that these pre-service programmes are implemented. Risks to the implementation of this intervention could be a lack of innovative practices proposed or trialed, but could be mitigated by increasing the focus on studying international best practices and ideas.

Intervention: 2.4c – Build strong foundation for early learning through training of early grade teachers in reading, writing and mathematics

As indicated in the preamble to this chapter, EGRA and EGMA tests were conducted in Sierra Leone in 2013. The findings were alarming. Amongst other things, analysis of the assessment scores showed that pupils of Class 2 not only struggled with reading, writing and number work but also that:

- i. Pupils in Primary/Class 2 do not know the letter sounds
- ii. Pupils in Primary/Class 2 do not have the ability to decode words
- iii. Pupils in Primary/Class 2 struggle with naming multiple digit numbers
- iv. Pupils in Primary/Class 2 lack calculation strategies other than the use of ‘tick marks’

Amongst the many recommendations made in the EGRA/EGMA study report, these two are clearly deduced:

- i. In the first years, learning to read should be the key target of Sierra Leonean primary schools
- ii. Focus on improving the skills of teachers through appropriate teacher training

A great deal of collaboration is necessary for this intervention to be successful. The TSC will work collaboratively with the HEST and Programmes directorates of MEST as well as relevant teacher training institutions, augmented as necessary by technical support, to ensure the success of the intervention. The risk is that the level of collaboration may not be as desired. Oversight by the Deputy Minister responsible for basic education can help to minimise the risk.

Intervention 2.4d - Establish and implement a system for strengthening the management of the teacher workforce (recruitment, deployment, promotion, etc.)

Teachers are at the very heart of classroom instruction and the most important implementers of MEST and TSC goals and policies. However, several schools suffer from scarcity of teachers in core subjects, such as English language, English literature, French, the science subjects, mathematics, technology and technical subjects, especially in disadvantaged rural areas.

This intervention will require addressing significant challenges related to high dependency on voluntary teachers (including payroll implications), as well as efforts made to clean the existing teacher payroll further described later. The TSC/MEST will develop improved systems for teacher deployment, at central and district levels, including forecasting school staffing needs and developing recruitment plans.

TSC policy guidelines on teacher management will take account of subject teacher shortages and articulate criteria for equitable distribution of teachers. Identifying and attracting the required teachers will be a significant risk, as well as the dependency success of this intervention has on resolving some of the bigger underlying sector challenges, such as the large amount of teachers not on the payroll. Some mitigation can be provided by having a harmonised public service e-database; use of technology to track teacher mobility and forecast demand and supply needs as well as policy guidelines for teacher management; clean records and payroll database.

Summary Table 2 - Matrix of Interventions and Ratings on Efficiency, Effectiveness, Relevance Appropriateness and Risk

S. O.	Intervention No.	MEST Responsible	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Relevance	Appropriateness	Risk Rating	Mitigation
2.1 -Improvement in the Assessment and Performance of learners	2.1a: Conduct annual sample-based learning assessment for selected pupil levels in English language arts and mathematics	Leh Wi Learn / Planning and Policy Directorate + BES / Learning Assessment Unit	5	4	5	5	L	Raise priority level of intervention and communications
	2.1b: Undertake curriculum revision/ updating and reform as necessary	Programmes Dir. + BES and Leh Wi Lan and Resuscitated NCRDC	5	3	4	4	M	Revitalise / Resuscitate the National Curriculum Research and Development Centre (NCRDC)
	2.1c: Stimulate greater interest and uptake of the sciences by stimulating interest in the sciences starting at the early primary level and supporting the establishment/ rehabilitation of equipped science laboratories, starting with two secondary schools per district	BES + Programmes Directorate - Secondary Division	4	3	5	5	M	Teacher refreshers
	2.1d: Undertake studies in assessment, performance and employability of learners	Planning and Policy Directorate + BES	4	3	4	4	L	Early expert search and network expansion
2.2 – All legally existing schools approved and comply with the GoSL stipulated minimum quality standards	2.2a: Take the necessary action to ensure that 100% of educational institutions in operation meet the MEST minimum standards together with other requirements spelt out in a revised/updated 2010 Education Policy	The Office of the CEO, Programmes Directorate, Planning and Policy Directorate, Inspectorate/Quality Assurance Directorate,	5	4	5	5	M	Wide and extensive consultations and a well-planned dissemination strategy that makes use of the MEST Website and Education Radio

S. O.	Intervention No.	MEST Responsible	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Relevance	Appropriateness	Risk Rating	Mitigation
2.3 - The education sector is safe and free of corruption	2.3a: Sensitise learners on their rights, responsibilities and referral channels in regards to corruption and exploitation at primary, JSS, SSS, TVET, HEIs and Learning Centres	Office of the CEO, Quality Assurance Directorate, Guidance and Counselling Unit and HEST	5	4	4	4	M	Guidance and Counselling Unit has to be strengthened
	2.3b: Develop and implement a National Strategy and Action Plan on Examination Malpractices, unethical and corrupt practices in education	Office of the CEO, Quality Assurance Directorate and HEST	5	3	4	4	M	High priority to implementation of intervention given by State House, Units and Divisions concerned
2.4 - Teachers are competent/ professionally qualified, equitably distributed, motivated and demonstrate high performance standards	2.4a: Establish and implement a system for the professional development, induction and continuous development of teachers and school heads making use of what has been learnt from interventions such as the lesson plans introduced in 2017	TSC	5	5	5	5	L	Evidence-based planning through R&D (baselines, SITAN, mechanisms for coordinating interventions); Policy Guidelines for Teacher Development
	2.4b: Develop and implement a set of reforms in pre-service education that are consistent with norms and standards for effective teacher performance	The Higher Education, Science and Technology Directorate, TSC, Office of CEO	5	5	5	5	M	Study of international best practices
	2.4c: Build strong foundation for early learning through training of early grade teachers in reading, writing and mathematics	TSC for in-service + HEST for pre-service + Office of CEO + Programmes	4	5	5	4	M	Oversight by Office of CEO
	2.4d: Establish and implement a system for strengthening the management of the teacher workforce (recruitment, deployment, promotion, etc.)	TSC	5	3	5	5	H	Harmonised public service e-database; Use of technology to track teacher mobility and forecast demand and supply needs'. Policy guidelines for Teacher Management; Clean records and payroll database.

Conclusion

The outcomes, indicators and interventions discussed in this chapter are achievable with the concerted support of all stakeholders and EDPs. Quality, relevance and integrity in the education system will lead to the ESP attaining its goal for all learners 'to pass the mark' in the education system.

3 – SYSTEM STRENGTHENING

Preamble

Key to a successful education system is good governance, good management, good supervision, a high level of integrity, discipline, broad ownership and structures that work. Without the aforementioned, effective and efficient service delivery is not possible.

Education in Sierra Leone is expanding rapidly in all directions and becoming increasingly complex. From just a single university a few decades ago, the country now has at least six with others in the pipeline. Pre-primary education is now growing faster than the other levels in enrolment terms. At the same time, secondary level education is growing faster than primary as more students sit and pass examinations to move to higher levels. District Education Offices are increasing in size, workload and responsibility. The Teaching Service Commission (TSC) is likely to be just the first of a number of entities established to relieve the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) of some of its load. Demands from the public are increasing daily to the extent that MEST is finding itself severely over-stretched. The Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) epidemic shook the system but at the same time provided the opportunity for a re-think on many things as indicated in this document.

As indicated in the immediately preceding ESP, “Developing the capacity for improved governance and management of the education sector is a critical element in ensuring effective and efficient delivery of quality education services.” In this ESP, good governance and management has to be infused with integrity and has to be visible in structures that work and deliver needed and wanted services.

A capacity assessment was conducted prior to the commencement of the preceding ESP and a Capacity Development Strategy (CDS) produced that informed interventions proposed in the ‘Learning to Succeed’ document. The findings of the capacity assessment as detailed in the CDS and stated in the preceding ESP and confirmed by the Mid-Term Review preceding the drafting of this document are:

Overlap and ambiguity in existing education policy and legislation

Both the Local Government Act and the Education Act of 2004 do not clearly delineate the roles of the central government and local councils.

Lack of clarity of roles within the MEST

There is confusion between MEST divisions, specialised agencies and commissions or councils regarding roles, responsibilities and function.

Severe staff shortages

Capacity is less than desired at both MEST and within local councils.

Over-stretched management, limitations with current human resources, organisational and institutional capacity

There is limited professional development planning across the sector, for teachers, managers and administrators within education at all levels, but also for MEST (central and district level) personnel.

Lack of coordination between the District Education Offices (DEOs) and the Local Councils (LCs)

A lack of co-ordination is resulting in a lack of joint monitoring of schools by DEOs and some LCs. The situation is likely to become more complex when the TSC is decentralised and district staff are appointed.

Gender Imbalance

There are a limited number of women in top managerial positions in the education sector.

Lack of a fully- operational Education Management Information System (EMIS)

Sierra Leone has yet to establish an effective and efficient system and infrastructure that supports harmonised and timely collection, processing and dissemination of data.

Quality Assurance

Reports and actions by inspectors and supervisors of schools help ensure quality. Left free to themselves, unscrupulous proprietors and heads of schools are focused on personal financial gain at the expense of student learning, thereby contributing greatly to the nation's poor WAEC results.

In addition to most of the above still holding true, new challenges have appeared and the situation in some cases has deteriorated. MEST remains very short staffed and even with the Public Service Commission (PSC) allowing the Ministry to go and hunt for the staff it needs, key positions remain unfilled and some units and divisions are no longer functional. It appears that what the Ministry, and hence the Government, has to offer is insufficient to attract needed individuals. This has serious implications for strengthening the Ministry and for overall good governance. A 'one size fits all' approach in recruiting for critical and key positions in the Ministry does not appear to be working. The present situation is extremely dangerous and threatens the continued ability of the Ministry to satisfactorily perform all its functions and play its leadership role in education. However, this is not to say that nothing has happened. In every one of the above areas something has happened as is indicated below:

- Necessary amendments to the Education and Local Government Acts are still to take place but significant improvement in the relationship between District Education Offices (DEOs) and Local Councils has resulted in both doing more of the planning for education in the district together as well as shared responsibility for what happens in education
- As indicated earlier, the fact that staff shortages still persist is not due to a lack of effort. A completely different approach is now being considered as detailed below
- There has been an increase in the number of women in leadership positions in education over the period under review. For example, in the period under review a woman was appointed as Deputy Minister 1 at MEST, a woman was appointed as Chairperson of the Teaching Service Commission, a woman was appointed as head of the College of Medicine and Allied Health Services of the University of Sierra Leone, a woman is now in charge of secondary education, etc.
- The transformation of the Inspectorate to a true Quality Assurance Directorate has come in

for much discussion and is at the brink of happening

What is undeniable is that even with all of the above-mentioned accomplishments, much work still has to be done to address the shortcomings highlighted earlier. Among other things, there is a need to strengthen not only central and local staff capacities in planning, budgeting and the monitoring of funds and activities, but also those of School Management Committees (SMCs), in an effort to ensure services are adequately delivered and their quality enhanced. In addition, improving supervision and accountability mechanisms at the local level may be effective in ensuring more efficient use of education inputs and resources at the school level. Decentralised financial and human resource management systems are also known to improve fiscal management and accountability systems and needs to be explored.

In terms of organisational efficiency, it is clear that much work still has to be done in getting the balance between the central and district education offices right. Key capacity gaps in both and delays in action are impacting on the delegation of responsibility and accountability from the centre to the district. One consequence is that the centre is overwhelmed with implementing activities better carried out at district level if only the District Education Office possessed the needed capacity. Temporary stop gap measures using donor/partner funds are not the long term answer and beyond the proposals in this transitional document a hard look has to be taken at the prevailing organisational and management structure of MEST as well as how it can take advantage of available but barely utilised private sector capacity.

The Accounts Division of MEST is run by staff sent by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED). MoFED also handles the payment of subsidies and subventions to educational institutions. It is MoFED that releases funds to educational institutions and pays the salaries of teachers. Delays in payments of fees and subventions are usually caused by non-submission of returns by educational institutions. Training is being provided for schools on how to be preparing and submitting financial returns in a timely manner. In particular, schools involved in a Performance Based Financing (PBF) trial, using funds from the GPE, are receiving first-hand experience and training on the importance and advantages of making timely returns. A proposal in this ESP is exploration of the possibility of adopting a PBF type model for providing support to educational institutions.

In the case of teachers in Government and assisted schools not being on the payroll, the cause is frequently the fact that many schools insist on taking staff above their allocated ceilings. As enrolment and the number of schools increase, it is also sometimes the case that the MEST has reached its ceiling on the number of teachers that MoFED would allow it to have on the payroll at that given time. The imposition of ceilings is a reflection of the fact that financial resources available to the GoSL are limited and the fact that the staff lists of a number of schools are bloated with the names of individuals who have no business being on the payroll. With regards to the latter, attempts have been and are being made to 'clean' the payroll and keep it clean. This matter receives attention in this ESP.

Given the limited amount of funding currently available from the GoSL, the rapidly increasing enrolment at all levels and accompanying increase in the number of institutions, it is apparent that guaranteed and sustainable funding additional to that currently being provided needs to be found in order to avoid a crisis situation. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is aware of the situation in member countries and proposed in a meeting of Ministers in September 2017 that all should impose a small percentage increase in taxes that should go directly to education. Discussion is ongoing in Sierra Leone on the proposal. At the same time, a few proposals are being floated by MEST. They include a 1% tariff on fuel or a 1% tariff on calls both coupled with proprietors of assisted schools being required to pay a percentage of the running cost of their schools instead of zero percent as is currently the case for almost all assisted schools.

Teachers are such an integral part of the system that they are mentioned in almost every chapter, which makes the issue of their management extremely important. In this regard, the cleaning of the teacher payroll and keeping it clean going forward is of very high priority and, when the TSC becomes fully operational, attention should be given to:

- Ensuring teachers are deployed to the schools where they are most needed
- Ensuring teachers continue to teach in schools where they are deployed
- Reducing the reliance of the education system on non-payroll teachers

Many lessons can be learnt from what happened in education during the Ebola and post-Ebola period in terms of the operation of the system. One clear lesson that came through was the greater level of collaboration and cooperation between the different players on the field of education the greater the likelihood and scoring goals and achieving success. Also coming through clearly was the importance of strong and clear MEST leadership. In the implementation of this ESP, MEST intends putting into practice the lessons learnt because it strongly believes that in doing so it will be taking another step in the direction of fulfilling its Mission.

From 4 to 6 May 2017, the political leadership and all senior staff of MEST at HQ and in the districts met at a retreat to discuss urgent issues and to map a way forward. Issues discussed at length included: the current scheme of service for MEST staff, the Education Act of 2004 and the 2010 Education Policy, the Local Government Act – in particular the clauses having to do with education and devolution, ‘study leave’ for teachers and staff of MEST, approval of schools, grant-in-aid; President’s Recovery Priorities systems and processes beyond 2017, and the relationship between the Teaching Service Commission (TSC) and the Quality Assurance Directorate (QAD). Resolving many of the issues discussed would significantly strengthen the system. Some of the key decisions/recommendations have been put on hold pending reports from committees and teams established at the retreat. These reports will inform the ESP moving forward. To ensure alignment the major issues discussed have already been covered in this and other chapters of this document.

An issue receiving increasing attention is that of a fair deal for children with disabilities who start off with barriers and disadvantages in the home and encounter challenges when they enter education. MEST is cognisant of the issue and is embarking on the development of an Inclusive Education Policy and Strategy, the first step of which has just been concluded with the carrying out of a research to inform the work. It is certain that implementation of the policy and strategy when developed will have a significant impact on the education and learning of disabled children in Sierra Leone and contribute positively to improving the quality of the education and system strengthening.

The major goal of system strengthening as detailed in this ESP Update is the emergence of a system that is forward looking, proactive yet responsive to the needs of the nation and providing service of a quality that is much higher than in previous years. The key and main target for System Strengthening is a significant improvement in service delivery by 2020. The Ministry believes it would have achieved this goal if a 10% improvement in the service delivery rating of MEST takes place between 2018 and 2020. This would be possible if just 75% of the interventions detailed in this document are successfully executed, the public adequately involved and informed.

Strategic Outcomes and Interventions

Within the short duration of this Education Sector (2018-2020), the Ministry of Education plans to focus its attention and resources on key strategic outcomes. The MEST will prioritise the following strategic outcomes under this theme:

- 3.1 - The filling of all key staff positions at MEST headquarters, district education offices (DEOs) and Teaching Service Commission (TSC)
- 3.2 – Development and maintenance of a clean payroll and records
- 3.3 – Increasing the service delivery rating of MEST, based on its official service charter, by a minimum of 10% by 2020
- 3.4 - Timely, Reliable and Accurate Data and Information on Education Readily Available, Accessible and in Use

Strategic Outcome 3.1: All key staff positions at MEST Headquarters, District Education Offices (DEOs) and Teaching Service Commission (TSC) filled

Table 3.1 – Key Outcome Indicator for Strategic Outcome 3.1

Unfilled Highest Priority Key Staff Position	2016	2020
MEST HQ	14	0
DEOs	42	0
TSC	14	0

There are directors at the Ministry doing the job of at least 2 others because key positions remain unfilled. The consequence is work overload and an inability to perform at the desired level. Similarly, some key divisions have disappeared because they have no staff and yet they are needed now more than ever. Part of the reason that schools are not inspected as often and as thoroughly as desired is because of a lack of Inspectors in DEOs. Similarly as the DEOs are assigned more responsibilities, more staff members are needed to stop them being overwhelmed and becoming both inefficient and ineffective. In order to address these shortcomings and to improve on the service delivery of MEST, the interventions detailed below will be implemented.

Intervention 3.1a – Obtain support to staff up the highest priority MEST HQ professional staff vacancies

The MEST has for many years suffered from significant understaffing. Some of the unfilled key staff positions identified during the analysis leading to this report need to be urgently filled as the absence of staff in these positions is having a significant negative impact on the performance of MEST and its ability to deliver needed services. The filling in of a few of these key positions by capable, high calibre persons of integrity ability to attract others to MEST, can have a transformative effect on the education landscape. Interviews with some of those that have turned down offers for key positions indicate that poor remuneration was the major reason for offers being declined. There are GoSL plans to improve the salaries and conditions of service of senior civil servants, but given the current financial constraints implementation is likely to be delayed.

To realise the maximum potential through this ESP period, MEST will work to obtain support to staff the current vacant HQ positions of the highest priority to the Ministry. As has happened in the past, negotiations will take place with the HRMO and MoFED, prior to staff appointment, to ensure that the GoSL will be able to continue funding the position if donor support is received.

A study of how staff are recruited for the best public services in the world suggests that a smart recruitment procedure ensures they get the best that is available. It is quite apparent that the current recruitment procedure has failed MEST and a new approach is needed as key MEST staffing positions have remained unfilled for years.

The procedure being advocated here is proactive recruitment process starting with approaches to:

- The best available and interested undergraduates about to enter the final year of their studies
- The best and most interested post-graduates in their final year
- The best in industry looking for a career change and/or a fresh challenge
- Able and competent educationists/heads of schools/senior teachers who can offer more to society by working in MEST

All would go through scrutiny by MEST before being recommended to the Public Service Commission for recruitment and going through the normal interview and appointment process.

The responsible entity at MEST for this intervention is the Office of the CEO supported by the Human Resource Management Office at MEST. There is a risk that support from donors may be lacking and that suitable applicants may not be found. There is also the risk of resentment by other staff who may be of similar rank but being paid less. Finally there is the risk that as soon as the support comes to an end the supported staff will leave. It is known already that individuals with the required skills exist. Two projects with significant support for capacity building will be operational for a period of 3 years and positive discussions on support are possible. A signed undertaking prior to appointment should reduce the risk of staff leaving prematurely and prior discussions. Agreement within and by the Inclusive Management Team (IMT) followed by approval by the Executive Management Team (EMT) and sensitisation of senior staff prior to 'open' recruitment and appointment should reduce resentment.

Intervention 3.1b – Securing the support necessary for TSC to be able to fill key HQ positions and become fully functional

The smooth and effective functioning of the schooling system is dependent on the teacher situation. Teachers are now primarily the responsibility of the Teaching Service Commission (TSC). If the TSC does not function well there are likely to be issues with teachers. If the TSC is not fully and properly staffed it is unlikely to function well. Without conditions of service and salaries that are sufficiently attractive, key positions in the TSC might remain unfilled. The TSC needs all support possible to ensure it is fully staffed by competent individuals. As the TSC is a semi-autonomous entity it will be responsible for the recruitment of its staff.

The Ministry will ensure maximum cooperation with and support for the TSC as its success will also be that of MEST and will mean a brighter future for the children of Sierra Leone. MEST will help facilitate support and cooperation with MoFED and the HRMO to ensure a fully functional TSC. When the TSC is fully established transfer of functions from MEST to TSC will take place. Key priorities will be to establish effective and efficient teacher personnel management systems including payroll.

The Office of the Permanent Secretary at MEST can help facilitate support and links with the TSC, MoFED and HRMO. The risk is that remuneration ceilings stipulated by the GoSL may be too low. Negotiations on allowances can be used to address the risk if the basic salaries are set too low.

Strategic Outcome 3.2: Develop and maintain a clean teacher payroll and records

Table 3.2 – Key Outcome Indicator for Strategic Outcome 3.2

Indicator	2016	2020
% of actual practicing classroom teachers in approved GoSL and assisted schools on payroll	NA	95%

Quality teachers make a real difference in the classroom, and constitute the heart of the education system. However, a large share of the serving teachers are currently not paid through the MEST payroll, implying significant reliance on voluntary teachers with varying levels of qualifications. Through the President's Recovery Priorities Programme, MEST and TSC have started the effort of cleaning the existing payroll, correcting mistakes in the records such as teachers that have legitimately relocated to another school, removing teachers that have retired, etc.

Intervention 3.2 – Develop and maintain clean teacher payroll and records

The MEST and TSC are committed to develop and put in place systems to maintain the payroll clean going forward, as well as understanding the future implications of providing PIN codes to legitimate teachers currently not on the payroll. However, this will have significant implications on the Government expenditures, implying that a clear strategy and feasibility study must be undertaken as a first step.

The Office of the Permanent Secretary at MEST will support the implementation by the TSC. Risks to this intervention may include data reliability and completeness, and will be mitigated through the establishment of better processes and robust validation mechanisms.

Strategic Outcome 3.3: Service delivery rating of MEST increases by a minimum 10% by 2020

Table 3.3 – Key Outcome Indicator for Strategic Outcome 3.3

Indicator	2016	2018	2020
Service Delivery Rating	n/a	a	a + (20% of a)
Percentage of legitimately operating schools unapproved		15%	0%

One of the most serious challenges affecting education in Sierra Leone is inadequate service delivery and follow up mechanisms to ensure proper accountability. Public perception greatly influences the service delivery rating of the MEST by the public. A high failure rate in public examinations and the levying of extra charges because fee subsidies have not been paid are just a few examples of issues which negatively affect the perception of MEST and which result in low service delivery ratings. Even with the production and dissemination of the MEST Service Charter in 2017 this continues to be the same.

Acute shortage and absence of teaching and learning materials, over-crowded classrooms, non-approval of schools of long standing, large numbers of teachers waiting to go on the payroll, mushrooming unsafe schools, shortage of teachers of some subjects and in some areas, etc. are all issues cited by the public in radio discussions for the comments they make concerning the performance of MEST. Cognisant of the foregoing, the MEST is embarking on the interventions detailed below, in addition to already ongoing activities, to improve on the quality of services being offered as well as the perceived competence and integrity of MEST.

Intervention 3.3a – Disseminate the MEST Service Charter widely and conduct an annual education service delivery survey

Stakeholders do not know the services for which MEST should be held accountable. A preliminary Service Charter was discussed extensively at the first MEST Senior Staff Retreat in May 2017. This is to be finalised and shared nationwide using all means available in mid to late 2017. A baseline service delivery rating of MEST based on the service charter and key issues identified by stakeholders is to be conducted in early 2018. Service delivery surveys are essential to monitor the health of the system from the viewpoint of the stakeholders/beneficiaries. This is to be the first MEST initiated and approved service delivery survey.

To ensure objectivity and lack of bias, a directorate of MEST will have oversight but an entity external to MEST will be responsible for carrying out and reporting the findings of the survey. MEST will indicate the areas which it would like the survey to cover and on what it wishes to be rated, in addition to any other areas independently identified by the agency contracted to do the work. The survey is to be comprehensive and cover all Local Council areas so that a council by council picture can be obtained. One survey a year will be conducted over a 4 month period covering both the analysis and report writing.

The Planning and Policy Directorate will be responsible for ensuring that the exercise is carried out. However an external entity will be responsible for the conduct and management of the survey. A risk to this intervention is that the survey findings could be controversial and could be resisted. This will be addressed by ensuring that MEST has ownership of the survey and process which, as already indicated, will be based on the MEST developed Service Charter. Additionally the carrying out of the survey can be built as a Performance Appraisal requirement for the Ministry.

Intervention 3.3b – Provision of capacity development training based on a comprehensive MEST staff development programme

No induction is currently performed for new staff entering MEST. As was made apparent at the MEST Senior Staff Retreat of May 2017, few staff members know the Vision and Mission of the Ministry and equally few possessed and understood the main legislations and policies governing the operations of the Ministry including the 2004 Education Act and 2010 Education Policy. Induction of all MEST staff new and old and provision of key policies and legislations is a must.

Service delivery is enhanced by staff becoming more competent and performing their roles and responsibilities better. Invariably this requires greater knowledge and skills acquisition through some form of training/ capacity development. The majority of staff at MEST receive no training whilst at the Ministry. Those that do benefit from training do so primarily through their own efforts. Sometimes the programmes pursued have little to do with their roles and responsibilities at MEST.

The HRMO at MEST has taken note of the foregoing and wants a comprehensive training plan that will cover all levels of staff at MEST at headquarters and in the districts. The plan is to ensure that all staff members undergo compulsory training related to their work at least once every three years.

The Office of the Permanent Secretary will oversee this intervention, working in collaboration with the Human Resource department, and the Office of the CEO. The risk associated with this intervention is the availability of financial resources, but will be reduced by varying the mix of internal and external training programmes, leveraging partner support and in-house TAs, and resorting to relevant free online programmes when necessary.

Intervention 3.3c – Provide inputs and resources to (i) make possible timely release of WAEC results to schools, and (ii) carry out analysis of the performance of schools and candidates in the examinations

The late release of WAEC examination results cause the first year of all levels of schooling and college to be shorter than the official school/academic year. In some instances results for the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) are released so late that successful candidates are unable to enter college the same year. Given that WAEC – Sierra Leone is a semi-autonomous arm of MEST, the Ministry comes ‘under fire’ every year the release of results is delayed. Because of the tremendous public interest in the results, the almost annual outcry has to receive due attention.

On release of results the public is eager to learn which schools and candidates performed well in the examination. This often leads to false information being given to the public by newspapers and radio stations which fail to cross-check their 'facts'. For more than a decade, the Ministry has been analysing the results of all school level examinations and producing candidate order of merit lists independent of that produced by WAEC. It has also been producing schools league tables based on a number of criteria. Starting in 2016, the Ministry commenced releasing a simplified version of the analysis to the public that includes league tables for the districts and categorisation of schools based on performance in the examinations as well as candidates' order of merit and school league tables based on a number of criteria including measures of improvement. Given the level of malpractice that has crept into the examinations, much care is taken in the analysis to watch for unusual/suspicious performance patterns and/or trends. National awards based on these analyses and non-examination analyses (e.g. learning assessment standards) are going to be highlights of an annual Week of Education which commenced in 2015. Support for the awards and Week of Education will continue to be needed, with potential support from partners such as the EU.

Invariably delay in the release of results can be traced to insufficient examiners for popular subjects, slowness in the return of marked scripts by examiners, equipment issues and irregular as well as unpredictable supply of power. Delay in the release of results are not insurmountable and the MEST believes that with the necessary inputs and changes, it is possible to have the results released to schools within 50 working days of sitting the last paper.

The Office of the CEO working in collaboration with the Programmes Directorate and the Basic Education Secretariat will be responsible for this intervention. The major risk associated with this intervention is provision of the financial and material resources needed, but can be reduced by the Ministry giving the intervention high priority and soliciting matching support by partners.

Intervention 3.3d – Introduce Performance Based Financing (PBF) by the GoSL for the financing of schools, colleges, polytechnics and universities

To date the Government of Sierra Leone has been providing financial support to schools and colleges without asking for much, if anything, in return. Additionally, little incentive has been given to educational institutions to improve on what they do and become more effective. The consequence has been that, in the absence of a competent head of institution, many public/GoSL /GoSL-assisted educational institutions have either stagnated or deteriorated in the quality of teaching/learning experiences they provide for their students and communities/stakeholders.

To counter the trend and to compel public educational institutions to improve the quality of their teaching and learning, the Ministry, following discussions and agreement with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED), is to operate a school financing scheme built around a, currently being piloted, school grants scheme that provides a base amount for all schools but with significant additional amounts possible for meeting simple and attainable administrative, teaching and learning targets. This will allow the GoSL to clearly see what it is getting in return for monies invested and at the same time make it possible for MEST to quickly identify under-performing/failing schools and take appropriate remedial action. Ultimately the GoSL will not only improve on the returns for monies spent but it will also be regarded more positively by the public for the service provided as a result of the anticipated improvement in teaching and learning.

On agreement being reached with the MoFED, schools involved in the REdi_SL pilot will join with others in a 2 year trial run of the scheme/programme.

Amongst other things, the success of the scheme being advocated will depend on regular, timely and appropriate monitoring and reporting on the operations of educational institutions.

The Ministry cannot act on what it does not know, and monitoring is essential for knowing and addressing the challenges of the system. The quality of monitoring and reporting greatly influences the quality of the services provided. The Institutional Arrangements chapter deals with monitoring and evaluation of education and ESP implementation. In this segment the importance of planned, systematic monitoring of educational institutions, the production of actionable reports and necessary follow-up is emphasised.

To ensure proper monitoring through this ESP period, the DEOs need to have adequate numbers of Inspectors/Quality Assurance Officers, necessary logistics as well as establishing close working relationships with Situation Room Ward Monitors and Paramount Chiefs who together with representatives of civil society will be involved in the validation/confirmation process. In addition, MEST will improve the way the information coming from the monitors will be used to guide the decision making. Without the necessary actions on the reports, the monitoring in itself is of limited value.

Issues of sustainability will inform decisions on what is needed and what is feasible. As much as is possible, use will be made of permanent structures enhanced by the provision of additional / new skills and incentives.

The responsible entity at the Ministry is to be the Planning and Policy Directorate together with the Inspectorate/Quality Assurance Directorate and supported by the Accounts Division in the Office of the Permanent Secretary. The major risk associated with this intervention is that the MoFED may not be agreeable to providing financing in the manner requested or may delay approval of the process. The risk will be reduced by early high level discussions as well as thorough sensitisation and briefing of relevant staff of the MoFED, schools and stakeholders prior to the commencement of the scheme.

Strategic Outcome 3.4: Timely, Reliable and Accurate Data and Information on Education Readily Available, Accessible and in Use

Table 3.4 – Key Outcome Indicator for Strategic Outcome 3.4

Indicator	2016	2020
Annual School Census data of quality for a district available and being used in district as well as nationally	No	Yes
Annual School Census data collection automated and more reliable data in use	No	Yes
M&E framework and plan for ESP in use	No	Yes
Annual Statistical Year Book/School Census Report available on Education Website within 50 working days of completion of data collection and validation	No	Yes

An accusation frequently levied against the Ministry is that school census data collection is always rushed and seemingly arbitrary. It is also said that the school census report is always released late, the reliability of data in the report questionable and ready access to the data difficult. Whilst the Ministry is able to easily counter most of the accusations it is constantly taking action to improve data reliability, accessibility, timeliness and use for informing policy and actions. In this regard, it is decentralising data collection and availability, moving away from paper-based data collection and moving towards the production of statistical year books for education in advance of the school census report which requires more time to produce. Overall, MEST is working on strengthening EMIS through provision of the necessary equipment and materials, providing the necessary training and operating structure, linking together the major data and information collecting/gathering entities and making it easier to access available information and data. At the same time, MEST is ensuring that the nature of data collected is such that it can readily be disaggregated in terms of location (region, district, council, chiefdom, etc.), gender/sex, age (in some instances), grade, physical status, condition in the case infrastructure, etc. In order to make the foregoing possible, MEST is embarking on the following interventions/activities during the lifetime of this ESP.

Intervention 3.4a – Equip and empower each DEO to collect and analyse data on education in the district in which it is located

A lesson learnt from past school census data collection is that data collection is fastest and the data obtained more comprehensive and reliable when District Education Offices (DEOs) lead in the data collection process. Outsiders, e.g. students from Freetown, may not know how to get to certain locations or be aware when a head of school is manufacturing numbers. Additionally, with the data available in the office, District Deputy Directors (DDD) are able to more quickly check on the integrity of the data supplied by schools in their district and to take necessary action.

By 2018 data collection should be fully tablet based and automated so that errors are kept to the minimum and collected data fed automatically to servers based in a district and at headquarters. Rapid validation of the data/information by the Planning and Policy Directorate as well as an independent entity, e.g. Paramount Chiefs or a suitable civil society organisation, will still be necessary. Taken together, the foregoing should result in quicker, more reliable and accurate information coming from EMIS, more timely Education Statistics Year Book and Annual School Census Report as well as better planning. With regard to the Statistics Year Book in particular it is anticipated that completion and release would not be more than 50 days after data collection and validation.

The Planning and Policy Directorate has over the last 3 years been gradually increasing the involvement and leadership role of the DDDs in school census data collection in their districts. This has all been part of the process of decentralising data collection and the EMIS. The intention is getting the information nearer and quicker to where it is most needed and of greatest use. The move is to be intensified with necessary training being provided along with needed equipment and materials. Each DDD is to be accountable for the comprehensiveness/coverage, the extent to which the data can be disaggregated to give information on gender, local council and district, inclusiveness, timeliness and quality of data collected. Clearance to release data and information to the public will be determined by MEST HQ following necessary quality/reliability and coverage checks as questions have been raised in the past about the reliability of data collected by some

DEOs. Necessary disciplinary action will be taken against DEOs found to be deliberately providing incorrect information/numbers.

The entity responsible for the successful implementation of this intervention will be the Inspectorate / Quality Assurance Directorate working in collaboration with the Planning and Policy Directorate. The main risk associated with this intervention is timely provision of funding. This can be addressed through the MEST making the activity a high level priority and/through early notification of partners if MoFED indicates resource mobilisation challenges.

Intervention 3.4b – Enable Paramount Chiefs to participate in the education monitoring/ validation process and produce termly reports on education in their Chiefdom

There are marked differences between chiefdoms in the quantity and quality of educational provisions. Chiefdoms with pro-active Paramount Chiefs (PCs) that are interested in education invariably have better and more schools. These PCs monitor their schools and can tell you what is happening in the remotest schools in their chiefdoms. Past experiences of the Ministry working with PCs has been positive especially during the post-Ebola period when the President referred to them as chief monitors in their chiefdoms. PCs have also always been fully involved in the Annual Sector Review Workshops.

During the lifetime of this ESP, all PCs are to work with the Chiefdom Education Committees (CECs), established under the Local Councils Act to help monitor/confirm what is happening in educational institutions in their chiefdom and provide termly reports to the Ministry through the Chief Education Officer via the District Education Offices. These reports will inform data collected for the Situation Room as well as school census data. With regard to the latter, in collaboration with selected civil society organisations, PCs are to also help validate school census data and hence to improve on its quality. Sensitisation and training of PCs are likely to be required under this intervention in order to get the best out of them. The use of PCs for monitoring/ validation purposes is reflected in the monitoring framework and plan developed by the M&E Unit in collaboration with the QA Directorate, other units of MEST and key players/stakeholders. Necessary support for the PC monitoring and reporting work is to be provided via the National Council of Paramount Chiefs in order to ensure that all PCs are on board.

The Quality Assurance Directorate / Inspectorate is responsible for this intervention. The main risk associated with this intervention is the timely provision of needed financial resources. This risk is reduced by giving this intervention high priority and the holding of discussion with the NCPC executive prior to embarking on data collection.

Intervention 3.4c – Strengthen EMIS to become a ‘one-stop shop’ for all MEST data on education

Significant work is ongoing to strengthen the Education Management Information System (EMIS) but additional and faster work is needed to bring about a more comprehensive and responsive system that will not only bring together school census and Situation Room data but also data from the districts, data and information collected by Paramount Chiefs as well as information collected by M&E staff and Quality Assurance staff, etc.

Linked with these will be additional information from the MoFED on teacher PINs and school IDs used for payment of subsidies. Following necessary discussions and agreement, other information from the MoFED Integrated Financial Information System (IFMIS) could also become available. The inclusion of WAEC examination school codes/IDs would make it possible to identify and provide information on a school from a variety of IDs. Getting data from various sources in one place makes it easier to check on the integrity of responses and to take action necessary to improve data quality and integrity.

The MICS, CWIQ and DHS surveys all collect data on education. Making the data available to MEST would further strengthen the EMIS, inform the annual school census and make possible analysis that is not possible with the latter alone.

Currently Situation Room Ward monitors visit all schools. They all have smartphones provided by the Ministry with contribution from donors. These phones are capable of capturing and sharing GPS/location data for schools visited. The GPS information is to be linked to schools on the database thus making it possible not to only know the location of schools but also to do school mapping and better plan the allocation/distribution of new and additional structures/institutions.

To make use of all sources of available data and inform better analysis and decision making, the MEST would like to develop and implement a clear EMIS strategy, realising the goal of having a 'one-stop shop' data warehouse and structure. Staff, training, equipment and financing are necessary to carry out this intervention which will involve work not only at HQ, but also in the districts.

The MEST entity responsible for implementation of this intervention is the Planning and Policy Directorate. The major risk with this intervention is the provision of the resources required. This can be partly mitigated by phasing implementation so that all the resources are not needed at the same time. Partners support built on existing working relationships is essential. The Deputy Director EMIS is to produce a clear plan with timelines and costing detailing how the intervention is to be successfully executed.

Intervention 3.4d - Strengthen and improve partner coordination

Development and implementing partners are key stakeholders in the education sector. Besides the fact that they fund educational activities around the country, many also have the expertise in emergency preparedness and response and bring international best practices. International and Local Non-Governmental Organisations work in all districts across the country, creating a need to ensure an updated database with information on: What partners are doing; When they are doing the What; Who they are doing the What for and Where they are doing the What.

The Office of the Permanent Secretary will oversee this intervention, implemented by the Partner's Coordination Desk in collaboration with the NGO Desk, the Inspectorate, and the Situation Room. Resources for this intervention will come from a mix of sources that include the GoSL. Although this is very essential, some partners may not declare some other activities conducted in some remote areas and hence have the opportunity to misconstrue the exercise. District Education Offices and District Councils should be vigilant to further monitor the activities of NGOs countrywide.

Summary Table 3 - Matrix of Interventions and Ratings on Efficiency, Effectiveness, Relevance Appropriateness and Risk

S. O.	Intervention No.	MEST Responsible	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Relevance	Appropriateness	Risk Rating	Mitigation
3.1 – The filling of all key staff positions at MEST Headquarters, District Education Offices (DEOs) and Teaching Service Commission (TSC)	3.1a: Obtain support to staff up the highest priority MEST HQ professional staff vacancies	Office of CEO, Human Resource Management Office	5	4	5	4	M	Clear support by IMT and EMT
	3.1b: Secure the support necessary for TSC to be able to fill key HQ positions and become fully functional	TSC	5	4	4	4	H	Negotiations on allowances
3.2 – Develop and maintain clean payroll records	3.2: Develop and maintain clean teacher payroll records	TSC	5	5	5	5	H	Establishment of better records management processes and robust validation mechanisms
3.3 – Service delivery rating of MEST increases by a minimum 10% by 2020	3.3a: Disseminate the MEST Service Charter widely and conduct an annual education service delivery survey	Planning and Policy Directorate	5	5	5	5	L	Ensure ownership by MEST and build in as a performance appraisal requirement
	3.3b: Provision of capacity development training based on a comprehensive MEST staff development programme	Office of the PS, Office of the CEO, Human Resource Management Office	5	5	5	5	M	Varying mix of programmes to fit available resources
	3.3c: Provide inputs and resources to (i) make possible timely release of WAEC results to schools, and (ii) carry out analysis of the performance of schools and candidates in the examinations	Office of the CEO. Programmes Directorate, Basic Education Secretariat	5	4	5	5	M	High priority given to intervention by MEST, soliciting matching support by partners
	3.3d: Introduce Performance Based Financing (PBF) by the GoSL for financing of schools, colleges, polytechnics and universities	Planning and Policy Directorate, Inspectorate/Quality Assurance Directorate, Accounts Division under the Office of the PS	5	4	5	4	H	Early high level discussions between MEST and MoFED

S. O.	Intervention No.	MEST Responsible	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Relevance	Appropriateness	Risk Rating	Mitigation
3.4 – Timely, Reliable and Accurate Data and Information on Education Readily Available, Accessible and in Use	3.4a: Equip and empower each DEO to collect and analyse data on education in the district in which it is located	Planning and Policy Directorate, / Inspectorate / Quality Assurance Directorate /	5	5	5	5	M	Intervention made high priority and partner support obtained
	3.4b: Enable Paramount Chiefs to participate in the education monitoring / validation process and produce termly reports on education in their Chiefdoms	Inspectorate / Quality Assurance Directorate and Office of CEO	4	4	4	5	M	Agreement with NCPC Executive prior to commencement of intervention
	3.4c: Strengthen EMIS to become a 'one stop shop' for all MEST data on education	Planning and Policy Directorate	5	5	5	5	M	Phasing of intervention and timely partner support
	3.4d: Strengthen and improve partner coordination	The Office of the PS, the Partner's Coordination Desk/ NGO Desk, the Inspectorate, Situation Room	4	4	5	4	L	Increased NGO Desk and Situation Room coordination, inclusion of District Councils

Conclusion

In the preceding paragraphs and sections a deliberate attempt has been made to focus on system strengthening issues that need to be urgently addressed and which can reasonably be covered during the lifetime of this ESP Update. Some require more resources and/or commitment than others but all are important and all contribute in one way or another to improving the service delivery of MEST as well as integrity in and quality of education in Sierra Leone.

4 – EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

“We do live in turbulent times. Often the future is unknown; therefore, it behoves us to prepare for uncertainties.” Thomas Monson

Emergency Preparedness is the process of preparing systematically for future contingencies, including major incidents and natural or man-made disasters. It is also referred to as a strategic plan of action through which communities reduce vulnerability to hazards and cope with disasters.

Preamble

The dawn of the 21st century globally, has been ushered with numerous problems ranging from political instabilities, civil strife, regional conflicts, health emergencies, natural disasters and flooding. Sierra Leone is no exception. The decade long civil strife in Sierra Leone left an indelible scar on all sectors of the economy, and on the education sector in particular. Accustomed as it is to invasion by diseases such as cholera, dysentery, typhoid and the always present malaria, the Ebola epidemic came as a very unpleasant surprise. Never previously known in Sierra Leone, the disease found the health and other sectors totally unprepared with devastating consequences.

It is not just civil strife and diseases that have found the education sector unprepared, natural disasters such as floods have also had a disrupting effect on the education system. Flooding during the rainy season in the recent years, has left many schools in ruins, materials looted, properties damaged and a few students drowned. The risk of fire poses another challenge which needs to be addressed especially as increasing numbers of primary schools prepare (cook) meals (school feeding). Given the level of unpreparedness of the education sector, it is important that an emergency response plan and related arrangements are put in place for the sector.

Emergency and disaster planning for the education sector involves a coordinated, co-operative process of preparing to match urgent needs with available resources. The phases are research, writing, dissemination, testing, and updating. Hence, an emergency plan needs to be a living document that is periodically adapted to changing circumstances and that provides a guide to the protocols, procedures, and division of responsibilities in emergency response.

The plan also needs to exist in a nested hierarchy that extends from the local emergency response (the most fundamental level), through the regional tiers of government, to the national and international levels. In a bid not to reinvent the circle, MEST has commenced training and sensitisation of Districts and Regions on Education in Emergencies and compiling an Emergency Preparedness Plan that will be used both at District, Regional and National Level.

Strategic Outcomes and Interventions

Within the short duration of this Education Sector Plan (2018-2020), the MEST plans to focus its attention and resources on key strategic outcomes. The MEST will prioritise the following:

4.1 – An Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan, Handbook, and Phone Directory for all Educational Institutions

4.2 – Dissemination, awareness creation, trainings and drills to ensure readiness to act according to the Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan

Strategic Outcome 4.1 – An Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan, Handbook, and Phone Directory for all Educational Institutions

Table 4.1 – Key Outcome indicator for Strategic Outcome 4.1

Educational Materials on Emergency Preparedness	2016	2020
% of Educational Units with Preparedness and Response Plans at National and Sub-National Levels	< 5%	>75%
% of Schools with access to Emergency Response Telephone Directory	< 3%	>75%

The vast majority of schools and other educational facilities are not adequately prepared for emergencies. Less than 5% of educational institutions have access to an emergency preparedness and response plan.

Intervention 4.1: Development, Printing and Distribution of an Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan, Handbook, and Phone Directory for all Educational Institutions

To improve the relatively low level of preparedness of schools and educational facilities, the MEST will develop an Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan for education. This will include agreed tasks and responsibilities for a multi-agency response to an emergency in education. It will be a blueprint for managing events, and include the alignment of action, collaboration, command, and communication during a disaster or major event affecting education; in other words, it will provide the framework for critical education related emergency matters.

Key district and national level emergency response phone / contact numbers will be made available on an Emergency Response Phone Directory of a few pages in length. In addition to the hard copies of the directory produced, an electronic copy will be available from the MEST Website. Educational institutions will be encouraged to download the directory from the website and print hard copies.

The Planning and Policy and Inspectorate Directorates will lead this intervention, with support from the School Broadcasting/Public Relations Unit of MEST to reach out to the telecommunications service providers and other security groups to strategise on security measures.

Strategic Outcome 4.2 – Dissemination, awareness creation, trainings and drills to ensure readiness to act according to the Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan

Table 4.2 – Key Outcome indicator for Strategic Outcome 4.2

Educational Materials on Emergency Preparedness	2016	2020
% of trained emergency officers in Educational Institutions (Rapid Response Team)	< 5%	>75%

Awareness of the content in the Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan, supported by regular trainings are essential to ensure ability to effectively respond should an emergency occur, including actors at all levels; National, Regional, District, Chiefdom, Ward, community and schools. This also includes the importance of building teams of emergency response actors at different levels.

Intervention 4.2a: Provision of sensitisation and awareness raising on the Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan as well as necessary training

To drive awareness the MEST will make use of different media such as billboards, jingles, posters, flyers and banners to complement handbooks for schools, to further broaden the knowledge and strengthen the level of preparedness in terms of potential emergencies. With its own radio station, the MEST is also in a unique position to reach a significant part of the population, including teachers, parents and the community.

Trainings and emergency drills are critical to ensure all actors know how to respond should an emergency even occur. Using primarily existing resources and structures, the MEST will ensure trainings, workshops and drills happen as and when funds become available at the required levels, including:

- Conducting training workshops involving wide participation of key stakeholders. As the occurrence of disasters and outbreaks are common during the rainy season, it is necessary to conduct these trainings prior to the rains.
- The MEST will ensure that all Guidance and Counsellors in schools and in the local communities are trained to perform their required roles.

A great deal of emphasis will be placed in the training not only dealing with the emergency itself but in emerging stronger if possible i.e. being truly resilient. In particular, attention will be given to discussing ways in which the challenges of the emergency could be turned into opportunities.

The Inspectorate Directorate and School Broadcasting Unit/Public Relations Office will lead this intervention and be supported by the Planning and Policy Directorate and the Situation Room. The risks associated with this intervention could include the availability of resources (financial and other) to carry out the trainings. Mitigation against the risks will include early discussions with MoFED to see if resources could be provided, and as far as possible integrate the required tasks within existing MEST and District structures.

Intervention 4.2b: Establish strong coordination with the Situation Room for real time data and information dissemination and further, disseminate information through the Ministry's EMIS and Website

The Situation Room (in its current or future form) is the information hub at the MEST for obtaining real time data and information from schools. Together with this, the MEST has just constructed its website and media house (which also serve as an information tool), and coupled with the refurbished state of the art EMIS room, there is enough capacity at MEST for information dissemination.

The MEST will set-up these structures in a way that enables them to support the campaign for the dissemination of emergency preparedness and response in the sector.

The Planning and Policy Directorate will oversee this intervention, with implementation support by the ICT Unit, the School Broadcasting, the Situation Room and EMIS Units. The associated risk with either of the communications mode will be mitigated by the other medium.

Summary Table 4 - Matrix of Interventions and Ratings on Efficiency, Effectiveness, Relevance Appropriateness and Risk

S. O.	Intervention No.	MEST Responsible	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Relevance	Appropriateness	Risk Rating	Mitigation
4.1 –An Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan, Handbook, and Phone Directory for Educational Institutions	4.1 Development, Printing and Distribution of an Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan and Handbook, and Phone Directory for Educational Institutions	Planning and policy Directorate, Inspectorate Directorate.	5	5	5	5	L	Toll free lines with caller identification.
4.2 - Dissemination, awareness creation, training and drills to ensure readiness to act according to the Emergency Preparedness Plan	4.2a Provision of sensitisation and awareness raising on the Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan as well as necessary training	Inspectorate, Planning and Policy Directorate	5	5	4	4	L	Leveraging a wide range of media, as well as careful consultations with local leaders. Additionally, early discussions with MoFED on availability of funds with a readiness to integrate activities with others receiving funding
4.2 - Dissemination, awareness creation, training and drills to ensure readiness to act according to the Emergency Preparedness Plan	4.2b Establish strong coordination with the Situation Room for real time data and information dissemination and further, disseminate information through the Ministry's EMIS and Website	Planning and policy Directorate, ICT Unit, Situation Room	5	4	5	5	L	Complemented with use of other media

Conclusion

Education in emergencies is considered as one of the key pillars of humanitarian response and therefore should be catered for prior to the occurrence of emergencies. Emergency preparedness limits the impact of disasters. Developing a National and Sub National Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan for education is a stride towards alleviating the consequences of disaster and devastation in our educational institutions and school communities.

5 - INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND M&E FRAMEWORK FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ESP

Preamble

While the earlier chapters of this document outlines “what” the ESP aims to deliver and “who” is responsible for delivering each intervention, the following section describes “how” the delivery system will work and the way in which stakeholders will interact with each other to make this happen. It therefore follows a different structure than the earlier chapters 1-4, and focuses on describing in detail the delivery structure, the stakeholder coordination mechanisms, the monitoring framework and the results framework. Implementing the institutional arrangements as described is essential to ensure realisation of the intended ESP outcomes, and will ensure that the ESP interventions are implemented in a timely manner, issues are resolved, and results are measured and acted on when required.

It follows from the above that this chapter points the way to:

- The implementation of the ESP guided by a clear 3-year implementation plan
- A successful ESP implementation centred on MEST post-transition management structure/ arrangements/ teams and compact multi-representation Working Groups
- The use of a multi-faceted monitoring frame work and strategy

During the President’s Recovery Programme Period, the MEST leadership team introduced new ways of working at the Ministry, which allowed accelerating the delivery and monitoring of a set of focus initiatives and outcomes over the past 24 months (June 2015 - June 2017). The delivery structure included:

- **Weekly Heads of Working Group Meetings (Chaired by the Coordinator):** A platform for all Initiative Owners and the senior MEST leadership to review progress, proposals and recommendations from the Initiative Owners for endorsement and/or approval. Issues escalated are resolved, and those issues that cannot be resolved are further escalated
- **Weekly Initiative Working Group meetings (Chaired by each Initiative Owner):** A platform for collaboration and coordination between MEST, collaborating Ministries and institutions, and specific partners involved in the implementation of an initiative. Plans are jointly developed, roles and responsibilities defined and distributed, operational challenges addressed, critical challenges/problems resolved or escalated, etc.
- **Quarterly Education Development Partners Forum (Chaired by the Minister):** A platform for the Education Sector leadership and Development Partners in the education sector to review progress in the education sector, track existing opportunities, identify funding gaps and discuss overall priorities and ongoing Donor initiatives

In addition to the regular meeting cycle, the establishment and close involvement of the following units has been important:

- **The Situation Room:** During the time of rapid recovery following a crisis (such as the Ebola outbreak), data needs to be obtained quickly to ensure critical interventions are implemented successfully and delivering results. To support this objective, a team of 1,182 Situation Room monitors were put in place to record monthly data at a school level, providing information on questions such as whether schools have implemented school feeding or not, or whether kids have returned and are attending school again, etc. Given the rapid reporting cycle, the Situation Room intends to complement other available annual data sources, such as the school census.
- **Education Partners' Desk:** Supports the coordination of the education sector efforts across the country and maintains an updated list of education sector partners, including operational areas, type and scale of interventions, quality of interventions, etc. The Partners' Desk, in collaboration with the NGO Desk, constitute the hub and linkage with all stakeholders in the education sector.
- **The Teaching Service Commission (TSC):** Integral to the coordination of efforts related to teachers and teacher policies, for example the establishment and maintenance of a clear payroll, teacher policies, training of teachers, etc.
- **The School Feeding Secretariat:** Integrated in the education sector for implementing the school feeding on a national scale, but operating as a stand-alone unit.

These PRP structures have proven to be very effective in getting a few priority interventions rapidly implemented, but recommendations from the Education Sector Mid-term Review of the 2014-2018 ESP Workshop, extensive consultations with education stakeholders nationwide, and review of the Agenda for Prosperity, have identified a set of improvement areas that will be put in place for the implementation of the ESP. Discussions based on lessons learned, obtained through these stakeholder interactions, have concluded that using the existing PRP structures as a foundation is desirable (relative to creating something “new”), but that the recommended adjustments will make the system stronger and more sustainable in terms of handling the larger ESP scope and objectives.

The most important reflections and lessons learned taken into account when developing the revised ESP structure include:

- Strong political will and recognition of good performance has created higher motivation for implementers to keep pushing for rapid results. Although there will be no weekly State House reporting structure post the President's Recovery Programme period, maintaining strong senior MEST leadership engagement in issue resolution, performance management and recognition will be important.
- Having a regular meeting cycle for coordination, progress tracking and rapid issue resolution has been absolutely critical for driving delivery, but the Heads of Working Group meeting should be extended to include all Directors and key staff and be supported by a smaller Minister level leadership meeting.
- Clearly appointed initiative owners have enabled holding individuals accountable to the delivery process, but the structure should be extended to include broader MEST priorities and all Directorates. It is also recommended that as far as possible, the owners should be assigned according to their initial organisational responsibilities.

- Tools and templates have enhanced quality of work and enabled better performance management, such as detailed workplans, KPIs, deep dive trackers, etc. An operations plan with supporting detailed workplans and input KPIs should be developed to support the ESP, but with slightly less detail than during the Presidential Recovery Period to make it more practical to use.
- Having timely data (e.g. Situation Room, reports from the Districts, etc.) allows rapid progress tracking, decision making and response, but this must be further strengthened in the refined ESP delivery structure.
- Working in a more integrated approach (e.g. with State House, other Ministries, IPs and PDs, etc.) has allowed breaking past siloes, and open and inclusive structures should be maintained, as well as regular IP/DP coordination and interactions.
- Stronger District engagement has allowed better coordination, execution, and accountability, and should be strengthened and leveraged even further.

Based on input from all stakeholders and the summary of lessons learned above, the following sections outline the suggested improved implementation structures for the 2014-2018 Education Sector Plan. The Planning and Policy Directorate, supported by the Coordinating Office, will hold the responsibility for making sure the transition happens and make any further adjustments to the system, when required.

The MEST Delivery Structures

The MEST ESP delivery structure includes 4 levels of implementation, issue resolution and decision-making, going all the way from each District up to the Minister. The chart below illustrates the cascading structure, followed by a detailed description on how each level is expected to operate.

MEST Education Sector Plan Delivery Model

	Role of forum	Participants	Frequency	
Executive Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Highest level decision making ▪ Political steer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chair: Minister ▪ Deputy Ministers ▪ CEO/PS 	Monthly (or as needed)	Coordinating office
Inclusive Management Team Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ESP progress tracking ▪ Issue resolution ▪ Decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chair: CEO/PS ▪ Deputy Ministers ▪ Directors ▪ TA lead ▪ Secretaries 	Fortnightly	
Directorate Working Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus on ESP implementation ▪ Resolving operational issues ▪ Recommendations for the Inclusive Management meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chair: Director ▪ Directorate staff, incl. secretaries ▪ TAs ▪ Others (on invitation) 	Fortnightly	
Districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ESP implementation ▪ Progress and issue resolution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chair: DDE ▪ District staff, including secretaries 	Fortnightly	

Executive Management Team (Monthly meetings)

The Executive Management Team (EMT), made up of the Ministers (i.e. the Minister and his two Deputies), Permanent Secretary and Chief Education Officer, will take policy decisions on behalf of the ministry informed by submissions from the Inclusive Management Team (IMT). This executive arm meets on general education matters as and when required to interface on IMT matters.

Non-convening of EMT meetings to take critical and timely decisions might cause delay in the implementation of some activities/interventions and is seen as a risk, and a monthly cycle is recommended to ensure rapid decision making and guidance to the implementing team.

Inclusive Management Team (Fortnightly meetings)

The Inclusive Management Team (IMT) of MEST is led by the Chief Education Officer and the Permanent Secretary with heads of directorates, divisions and units as members. The Deputy Minister I and II will be in attendance when their duties allow them. This body will guide interventions and track the ESP initiative implementation using a simple workplan and KPI tracker file, with supervision and leadership from the Executive Management Team. Existing tracking tools and templates applied during the Presidents Recovery Programme Period will be updated and adjusted to fit this purpose, focused on tracking activities and input KPIs in the short-term, and output/outcome KPIs as soon as they are available. This body will also have the mandate to make technical decisions that will further guide and effect actions related to the implementation of the ESP. Feedback on progress including challenges and recommendations will be reviewed and possible endorsement taken by this body during fortnightly meetings. Education Development Partners and other stakeholders will upon invitation from the IMT, attend meeting as requested by MEST. The IMT will review ESP targets and adjust as necessary.

The Inclusive Management Team has the responsibility of ensuring achievement of set targets when they become due. Bureaucratic bottleneck leading to delays has been identified as a possible risk to the work of the IMT.

Working Group Approach Driven by a Coordinating Office (Weekly/ Fortnightly meetings)

The Working Group approach which proved successful during the implementation of the Ebola and Post Ebola recovery interventions in the education sector, was recommended for adaptation as a coordinating strategy by stakeholders during the 2017 Education Sector Mid-term Review of the 2014-2018 ESP. This coordinating strategy has been proposed to be the driving force for the 2018-2020 ESP implementation.

The Working Groups will consist of MEST leadership at directorate/division/unit/office level and include in the membership INGOs, NGOs, other development agencies, line MDAs, CSOs, private sector and any other local or international education stakeholders. Each Working Group will be responsible for specific interventions/activities based on the allocation for the directorate/division/unit leading the group, and will follow their detailed implementation plan. As such, the Working Groups are the engine and core of the ESP implementation, focused on delivering 1-2 interventions each, and is responsible for ensuring delivery according to plan, issue resolution or escalation when challenges arise, and monitoring of results and impact of the intervention(s). Input KPIs will be used to track short-term impact and progress of the Working Group, followed by output and outcome KPIs once such are available.

Regular updates on the implementation progress from each Working Group will be provided to the IMT through the Planning and Policy Directorate and the Coordinating Office. The Working Groups are expected to meet weekly on the commencement of implementation and fortnightly thereafter.

District Education Office (Fortnightly meetings)

Most of the ESP interventions will require implementation by the DEOs. District implementation work-plans and targets will be developed to mirror and support the implementation of the national interventions and targets. To ensure progress and issue resolution, fortnightly progress meetings will be held in each District, led by the DDE. Each Working Group will be responsible for coordinating with the DDO and DDE regarding their specific interventions, creating a strong link between the coordinating centre and the implementation in the Districts.

Coordinating Office

Similar to the Presidents Recovery Programme Period, the Coordinating Office will be responsible for ensuring that all Working Groups are meeting as scheduled and are meeting their targets. The office will consist of technical staff and interns/volunteers from the universities who will provide technical expertise and secretarial support for the implementation of the interventions. The office will also provide oversight and administrative support, for example by making sure the detailed workplan and KPI tracker is updated ahead of the IMT meetings.

Coordination and Stakeholder Management Mechanisms

To successfully deliver the ESP, the MEST needs to work closely in coordination with several external stakeholders, including other Government institutions, as well as Implementing and Development partners. The following section outlines the intended way of working with each stakeholder, and the role of different supporting units.

Development Partners

The contribution of Donors and implementing partners towards supporting the education sector in Sierra Leone cannot be over emphasised. Donors over the years have made significant contributions in supporting the education sector to achieve its targets. The key donor players among others have been GPE, DFID, UNICEF, ADB, IDB, World Bank, EU, WFP, JICA, CRS. Civil Society groups have also been an integral part of the development partners forum and have contributed immensely by ensuring that service delivery in education is enhanced. These agencies will provide continued support to MEST with the aim of enabling the education sector to meet set targets by 2020. The Education Development Partners (EDP) otherwise regarded as Local Education Group (LEG) are expected to endorse the ESP and support MEST in meeting all key targets by 2020. The partners should also be a part of the monitoring structure.

To ensure close dialogue and collaboration with the Development Partners, MEST will continue to host the quarterly Development Partners Meetings, including all senior staff at the ministry and the Development Partners. The meetings will be a forum for discussing progress according to the ESP work-plan, as well input KPIs (in the short-term) and output/outcome KPIs (in the medium/long term). In addition to reviewing progress against plan and targets, the meetings will allow an open dialogue between the Partners and MEST, the ability to raise any concerns about the sector development, as well as sharing progress or developments by the Partners.

Several risks have been identified with donor/partner support. They include: delay in donor partners fulfilling support pledges for the implementation of the ESP, development plans of partners not being aligned with ESP outcomes, and delay in ratification of funding provision by donors.

Partner Coordination

MEST in its stride to consolidate and evenly spread partner interventions among areas where there are identified gaps, has established a partner coordination desk which supports all coordination efforts between MEST and all development partners working in the education sector. This body supports the work of NGOs and Donor Partners and ensures that all partners' activities are fully aligned with the education sector plan by the end of the 1st quarter of 2018. MEST Collaboration with NGOs and other development organisations should also be enhanced at district level by the end of the 1st quarter 2018. Whilst a long-term solution for strengthening partnership coordination is been worked on by MEST, the partner coordination desk will continue to support the MEST NGO desk by providing technical assistance in areas of need.

A major risk associated with the above is the absence of a fully functional partnership coordination unit at MEST will lead to partner support interventions not been properly coordinated.

Local Councils

The Local Councils will continue their role of ensuring that service delivery for basic education is enhanced. MEST, through the Inspectorate Directorate/Quality Assurance Directorate, will ensure that Local Council plans are aligned with the objectives and interventions in the basic education subsector of the ESP. Local Councils will work with the local District Education Office in the implementation of relevant interventions of the ESP.

Local Councils are also required to provide regular updates on the interventions for which they are responsible on a routine basis right through to the end of 2020. Risks include weak Capacity Local Council implementation capacity.

Line Ministries Departments and Agencies

The Ministry of Education Science and Technology linking with line ministries, departments and agencies will ensure that cross cutting interventions are collaboratively executed. This will be coordinated by the Planning and Policy Directorate of MEST. The process will be guided by a Memorandum of Understanding with the other line MDAs indicating clear pathways and method of collaboration whilst at the same time making specific references to the roles and responsibilities of key focal points to be appointed. A major risk is that of invited and relevant line ministries not assigning focal points to Working Groups.

Teaching Service Commission

The Teaching Service Commission (TSC) has a clear and well defined mandate for the management of teachers, and is expected to be fully operational by the end of the first quarter of 2018. Close coordination and collaboration between MEST and the TSC will be critical, especially in the areas of (i) registration and licensing of teachers, (ii) teacher performance and development, (iii) teacher management operations – recruitment, replacements, transfers, promotions, etc., and (iv) teacher/employer relations are expected to be met. As soon as the TSC has the required capacity, the responsibility for implementing the teacher-associated interventions under the ESP would be gradually transitioned over to the TSC.

One concern is that the TSC may not be fully operational before the start of the implementation of the 2018-2020 ESP.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Unit within the Directorate of Planning and Policy (DPP) in collaboration with the Inspectorate/Quality Assurance Directorate (QAD) will provide the technical expertise and guidance on all monitoring and evaluation exercises within the education sector.

The aim of this group i.e. coalition of the M&E Unit of the DPP and QAD will be to monitor all outcome metrics defined across the proposed set of interventions in the ESP, as well as to make further inputs necessary for supporting the operational/implementation plan. Simple tools and KPI tracker templates will be used to enable this work and make data easily available and sharable across stakeholder and meeting forums.

The information and data will be collected from a number of sources including the Situation Room through monitors and District Education Offices through inspectors and supervisors. Information will also be obtained from the Paramount Chiefs, the Civil Society groups, school support structures e.g. the Five-man Committees and School Management Committees, partners, Local Councils and District Oversight Committees.

The Situation Room has a presence in the districts and at headquarters, and provides the opportunity for communicating real-time information/data electronically on a regular basis. With a total 1,182 community monitoring personnel and 14 Information technology focal persons, this structure has been designed to allow timely data tracking from almost 80% of all schools across the country every month, and complements very well other less frequently reported data sources, such as the Annual School Census, the annual exam results, etc. As such, the Situation Room will become a core component within the Educational Management Information System (EMIS) alongside the Annual School Census and other similar complementary sources. It provides data and information necessary to arrive at informed decisions, actions and policies.

Data provided by the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, will be leveraged through a three-tier governance structure:

- **District Education Office level:** Data collected at a school level will be aggregated to provide a chieftom level view for each District Education Office (DEO) supporting each District Deputy Director in setting and monitoring their district objectives and targets aligned to the national targets of the ESP. As described in the section above, the DEOs will hold a monthly meeting to review the data and escalate issues centrally where required. In addition to school level performance data, input KPIs at a district level will also be monitored to ensure timely delivery according to the operational plan of the ESP, such as number of classrooms constructed in each district within a certain timeframe, number of teachers trained, etc.
- **MEST Directorate level:** Within MEST, data will be aggregated at the district level and provided to each directorate and the Quality insurance/Inspectorate Directorate. This will provide all directors with updates on their key targets and objectives derived from

the education sector plan. These will be discussed in depth at least every quarter during Working Group meetings with the aim to monitor, make recommendations and take action where required. In addition to the quarterly review of KPIs, progress against work-plan (the operational plan of the ESP) will be monitored regularly to ensure timely implementation of tasks and activities.

- **MEST IMT/EMT level:** The IMT/EMT is the highest forum for day-to-day routine monitoring at MEST, and progress against work-plan (the operational plan of the ESP) will be reviewed at every meeting, extending the monitoring systems processes developed in the Heads of Working Group Meeting under the President's Recovery priorities period. Similar to the Directorate level, every quarter progress against KPIs will also be reviewed and discussed.

In addition to the regular progress tracking and monitoring routines at MEST, annual Joint Education Sector Review (JSR) with all donors, partners and stakeholders (i.e. parents, teachers, students, special interest groups e.g. private schools, the disabled, traditional leaders, etc.) will continue to be held to provide a holistic update on progress against all Education Sector Plan targets, discuss issues and decide on the best way forward. While the Education Sector Review is relatively broad (going beyond impact tracking against the ESP alone), it will be complemented with Mid-term reviews of the Education Sector Plan. All these reviews will allow the MEST to receive feedback from a broad audience of stakeholders, share results and adjust the strategy and approach based on results, dialogue, and lessons learned.

Planning and preparation of both the sector reviews and mid-term review involve a team / committee made of MEST, representatives of partners, representatives of civil society, MoFED and semi-autonomous entities such as the TSC. Planning and preparation are done under MEST leadership. The team proposes the date and approves the programme for the event developed by MEST. Preparation of the reports that inform the reviews is usually funded by partners and/or the GPE. The team also has oversight of the preparation of the reports that inform the reviews. The practice is for district level meetings and consultations to be carried out prior to the national review workshop. Findings and recommendations from the district level meetings are fed into each review report as it is being finalised. A record of what took place at the review workshop is prepared by a professional rapporteur. These records/notes are used to prepare the reports on the review workshops.

Results Framework

The monitoring and evaluation unit will conduct its data gathering and reporting work in line with the ESP results framework, supported by simple templates for communicating the results at the three different governance levels described above. The table below summarises the linkages between the suggested interventions and desired outcomes. For simplicity the detailed activities (below each intervention) are not visualised in the results framework below, but are explained in detail through chapter 1-4.

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework Matrix

The M&E Framework Matrix is directly related to the results framework but has a little bit more detail and can be found as Annex II.

For each intervention, the M&E Framework spells out the expected output and outcome together with the means of verification, frequency of monitoring, entity that will play a major in implementation and those that will be involved in the monitoring.

Matrix 5.1: Results framework for the objective of improving Access, Equity and Completion

Strategic Outcome	Intervention name	Indicator Name	Indicator Targets			Data collection		
			2018	2019	2020	Frequency	Source	Responsible
1.1 – All Children enter school and complete primary education	Intervention 1.1a: Reduce the cost of schooling to parents and households by ensuring school subsidies are reviewed and disbursed on time	% of 6-11 years old out of school / Girls out	25%/a%	20%/a%-7%	15%/a%-15%	Annually	TBD	TBD
	Intervention 1.1b: Encourage and motivate parents and communities to have children start primary schooling at the official starting age of 6 years	Primary/Class 1 NIR/Girls NIR	a%/a%	a+3%	a+6%	Annually	School Census	Inspectorate
1.2 – Increased access to pre-school for children aged 3 to 5 years	Intervention 1.2a: Develop a policy and costed action plan to guide expansion of quality pre-school education and improve MEST capacity to deliver	Pre-primary GIR/ Girls Pre-prim GIR	14%/a%	19%/a%+6%	24%/a%+11%	Annually	School census	Planning and Policy Directorate
	Intervention 1.2b: Develop strategy and costed action plan for expansion of public pre-school education in existing primary schools, and continue the development and piloting of community-based cost effective pre-primary education models	Pre-primary GER	12%	16%	20%	Annually	School census	Planning and Policy Directorate
1.3 – Improved school-feeding programme for primary schools	Intervention 1.3a: Improved government-led school feeding programme through the establishment of strong partnerships	% of children in GoSL and GoSL assisted primary schools receiving school feeding	100%	100%	100%	Monthly	Situation Room, Supervisor / Inspectors	M&E team, SF secretariat, Planning and Policy Directorate

Strategic Outcome	Intervention name	Indicator Name	Indicator Targets			Data collection		
			2018	2019	2020	Frequency	Source	Responsible
1.4 – Increased transition from primary to JSS, and increase in GER at JSS level	Intervention 1.4a: Expand the tuition support programme for girls at JSS level to improve gender parity	P to J Transition Rate for Girls	88%	91%	94%	Annually	School census	Planning and Policy Directorate
	Intervention 1.4b: Formalise the policy for re-entry of teenage mothers into the school system	JSS GER for girls	60%	63%	67%	Annually	Learning centre reports	Non-formal education directorate / Programmes
	Intervention 1.4c: Ensure all schools are safe for girls through curbing sexual violence and exploitation in schools	JSS GCR/PCR for girls	40%	45%	50%	Every 6 months	Community / PC reports	PPD / Gender desk / Quality Assurance Directorate
1.5 – Increased equitable access to senior secondary education	Intervention 1.5a: Ensure equity by providing scholarships to SSS students satisfying predefined criteria	GER + GPI	29%/0.92	30%/0.93	32%/0.96	Annually	Awards entity + School Census	Planning and Policy Directorate
1.6 – Improve the infrastructure of primary, JS and SS schools	Intervention 1.6a: Construct additional fully functional and equipped classrooms to accommodate current and projected demand as well as phase out double-shift schooling	% Prim., JS; SS categorised as over-crowded + No. of classrooms constructed	Pri-35%, JSS-30%, SS- 25% + 200 classrooms + 5 new JSS/SSS	Pri-30%, JSS-25%, SS-20% + 200 classrooms + 5 new JSS/SSS	Pri-25%, JSS-20%, SS-15% + 200 classrooms + 5 new JSS/SSS	Annually	Contractors, school census, supervisors / inspectors	Planning and Policy Directorate
	Intervention 1.6b: Ensure at least 15% of existing schools have ramps for students with disability	Number of schools given ramps	450	450	450	Annually	Contractors, school census, supervisors / inspectors	Planning and Policy Directorate
1.7 – Increased equitable access to Technical and Vocational Education	Intervention 1.7a: Develop an implementation plan for the TVET policy	IP developed and in use	Yes	Yes	Yes	Annually for use	HEST + TVET Unit	HEST + TVET Unit
	Intervention 1.7b: Formal constitution and operationalisation of NCTVE	NCTVE constituted and functioning	No	Yes	Yes	One off	HEST	HEST
	Intervention 1.7c: Strengthen and streamline Public/Private Partnership in provision of TVET	No. of PPP TVET entities	5	10	20	Annually	HEST	HEST

Strategic Outcome	Intervention name	Indicator Name	Indicator Targets			Data collection		
			2018	2019	2020	Frequency	Source	Responsible
1.8 – Increased equitable access to higher education	Intervention 1.8a: Develop a higher education strategy/ framework to consolidate the policies for addressing equitable growth, quality, and relevance	Stakeholders rating of higher education	A	B = A + 10%	C = A + 20%	Annually	Survey	Planning and Policy Directorate + HEST + TEC
	Intervention 1.8b: Provide better targeted financial support (scholarships/grants/loans) to the neediest students, and continue support for students with disabilities as well as females in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and mathematics)	GPI + % Students with disabilities in HEd	A/A%	B =(A+0.05) B% = A%+1%	B + 0.15 B% + 2%	Annually	School census	Planning and Policy Directorate
1.9 – Improved literacy rate for youths and adults	Intervention 1.9a: Provide accelerated primary education for older children and youths aged 10 to 15 years	No. registered in programme	A	B = A + 10%	C = A + 20%	Annually	Training centre reports	Non-Formal Education Directorate
	Intervention 1.9b: Increase and regularise the funding for non-formal and adult education	Literacy rate	52%	54%	56%	Annually	Non-formal Education Directorate	Planning and Policy Directorate
2.1 – Improvement in the performance and assessment of learners	Intervention 2.1a: Conduct annual sample-based learning assessment for selected pupil levels in English language arts and mathematics	Learning Assessment - % at expected Prim + JS learning / performance level	a%	a+10%	a+15%	Annually	Learning Assessment	Leh Wi Learn / Planning and Policy Directorate + BES
	Intervention 2.1b: Undertake curriculum revision/updating and reform as necessary	Teachers trained in use of updated SSS curriculum	20983	20983	21619	Annually	Learning Assessment	Programmes Dir. + BES and Leh Wi Lan
	Intervention 2.1c - Stimulate greater interest and uptake of the sciences by stimulating interest in the sciences starting at the early primary level and supporting the establishment/ rehabilitation of equipped science laboratories, starting with two secondary schools per district	Pass Rates in Int. Sc. at BECE and in Bio and Chem at WASSCE	64% - BECE, WASSCE 50% - Bio; 30% - Chem	67% - BECE, WASSCE 54% - Bio; 35% - Chem	64% - BECE, WASSCE 58% - Bio; 40% - Chem	Annually	Exam results	BES + Secondary Div.

Strategic Outcome	Intervention name	Indicator Name	Indicator Targets			Data collection		
			2018	2019	2020	Frequency	Source	Responsible
2.1 – Improvement in the performance and assessment of learners	Intervention 2.1d: Undertake studies in assessment, performance and employability of learners	Findings of studies made public	Yes	Yes	Yes	Annually	TBD	Planning and Policy Directorate + BES
2.2 – All legally existing schools approved and comply with GoSL stipulated minimum quality standards	Intervention 2.2a – Take the necessary actions to ensure that 100% of educational institutions in operation meet MEST minimum standards together with other requirements spelt out in a revised/updated 2010 Education Policy	% of institutions at different levels meeting minimum standards + Updated Ed. Policy in use	25% - No	60% - Yes	100% - Yes	Monthly	Archive of applications and registrations, School census	Inspectorate / Quality Assurance Directorate / Programmes
2.3 – The education sector is safe and free of corruption	Intervention 2.3a: Sensitise learners on their rights and referral channels in regards to corruption and exploitation at primary, JSS, SSS, TVET, HEIs and Learning Centres	No. of institutions complying	2,000	6,000	9,000	Annually	Survey	Office of the CEO and Quality Assurance Directorate
	Intervention 2.3b - Develop and implement a National Strategy and Action Plan on Examination Malpractices, Unethical and Corrupt Practices in Education	Exam malpractices reported as % of 2018 baseline + Action Plan being implemented	a% + Yes	(a*40%) + Yes	(a*20%) + Yes	Annually	Community /PC reports	Office of the CEO and Quality Assurance Directorate

Strategic Outcome	Intervention name	Indicator Name	Indicator Targets			Data collection		
			2018	2019	2020	Frequency	Source	Responsible
2.4 – Teachers are competent/ professionally qualified, equitably distributed, motivated and demonstrate high performance standards	Intervention 2.4a - Establish and implement a system for the professional development, induction and continuous development of teachers and school heads making use of what has been learnt from interventions such as the lesson plans introduced in 2017	% of teachers benefitted from CPD programmes in last 3 years + No. trained through CPD annually	25% + 12,382	50% + 12,382	70% + 12,382	Monthly	Situation Room, Supervisors / inspectors	TSC
	Intervention: 2.4b - Develop and implement a set of reforms in pre-service education that are consistent with norms and standards for effective teacher performance	Conduct of reform study and its implementation	1	3	1	Annually	TBD	TSC + HEST + Office of CEO
	Intervention 2.4c: Build strong foundation for early learning through training of early grade teachers in reading, writing and mathematics	Number of teachers trained	9763	9763	9763	Annually	M&E Unit	TSC + HEST + Office of CEO
	Intervention 2.4d - Establish and implement a system for strengthening the management of the teacher workforce (recruitment, deployment, promotion, etc.)	No. of teachers receiving (i) subject (ii) needy area allowances	(i) a ; (ii) x	(i) a+15 ; (ii) x + 15	(i) a + 20; (ii) x + 20	Annually	TBD	TSC

Matrix 5.3: Results framework for System Strengthening

Strategic Outcome	Intervention name	Indicator Name	Indicator Targets			Data collection		
			2018	2019	2020	Frequency	Source	Responsible
3.1 - All key staff positions at MEST Headquarters, District Education Offices (DEOs) and Teaching Service Commission (TSC) filled	Intervention 3.1a – Obtain support to staff up the highest priority MEST HQ professional staff vacancies	No of unfilled high priority positions	10	4	0	Annually	HR	Office of the Permanent Secretary & Human Resource Unit.
	Intervention 3.1b – Secure the support necessary for TSC to be able to fill key HQ positions and become fully functional	No of key TSC HQ positions unfilled	10	4	0	Annually	TSC	TSC
3.2 – Develop and maintain a clean teacher payroll and records	3.2 – Develop and maintain a clean teacher payroll and records	No of written complaints about payroll and records received by TSC + % of teachers in GoSL and Assisted schools that have been approved for financial support are on payroll	a/a%	a - 10% / 90%	a - 20% / 95%	Every 6 months / Annually	TSC, School census	Office of the CEO, TSC, MOFED
3.3 – Service delivery rating of MEST increases by a minimum 10% by 2020	Intervention 3.3a – Disseminate the MEST Service Charter widely and conduct an annual education service delivery survey	Service Delivery Rating	a	a + (10% of a)	a + (20% of a)	Annually	Survey	PPD and Inspectorate / Quality Assurance Directorate
	Intervention 3.3b – Provision of capacity development training based on a comprehensive MEST staff development programme	Service Delivery Rating	a	a + (10% of a)	a + (20% of a)	Annually	Survey, HR	Office of the PS, Human Resource Unit
	Intervention 3.3c – Provide inputs and resources to (i) make possible timely release of WAEC results to schools, and (ii) carry out analysis of the performance of schools and candidates in the examinations	No. of days taken for release of results and Pass Rates for BECE and WASSCE	75	70	70	Annually	Exam results and release dates	Office of the CEO
	Intervention 3.3d – Introduce Performance Based Financing (PBF) by the GoSL for the financing of schools, colleges, polytechnics and universities	No. of institutions meeting requirements for full PBF	a	a + (20% of a)	a + (30% of a)	Annually	PBF Disbursement Reports, School assessments by DEOs	MOFED, PPD, QAD/ Inspectorate

Strategic Outcome	Intervention name	Indicator Name	Indicator Targets			Data collection		
			2018	2019	2020	Frequency	Source	Responsible
3.4 - Timely, Reliable and Accurate Data and Information on Education Readily Available, Accessible and in Use	Intervention 3.4a – Equip and empower each DEO to collect and analyse data on education in the district in which it is located	% of DEO able to collect own data for ASC and display overall totals	30%	100%	100%	Monthly	DEO reports	Inspectorate / Quality Assurance Directorate / Planning and Policy Directorate
	Intervention 3.4b – Enable Paramount Chiefs to participate in the education monitoring / validation process and produce termly reports on education in their Chiefdom	% of PCs submitting termly reports on time	50%	100%	100%	Termly	PC reports, DEO reports	Inspectorate / Quality Assurance Directorate
	Intervention 3.4c – Strengthen EMIS to become a ‘one-stop shop’ for all MEST data on education	EMIS Data Desk established & functioning + Website Data Access Point	Yes	Yes	Yes	One off	EMIS team, Website review	Planning and Policy Directorate
	Intervention 3.4.d - Strengthen and improve partner coordination	4W Database operational - partner interventions evenly distributed and duplication minimised	Yes	Yes	Yes	Every 6 months	Database review	Partner Coordinating Office & NGO Desk + PPD

Matrix 5.4: Results framework for Emergency Preparedness and Response

Strategic Outcome	Intervention name	Indicator Name	Indicator Targets			Data collection		
			2018	2019	2020	Frequency	Source	Responsible
4.1 – An Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan, Handbook, and Phone Directory for all Educational Institutions	Intervention 4.1 - Development, Printing and Distribution of an Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan, Handbook, and Phone Directory for all Educational Institutions	% of institutions. with EPRP Handbook + Phone Directory	a	a + (50% x a)	100%	Every 6 months	Situation Room, Supervisors / Inspectors	Inspectorate, Planning and Policy Directorate
4.2 - Dissemination, awareness creation, training and drills to ensure readiness to act according to the Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan	Intervention 4.2a - Provision of sensitisation and awareness raising on the Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan as well as necessary training	Jingles, posters, etc., in use and in all educational institutions as well as MEST offices	Yes	Yes	Yes	Every 6 months	DEO reports	Inspectorate, Planning and Policy Directorate
	Intervention 4.2b - Establishment of strong coordination with the Situation Room for real time data and information dissemination and further, disseminate information through the Ministry's EMIS and Website	Updated information on the website	Yes	Yes	Yes	Every 6 months	Website review	PPD, Situation Room, ICT Unit

6 – EDUCATION FINANCES AND COST OF THE ESP

Preamble

The previous Education Sector Plan (2014-2018) was prepared in a stable and promising macroeconomic environment in 2013. The country's GDP had grown by 15.2 percent in 2012 and 20.7 percent in 2013, and was projected to grow at 11.3 percent in 2014 before the Ebola outbreak in May of that year. This had taken place on the back of resumption of massive iron ore mining activities, a general increase in private investment in other sectors and implementation of sound socio-economic reforms. The Gross Domestic Product was projected to grow at an average rate of 6.1 percent for the entire plan period (2014-2018). Therefore, it was expected that the government, with assistance from development partners, would be able to largely meet the cost of financing the EPS, estimated at the time to be Le 3.93 trillion, with only minimal gaps to be filled through other sources, including the private sector and households.

Summary of Mid-term ESP Review Findings, The 2014-2016 Financial Challenge

Unfortunately, the economic performance preceding the ESP (2014-2018) was short-lived, and the period 2014-2016 ended up being a serious economic trial for the Government of Sierra Leone. The years 2014 and 2015 were especially devastating considering the unprecedented outbreak of the Ebola virus disease (EVD) during these two years, coupled with a simultaneous sharp decline in the country's leading export commodity, iron ore. The economy nearly came to a standstill during these protracted twin crises, as all economic activities were virtually put on hold.

As a result, the strong economic growth trend at the time of planning the ESP did not materialise, with GDP growth plunging from 20.7 percent in 2013, to 4.6 percent in 2014 and then contracting by 20.7 percent in 2015. Government revenues badly dipped, and the effects have lingered on through to date, leading to the suspension of a range of recurrent and capital spending. The total fiscal impact of the twin crises during 2014-2015 was estimated at least US\$130 million, owing to the slowdown in economic activities and weaker tax compliance. The Total revenue collected in 2014 was US\$90 million below the pre-Ebola projection; and the total loss in government revenue during May 2014 to July 2015 has been estimated at US\$ 74 million. Unexpected spending, necessary to control Ebola, diverted resources away from planned development spending in a range of areas, including education development programmes. For instance, in 2014, the government allocated US\$27 million (2.8 percent of expenditure) to fund Ebola-related activities.

Spending on capital projects also plummeted from both domestic and foreign sources, and all key economic sectors were brought to a near halt. At the time of planning the ESP in 2013, agriculture, as the mainstay of national livelihood, was gradually picking up in terms of contribution to state revenue, receiving significant private sector investment in the years preceding the outbreak of the disease; and had been a major source of household financing of child education, especially for rural farm families. During 2014-2015, however, the EVD significantly reduced agricultural output. Production of the main staple crop, rice, fell by at least 20 percent, coupled with drastic decline

in other food crops. Cash crop performance was equally diminished, with export of the leading traditional crop, cocoa, falling by 30 percent. Incomes of farmers' cooperatives had also dwindled.

As noted earlier, the main activity in mining (iron ore production), crashed as the disease was raging, owing to decline in the world market price of the mineral. This led to the suspension of operations of the two largest mining companies of iron ore, which became bankrupt. Manufacturing activities declined from both supply and demand side. The supply of raw material including those from the agricultural sector was not forthcoming. Bars, night clubs, cinemas and related activities ceased trading in response to Ebola measures, which, coupled with the lull in construction activities, resulted in a significant drop in demand for locally manufactured products.

The impact of the disease on manufacturing can be linked to its effects on transport and tourism. About 70 percent of business establishments had attributed the "limited availability of raw materials and resale difficulties" to the limited air travel, in addition to quarantine policies. Where activities were ongoing, transporting of raw materials was on the increase. Tourist arrivals were declining; and tens of hotels and hundreds of guest houses were closing down, while all night clubs totally ceased operations. Revenue generated in the tourism sector thus declined from US\$58.8 million in 2013 to US\$31.8 million in 2014. A range of other economic sectors were equally devastated, including energy, road infrastructure and telecommunications, thereby leading to an overall decline of the economy.

As the negative impact of these shocks on macroeconomic indicators was increasing, debt sustainability challenges were heightening. The drop in domestic revenue and increase in expenditure resulted in a widening of the national financing gap, part of which had to be covered through increased borrowing from the domestic banking sector. At the same time, debt servicing was mounting, all of which implied much more resources would be shifted from critical development sectors like education towards financing debt. The effects of these shocks on inflation revealed themselves by the first half of 2016, when general prices assumed double-digit at 10.2 percent, from 7.2% and 8.1% in 2014 and 2015, respectively. This owed largely to the depreciation of the Leone against major international currencies, fueling increased prices of basic commodities. Inflation reduced domestic demand and fueled business uncertainty, which put together, had dampened investment climate and reduced propensity of revenue uptake of the state, thereby affecting spending on critical sectors like education.

Summary of spending performance towards the ESP, 2014-2016

In this circumstance, it is not unexpected that the actual expenditure on the Education Sector Plan for 2014-2016 fell short of planned spending by Le 1.12 trillion (US\$ 189.44 million), against expected spending of Le 2.5 trillion (USD 571 million). The Leone depreciated noticeable, from Le 4,300 per dollar in 2014, to Le 7,239.20 in 2016. Resulting in a change estimated at US\$ 145.15 million, for the period 2014-2016.

Between 2014 and 2016, the Government maintained its emphasis on education by attempting to ring-fence spending to the sector. Spending towards primary education far outweighed spending towards post-primary education.

The recommendations from the sector plan review included the need to increase domestic resource mobilisation to ensure additional resources are available for investment in education; diversify

the economy to increase its resilience and broaden private sector operations; reduce reliance on aid to increase predictability of spending through increased public financial management, and institutional coordination; exploring non-traditional donor sources to mitigate the risk of aid unpredictability; exploring innovative solutions to financing tertiary education; and increasing capacity to plan and forecast the status of the economy.

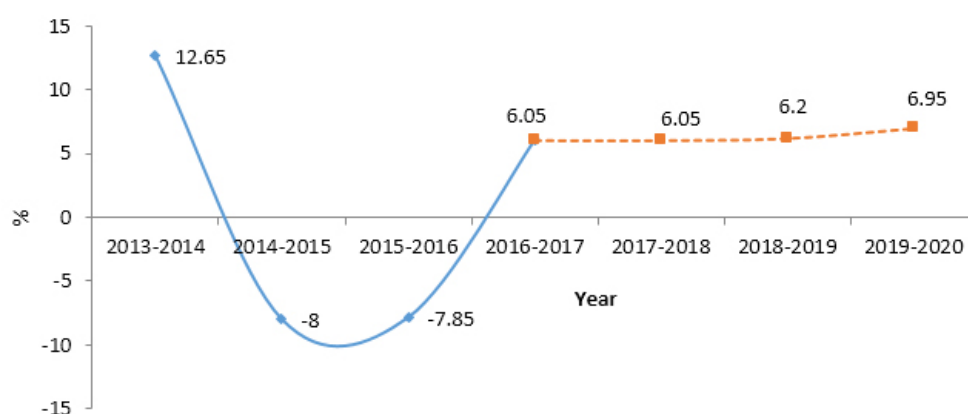
Economic Outlook 2018 and Beyond

Following the financial downturn in 2014-2015, the economy gradually began recovering in 2016, recording a GDP growth rate of 6.1 percent as business activities were normalising, and is projected to grow by 5.9 percent in 2017. Growth is expected to stay buoyant all through to 2020, when it is expected to reach 6.8 percent from 6.1 and 6.3 percent in 2018 and 2019, respectively (Figure 1). The projected positive macroeconomic outlook reflects increasing iron ore production; investments in new mining techniques and the issuance of new mining licenses, which will increase non-iron ore minerals; foreign investments in agriculture and agribusinesses; rising social and infrastructure investments; and structural reforms, which will contribute to improved business and lower costs of doing business.

Looking across sectors, agriculture is expected to average 4.6 percent of GDP during 2017-2019, while industry (comprising of manufacturing, mining, electricity, water, and construction) is projected to grow by an average of 17.6 percent. The service sector will grow 5.2 percent, including trade, tourism, transport, storage and communications, finance, insurance and real estate. Both private and public consumption (putting an end to the current austerity measures) are expected to assume a significant upward trend, export averaging around 20.3 percent of GDP, while import stabilising around 8.6 percent.

The sustained performance of these sectors is critical to ensuring sustained financing of development, including education programmes and projects. Thus, it is imperative that the government remains committed to promoting economic resilience against future external shocks. However, this still remains a huge challenge given the fact that Sierra Leone enormously remains a fragile state, as further alluded to below.

Figure 6.1: Real GDP growth projections



International Development Outlook and Implication for Education Financing

As a fragile state, Sierra Leone's economy is highly dependent on the dynamics of the international socio-economic and political environment. The price of its leading export commodity, iron ore, is determined by the international market. This highly depends on the consumption patterns and dynamics of consuming economies like China. Being aid dependent implies that the country has to be mindful of the financial and political realities unfolding in major industrialised countries that provide aid.

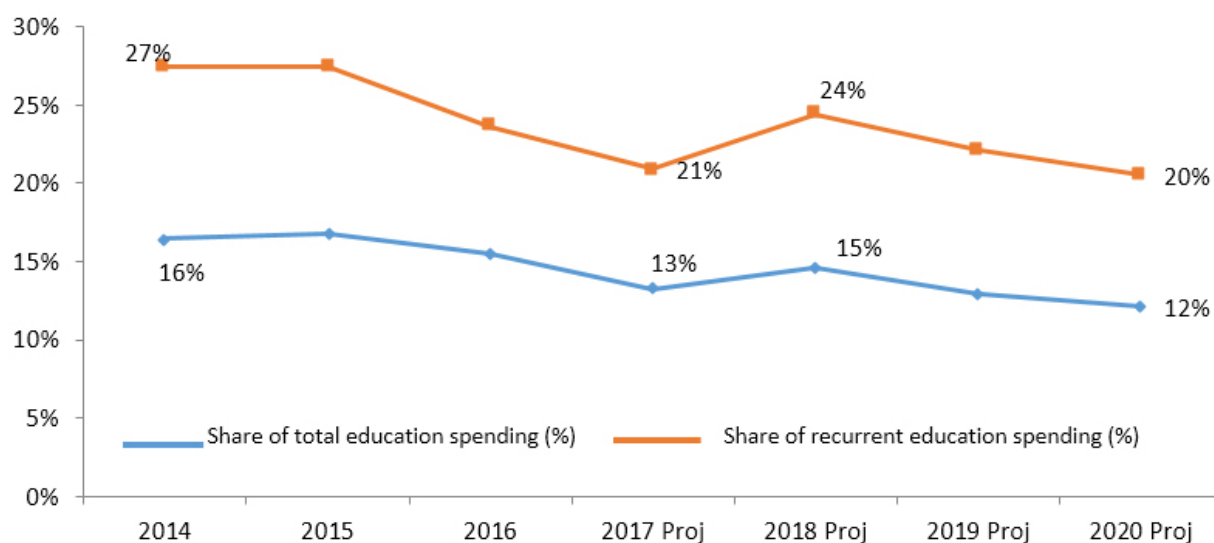
While the Government had projected a recovery in GDP growth for the period 2017-2021, the latest World Economic Outlook Update, released by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), suggests that global economic activity is in a period of subdued growth following a number of shocks. It warns that the UK decision to leave the EU has created substantial economic, political and institutional uncertainty that could pose serious downside risks. This is particularly significant in a world economy that is already characterised by weak business and consumer sentiments and frequent financial market volatility, leaving global GDP estimated growth slower than expected for 2017 at 3.4 percent.

In the US, first-half growth was weaker than expected due to a stronger dollar and weak energy sector investment. However, leading indicators point to a recovery in the second half of the year. The UK economy is projected to slow down to 1.3 percent in 2017, as the lingering effect of Brexit begins to take hold, while that of the entire Euro Zone is expected to plunge by 1.8 percent in 2017. In China, investments in commodity export remains weak. And there is an expected deterioration in near-term economic outlook for sub-Saharan Africa, reflecting challenging macroeconomic conditions, including sharp depreciation of domestic currencies due to the lingering effect of the fall in commodity prices. All of these are having impact on the performance of Sierra Leone's economy through lower commodity prices and trade channels. It will constrain GDP growth with serious implication for revenue generation to finance critical sectors like education.

General Trend in Planned Education Expenditure

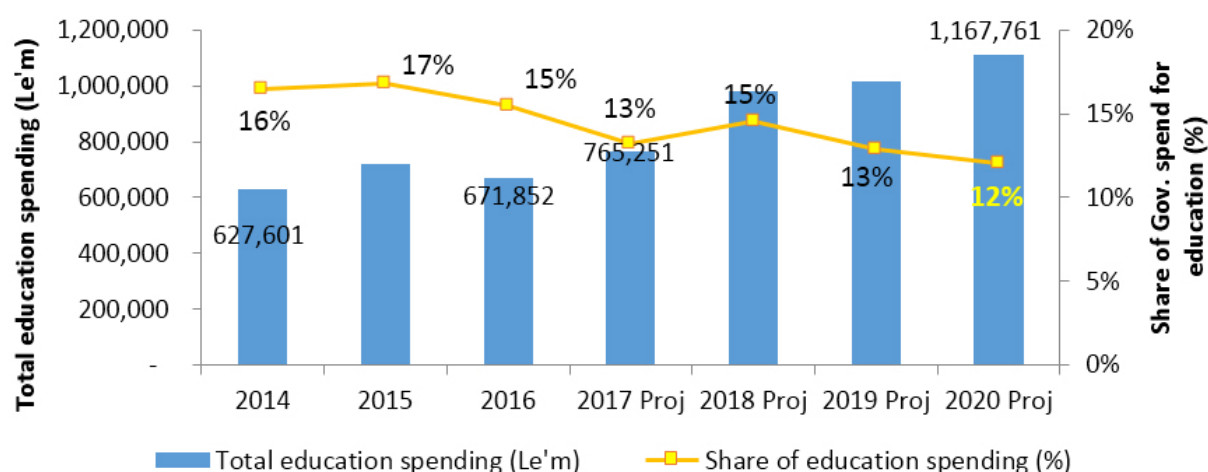
Figure 6.2 presents projected total domestic planned/committed education spending as a percentage of the total government expenditure, and recurrent education spending as a percentage of total government recurrent expenditure for the period 2017-2020, following actual spending during 2012-2016. The percentage of total actual spending towards the sector for 2012-2016 was 14.66 Percent, while planned spending for 2017-2020 is 11.94 percent. It is crucial that this share doesn't fall more, which could limit the achievement of SDG 4 of providing quality and inclusive education for all.

Figure 6.2: Trend in Shares of Total & Recurrent Education Spending, 2014-2020



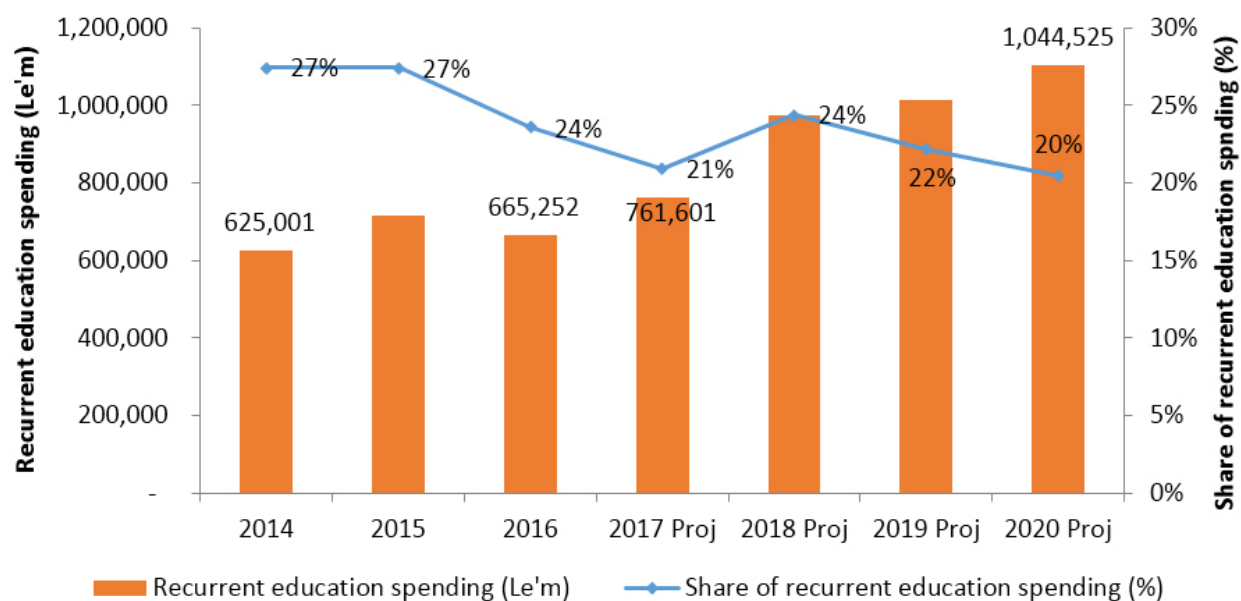
While the overall trend in the share of total planned and recurrent education spending has been downward sloping, this must not, however be necessarily interpreted to imply a decline in actual education spending over time. For instance, in absolute terms, total actual/planned education spending increased from Le 625.00 billion in 2014, to 665.25 in 2016 in actual terms; and is projected to increase from Le 761.60 billion in 2017 (up from 2016), to Le 1.17 trillion in 2020 (Figure 3). Even assuming that inflation could reach 10%, there would be a real increase in spending to the education sector with the outlined Leone budget figures.

Figure 6.3: Trend in Actual & Planned Domestic Education Spending 2014-2020



Recurrent education spending has been rising in absolute terms, as Figure 6.4 illustrates. This can be expected, following the end of the war. Government has embarked on increasing access to education since 2002, and these efforts have seen many children enrolled in primary and junior secondary school (basic education) that has necessitated increase in administrative and human resource cost, including a large/high teacher wage bill. Teachers constituted 76.55 percent of total recurrent spending covering primary, junior and senior secondary school levels. It is encouraging that the shares, both total and recurrent, are expected to increase from 2017 to 2018.

Figure 6.4: Trend in Actual & Planned Recurrent Education Spending, 2014-2020



Costing the ESP

The costing of the plan for a three year period, 2018-2020, has been done in two steps. First, the macro-level model, which is used for the MTEF, was updated, and secondly a costed multi-year action plan was developed for the additional activities in the Implementation Plan. The summation of these two models is taken to be the cost of the ESP presented here.

The macro-model was updated to reflect changes in costs, and pupil numbers using a realistic cost scenario from the education sector model. Growth in GDP for the period 2018-2020 has been revised to 6.3 percent. Actual population estimates obtained from the Sierra Leone Housing and Population Census of 2015 has been applied, which reports a national population size of a little above 7 million currently, compared to a little below 5 million population in the previous census of 2004. This increase will translate to increases in school-going age population across the various school levels: pre-primary, primary, secondary, and higher education. The school population census of 2016 has been leveraged to update the size of school enrollment across these levels. In addition changes in a range of other policy variables such national revenue and expenditure profile has been taken into consideration, while maintaining a range of assumptions used in the model during the preparation of the five year ESP (2014-2018) costing in 2013. Simulations for the general increase in salaries of public servants during 2014-2016 that came into effect in July 2015

has also been factored in, which improved teachers' monthly earnings and the budget estimates.

Once these budgets have been estimated, which form the basis of the Mid-term Expenditure Framework for Education, the costs to improve on the 'business as usual' were estimated through a more in-depth costing of the implementation plan. The combination of these two endeavors, split by major budget lines, is shown in Table 6.4. The increase in absolute terms reflects the Governments continuing commitment to education.

Table 6.4: ESP Cost in Millions of Leones

Cost Areas	2018 (LeM)	2019 (LeM)	2020 (LeM)
Teachers' Salary	410,445.7	477,519.2	551,548.3
Education staff (MEST Staff)	7,940.2	9,237.7	10,669.9
Recurrent (Non-salary, Non-Interest recurrent exp)	369,572.7	452,908.9	482,306.8
Transfers to Local councils for Education Services	62,200.2	98,290.5	117,736.1
Capital Expenditure (domestic)	4,930.0	5,430.0	5,500.0
Implementation Plan Activities	291,809	297,412	276,817
Total	1,146,898	1,340,798	1,444,578

It should be noted that these costs exclude some off-budget donor activities which are fully funded, as they were not included in the implementation plan nor the government budget. This is a conscious decision to streamline the IP to facilitate its use for implementation and accountability, as earlier versions with all activities were unwieldy. While this will understate total education expenditure⁶, it will not bias estimates of the financing gap.

Cost of the ESP interventions 2018 – 2020

The ESP outlines a set of interventions, whereby funding will be needed to ensure proper implementation, monitoring, and eventually the desired impact. The budget for the activities in the ESP (excluding core running costs such as teacher salaries and transfers) sums up to \$115 million USD over the 3 year period, with 38.9 million USD needed in 2018, 39.6 million USD in 2019 and 36.9 million in 2020. Table 6.4 above summarises the overall sector costs, including teacher salaries, transfers to districts, "business as usual" recurrent costs and the cost of the additional activities within the ESP implementation plan.

Table 6.5 shows in more detail the expected costs associated with implementing each intervention in the implementation plan. Further details and assumptions for each item can be found in the supporting Implementation Plan. It is noted that these are costed to build on the existing system, so is the cost of the additional activities highlighted over and above "business as usual". These interventions would typically be improvements of processes, which could be handled by regular Ministerial staff, existing levels of school subsidies, and have been marked in the summary table below with "in existing budget". In addition, not all activities, and therefore not all costs, associated with development partner programs are included in the implementation plan, following the decision to focus the IP on a narrow group of activities that was initially proposed.

⁶ In essence this decision has no further implications than excluding private education expenditure, or not capturing the summation of small projects. The decision was taken in the context of time constraints in preparation of the ESP (which was agreed to be an interim ESP prior to a full sector analysis in 2019).

Table 6.5: ESP Intervention Costing, 2018-2020 in US Dollars

Intervention cost breakdown (USD budget)					
#	Activity	Cost 2018 (\$)	Cost 2019 (\$)	Cost 2020 (\$)	Total (\$)
1	Intervention 1.1a: Reduce the cost of schooling to parents and households by ensuring school subsidies are reviewed and disbursed on time	Already covered in the recurrent budget			0
2	Intervention 1.1b: Encourage and motivate parents and communities to have children start primary schooling at the official starting age of 6 years	328,800	278,800	278,800	886,400
3	Intervention 1.2a: Develop a policy and costed action plan to guide expansion of quality pre-school education and improve MEST capacity to deliver	230,000	30,000	30,000	290,000
4	Intervention 1.2b: Develop strategy and costed action plan for expansion of public pre-school education in existing primary schools, and continue the development and piloting of community-based cost effective pre-primary education models	1,298,000	1,248,000	1,148,000	3,694,000
5	Intervention 1.3a: Improved Government led school feeding programme through the establishment of strong partnerships	12,489,800	11,232,000	11,232,000	34,953,800
6	Intervention 1.4a: Expand the tuition support programme for girls at JSS level to improve gender parity	2,750,000	2,750,000	2,750,000	8,250,000
7	Intervention 1.4b: Formalise the policy for re-entry of teenage mothers into the school system	160,000	816,000	1,472,000	2,448,000
8	Intervention 1.4c: Ensure all schools are safe for girls through curbing sexual violence and exploitation in schools	238,000	138,000	138,000	514,000
9	Intervention 1.5a: Ensure equity by providing scholarships to SSS students satisfying predefined criteria	450,000	450,000	450,000	1,350,000
10	Intervention 1.6a: Construct additional fully functional and equipped classrooms and facilities to accommodate current and projected demand as well as phase out double-shift schooling	5,770,000	5,770,000	5,770,000	17,310,000
11	Intervention 1.6b: Ensure that at least 15% of existing schools have ramps for students with disability	1,260,000	1,260,000	1,260,000	3,780,000
12	Intervention 1.7a: Develop an implementation plan for the TVET policy	100,000	0	0	100,000

Intervention cost breakdown (USD budget)					
#	Activity	Cost 2018 (\$)	Cost 2019 (\$)	Cost 2020 (\$)	Total (\$)
13	Intervention 1.7b: Formal constitution and operationalisation of NCTVE	200,000	250,000	250,000	700,000
14	Intervention 1.7c: Strengthen and streamline Public/Private Partnership in provision of TVET	100,000	0	0	100,000
15	Intervention 1.8a: Develop a higher education strategy/framework to consolidate the policies for addressing equitable growth, quality, and relevance	100,000	0	0	100,000
16	Intervention 1.8b: Provide better targeted financial support (scholarships/grants/loans) to the neediest students, and continue support for students with disabilities as well as females in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)	Already covered in the recurrent budget			0
17	Intervention 1.9a: Provide accelerated primary education for older children and youths aged 10 to 15 years	698,000	806,000	881,000	2,385,000
18	Intervention 1.9b: Increase and regularise the funding for non-formal and adult education	698,000	806,000	881,000	2,385,000
19	Intervention 2.1a: Conduct annual sample-based learning assessment for selected pupil levels in English language arts and mathematics	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,500,000	4,500,000
20	Intervention 2.1b: Undertake curriculum revision/updating and reform as necessary	1,621,993	1,154,068	1,189,040	3,965,100
21	Intervention 2.1c – Stimulate greater interest and uptake of the sciences by stimulating interest in the sciences starting at the early primary level and supporting the establishment/ rehabilitation of equipped science laboratories, starting with two schools per district	100,000	3,090,800	240,800	3,431,600
22	Intervention 2.1d: Undertake studies in assessment, performance and employability of learners	100,000	100,000	100,000	300,000
24	Intervention 2.2a – Take the necessary actions to ensure that 100% of educational institutions in operation meet MEST minimum standards together with other requirements spelt out in a revised/ updated 2010 Education Policy	75,000	0	0	75,000

Table 6.5: ESP Intervention Costing, 2018-2020 in US Dollars

Intervention cost breakdown (USD budget)					
#	Activity	Cost 2018 (\$)	Cost 2019 (\$)	Cost 2020 (\$)	Total (\$)
25	Intervention 2.3a: Sensitise learners on their rights, responsibilities and referral channels in regards to corruption and exploitation at primary, JSS, SSS, TVET, HEIs and Learning Centre	190,000	90,000	90,000	370,000
26	Intervention 2.3b - Develop and implement a National Strategy and Action Plan on Examination Malpractices, Unethical and Corrupt Practices in Education	104,500	4,500	4,500	113,500
27	Intervention 2.4a - Establish and implement a system for the professional development, induction and continuous development of teachers and school heads making use of what has been learnt from interventions such as the lesson plans introduced in 2017	3,052,314	2,952,314	2,952,314	8,956,942
28	Intervention: 2.4b - Develop and implement a set of reforms in pre-service education that are consistent with norms and standards for effective teacher performance	100,000	30,000	30,000	160,000
29	Intervention 2.4c: Build strong foundation for early learning through training of early grade teachers in reading, writing and maths	2,580,900	2,480,900	2,480,900	7,542,700
30	Intervention 2.4d - Establish and implement a system for strengthening the management of the teacher workforce (recruitment, deployment, promotion, etc.)	280,000	180,000	180,000	640,000
31	Intervention 3.1a – Obtain support to staff up the highest priority MEST HQ professional staff vacancies	60,000	150,000	210,000	420,000
32	Intervention 3.1b – Secure the support necessary for TSC to be able to fill key HQ positions and become fully functional	60,000	150,000	210,000	420,000
33	Intervention 3.2 – Develop and maintain clean teacher payroll and records	550,000	550,000	50,000	1,150,000
34	Intervention 3.3a – Disseminate the MEST Service Charter widely and conduct an annual education service delivery survey	200,000	118,000	118,000	436,000

Intervention cost breakdown (USD budget)					
#	Activity	Cost 2018 (\$)	Cost 2019 (\$)	Cost 2020 (\$)	Total (\$)
35	Intervention 3.3b – Provision of capacity development training based on a comprehensive MEST staff development programme	200,000	150,000	150,000	500,000
36	Intervention 3.3c – Provide inputs and resources to (i) make possible timely release of WAEC results to schools, and (ii) carry out analysis of the performance of schools and candidates in the examinations	600,000	350,000	350,000	1,300,000
37	Intervention 3.3d – Introduce Performance Based Financing (PBF) by the GoSL for the financing of schools, colleges, polytechnics and universities	Already covered in the recurrent budget			
38	Intervention 3.4a – Equip and empower each DEO to collect and analyse data on education in the district in which it is located	107,600	57,600	57,600	222,800
39	Intervention 3.4b – Enable Paramount Chiefs to participate in the education monitoring/ validation process and produce termly reports on education in their Chiefdom	81,950	81,950	81,950	245,850
40	Intervention 3.4c – Strengthen EMIS to become a ‘one-stop shop’ for all MEST data on education	0	270,000	0	270,000
41	Intervention 3.4d - Strengthen and improve partner coordination	15,000	15,000	15,000	45,000
42	Intervention 4.1: Development, Printing and Distribution of an Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan, Handbook, and Phone Directory for all Educational Institutions	118,000	5,000	18,000	141,000
43	Intervention 4.2a: Provision of sensitisation and awareness raising on the Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan as well as necessary training	140,000	140,000	140,000	420,000
44	Intervention 4.2b: Establish strong coordination with the Situation Room for real time data and information dissemination and further, disseminate information through the Ministry’s EMIS and Website	200,000	200,000	200,000	600,000
	TOTAL \$	38,907,857	39,654,932	36,908,904	115,471,692

Total costing and over-programming

A total cost of Le 3.93 trillion (US\$524 million) is required to implement the ESP during 2018-2020. The IP has been developed to 'over programme', to allow for movements in procurement and delivery timelines, and create an agreed basket of activities for Government and Partners to align behind for future funding allocations. As such, their total cost is greater than the current allocated resource envelopes.

The total financing gap for the ESP implementing plan, after accounting for predicted domestic resources and committed donor support is Le 804 billion (US\$107.2 million), approximately 20% of the planned education expenditure over the period. Of this, \$17.2m potential funding has been identified through the GPE, to fund specific activities in the IP. If this application is successful the financing gap would be 675 Billion Leones (\$89.95m), or 17% of planned expenditure.

By having clearly identified, and costed funding needs, MEST can show clearly the value-added of additional funding to the education sector to donors, civil-society partners and the Ministry of Finance. This reduces the risk that future funds will not materialise. In addition, there are several funding streams currently under development, such as the EC Development Fund, ECOWAS funding and Presidential Initiatives which, while at this stage it is not possible to specifically align to activities, are highly likely to lower the 'gap'.

This issue is discussed more in the risk section below.

Fiscal tracking and monitoring

Fiscal tracking and monitoring will be conducted at various levels: at the macro, sectorial and community level. At the macro level, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development will take the lead in ensuring there is stringent public fiscal management in the execution of national and sectorial budget, including education spending. The MoFED has a tradition of carrying out public expenditure tracking surveys to improve delivery of services to the people, which have always captured the education sector. The Ministry has plans to resume these exercises, which were last conducted in 2010. Generally, the government has renewed its commitment to enhancing public financial management through the enactment of the Public Financial Management Act 2016 that emphasises expenditure monitoring, and monitoring and evaluation of output and outcome expected from planned spending. Monitoring and reporting on education budget execution will be prioritised within this framework, being a leading poverty reduction sector in the country's poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP), which is currently the Agenda for Prosperity, ending in 2018. The prioritisation of the education sector in the successor national plan (PRSP) will be assured as the ESP (2018-2020) is implemented.

At sector level, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology has an effective Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Department that has coordinated tracking of education results nationally, regionally and at district level. This outfit will remain instrumental in the implementation and monitoring of the ESP in MEST. Civil society organisations have played crucial role in enforcing accountability in service delivery. They have followed up on implementation of development activities, including education projects across the country, with citizens' participation, since the end of the civil war. These organisations will remain instrumental going forward.

On the revenue side, the government will continue to make efforts in diversifying the economy, ensuring that revenue generation sources are broadly deconcentrated, and will pursue more efforts to increase the operations of the National Revenue Authority in resource mobilisation. As discussed further in the next section, government and MEST will explore more avenues to widen the fiscal space for education, including expansion of financing of tertiary and preschool education, as well as primary and secondary education.

Risks to Financing/Funding of ESP and Measures to Address

This update has been prepared in the run up to general elections in the first quarter of 2018. Naturally, the outcome of elections (presidential, parliamentary and local elections) has implications for any planning document, both on the side of government and donor admirations. This is a major risk and challenge for translating planned financial commitments into reality. The financing gap for the ESP update is not insignificant and there is a real risk activity may not be undertaken, or have to be prioritised or scaled back.

As highlighted above, it is easiest to secure funding for identified needs that can be shown to have sectoral improvements. Through the implementation plan, MEST can show clearly the value-added of additional funding to the education sector, which reduces the risk that future funds will not materialise.

There is also a risk that donor support will be reduced, and that it has been inflated due to increased attention through the Ebola crisis. This is unlikely over the period of the ESP, given pre-existing commitments and strong partnerships. A key measure to mitigate this risk is for the Ministry of Science and Technology to strengthen and sustain partnerships and cooperation with donors.

Domestically, there is a low risk that education becomes lower priority – as mitigation MEST will continue to effectively defend sector policy and expenditure proposals during the national Medium Term Expenditure Framework/Budget hearings of the government and draw on the ESP to show clearly what funds are buying. It is noteworthy that the government continues to enjoy confidence from its development partners in government operations, markers of effectiveness of governance and efficient service delivery in the country. The recent successful conclusion of the donor-driven post-Ebola recovery strategy, with a huge education component, leaves hope for continued government and donor partnership in advancing the education sector. These partnerships and mutual trust should be strengthened going forward. Non-traditional sources of external assistance should also be explored.

Cost projections show that the government spending will remain consistent. This is encouraging, but a risk is identified in the graphs above with planned/committed recurrent spending trend of government sloping downwards to 20 percent in 2020; there is no certainty as to whether the years thereafter will see spending rise above the 20 percent threshold. Thus, the current trend should be monitored closely to ensure that it is reversed upwards.

There is a macro-level risk to government revenues, through the economy failing to diversify and the private sector not developing. Thus, raising adequate tax revenues under the current economic circumstance can be unpredictable; tax compliance by established businesses is also unpredictable. Encouragingly, the government is currently assiduously pursuing strategies to diversify economic activities, as demonstrated by the massive infrastructural development

programmes it is embarking upon. It is pursuing this at various fronts, including the establishment of Economic Transformational Development Funds; operationalising a Made-in-Sierra Leone Agenda and a range of other activities aimed at increasing fiscal position of the state through intensifying value-added economic activities and increased tax revenues. The short term mitigation is for the National Revenue Authority to increase efforts at collecting revenue and for the government to strengthen general implementation of Public Financial Management (PFM) Reforms. The strict implementation of the PFM Act 2016 is critical to this end in enforcing probity in the use of public resources and enhancing efficiency savings.

It can be expected with these efforts that the recurrent spending trend pointing downwards towards 20 percent in 2020 and possibly going below that threshold thereafter can be reversed.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX I - Definitions of Relevant Education Indicators

Adult Literacy or Illiteracy Rate

The percentage of population aged 15 years and over who can both read and write with understanding a short simple statement on his/her everyday life. Generally, 'literacy' also encompasses 'numeracy', the ability to make simple arithmetic calculations. Adult illiteracy is defined as the percentage of the population aged 15 years and over who cannot both read and write with understanding a short simple statement on his/her everyday life.

Gross Intake Ratio (GIR) into the First Grade of Primary School

Total number of new entrants in the first grade of primary education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the population at the official primary school-entrance age.

Net Enrolment Rate/Ratio (NER)

Enrolment of the official age group for a given level of education expressed as a percentage of the corresponding population.

Transition Rate (TR)

The number of pupils (or students) admitted to the first grade of a higher level of education in a given year, expressed as a percentage of the number of pupils (or students) enrolled in the final grade of the lower level of education in the previous year.

Gross Enrolment Rate/Ratio (GER)

Total enrolment in a specific level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the eligible official school-age population corresponding to the same level of education in a given school year.

Repetition Rate by Grade (RR)

Proportion of pupils from a cohort enrolled in a given grade, at a given school year, who study in the same grade in the following school year.

Percentage of Repeaters

Total number of pupils who are enrolled in the same grade as in a previous year, expressed as a percentage of the total enrolment to the specified grade.

Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR)

Average number of pupils (students) per teacher at a specific level of education in a given school year.

Gender Parity Index (GPI)

The ratio of boys and girls enrolled in an educational level. It is usually computed as the ratio of the Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) of females to males at an educational level.

Gross Completion Rate (GCR)/Proxy Completion Rate (PCR)

The number of students, regardless of age, completing the final year of each level of education divided by the population of the official completion age for the level.

Official School Ages

The official age groups for each schooling level are:

- Pre-primary 3 – 5 years
- Primary 6 – 11 years
- Junior Secondary School (JSS) 12 – 14 years
- Senior Secondary School (SSS) 15 – 17 years

(Sources: UIS Education Indicators and Sierra Leone School Census Report – 2010)

ANNEX II – M & E Framework Matrix – Part 1

2018-2020 ESP Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

Theme	Input intervention	Performance Indicator	Baseline Assumption	Milestone/Target	Actual	Milestone/Target	Actual	Milestone/Target	Actual
			2016/17	2018		2019		2020	
Access Equity and Completion	1.1a: Reduce the cost of schooling to parents and households (primary)	% of 6-11 years old out of school / Girls out	N/A	25%/a%		20%/a%-7%		15%/a%-15%	
Access Equity and Completion	1.1b: Encourage and motivate parents and communities to have children start primary schooling at the official starting age of 6 years	Primary/Class 1 NIR/ Girls NIR - A 3% increase in the 2018 value for both by 2019 and a 6% increase by 2020	NA	a%/a%		a+3%		a+6%	
Access Equity and Completion	1.2aDevelop a policy and costed action plan to guide expansion of quality pre-school education	Pre-primary GIR/ Girls Pre-prim GIR - % increases as shown in table	Policy not available	14%/a%		19%/a%+6%		24%/a%+11%	
Access Equity and Completion	1.2b Develop strategy for expansion of public pre-school education in existing primary schools, and continuing the development and piloting of community-based cost effective pre-primary education models	Pre-primary GER - 9% increase by 2020 relative to baseline	11%	12%		16%		20%	
Access Equity and Completion	1.3a: Improved government-led school feeding programme through the establishment of strong partnerships	% of govt. & govt-assisted schools benefiting from the national school feeding programs	N/A	100%		100%		100%	

Theme	Input intervention	Performance Indicator	Baseline Assumption	Milestone/Target	Actual	Milestone/Target	Actual	Milestone/Target	Actual
			2016/17	2018		2019		2020	
Access Equity and Completion	1.4a: Expand the tuition support programme for girls at JSS level to improve gender parity	Primary to JSS Transition Rate for Girls - 10% increase by 2020	84%	88%		91%		94%	
Access Equity and Completion	1.4b: Formalise policy for re-entry of teenage mothers into the school system	JSS GER for girls - 7% increase between 2018 and 2020	N/A	60%		63%		67%	
Access Equity and Completion	1.4c: All schools are safe for girls through curbing sexual violence and exploitation in schools	JSS GCR/PCR for girls - 10% increase between 2018 and 2020	N/A	40%		45%		50%	
Access Equity and Completion	1.5a: Ensure equity by providing scholarships to SSS students satisfying predefined criteria	GER + GPI - % increases as shown in table	N/A	29%/0.92		30%/0.93		32%/0.96	
Access Equity and Completion	1.6a: Construct additional fully functional and equipped classrooms to accommodate current and projected demand as well as phase out double-shift schooling	% Prim., JS; SS categorised as over-crowded + No. of classrooms constructed		Pri-35%, JSS-30%, SS-25% + 200 classrooms + 5 new JSS/SSS		Pri-30%, JSS-25%, SS-20% + 200 classrooms + 5 new JSS/SSS		Pri-25%, JSS-20%, SS-15% + 200 classrooms + 5 new JSS/SSS	
Access Equity and Completion	1.6b: Ensure at least 15% of existing schools have ramps for students with disability	Number of schools given ramps	N/A	450		450		450	
Access Equity and Completion	1.7a: Develop an implementation plan of the TVET policy	Implementation plan developed and in use	TVET policy available, Implementation plan not available	TVET policy available and in use, approved implementation plan available and in use		TVET functions guided by a policy and an implementation plan		TVET functions guided by a policy and an implementation plan	

Theme	Input intervention	Performance Indicator	Baseline Assumption	Milestone/Target	Actual	Milestone/Target	Actual	Milestone/Target	Actual
			2016/17	2018		2019		2020	
Access Equity and Completion	Intervention 1.7b: Formal constitution and operationalisation of NCTVE	Fully functional NCTVE guided by a constitution	No NCTVE constitution and NCTVE not operationalised	Draft of Formal Constitution available by end of 2018		Approved constitution available and in use,, operationalisation of NCTVE by operationalisation of NCTVE by end of 2019		Approved constitution available and in use, operationalisation of NCTVE by end of 2019	
Access Equity and Completion	1.7c: Strengthen and streamline Public/Private partnership in provision of TVET	Additional PPP established to boost support to TVET activities - 20 by 2020	No TVET PPP	5		10		20	
Access Equity and Completion	1.8a: Develop a higher education strategy/ framework to consolidate the policies for addressing equitable growth, quality, and relevance	Stakeholders rating of higher education	NA	A%		B= A + 10%		B + 10%	
Access Equity and Completion	Intervention 1.8b: Provide better targeted financial support (scholarships/ grants/loans) to the neediest students, and continue support for students with disabilities as well as females in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)	GPI + % Students with disabilities in HEd - GPI increases by 0.15 by 2020 and % of students with disability in HEd by 3%	Scholarship-GoSL grant-in-aid and other multilateral scholarships to the neediest students provided	A/A%		B =(A+0.05) B% = A%+1%		B + 0.15 B% + 2%	

Theme	Input intervention	Performance Indicator	Baseline Assumption	Milestone/Target	Actual	Milestone/Target	Actual	Milestone/Target	Actual
			2016/17	2018		2019		2020	
Access Equity and Completion	1.9a: Provide accelerated primary education for older children and youth ages of 10 to 15 years old	No. registered in programme - Increases by 20% by 2020	N/A	A		B = A + 10%		C = A + 20%	
Access Equity and Completion	1.9b: Increase and regularise the funding for non-formal and adult education	Literacy rate - Increases by 4% between 2018 and 2020	N/A	52%		54%		56%	
Quality Relevance and Integrity	2.1a: Conduct annual sample-based learning assessment for selected pupil levels in English Language Arts and mathematics	Learning Assessment - % at expected Prim + JS learning / performance level	NA	A%		a+10%		a+10%	
Quality Relevance and Integrity	2.1b: Undertake curriculum revision/updating and reform as necessary	Teachers trained in use of updated SSS curriculum	NA	20,983		20,983		21,619	
Quality Relevance and Integrity	2.1e - Stimulate greater interest and uptake of the sciences by stimulating interest in the sciences starting at the early primary level and supporting the establishment/ rehabilitation of equipped science laboratories, starting with two secondary schools per district	Pass Rates in Int. Sc. at BECE and in Bio and Chem at WASSCE		64%-BECE, WASSCE; BIO-50%, CHEM-30%		67%-BECE, WASSCE; BIO-54%, CHEM-35%		70%-BECE, WASSCE; BIO-58%, CHEM-40%	
Quality Relevance and Integrity	2.1d: Undertake studies in assessment, performance and employability of learners	All Findings of studies made public	Few studies made public	1 Study finding made public		1 Study finding made public		1 Study finding made public	

Theme	Input intervention	Performance Indicator	Baseline Assumption	Milestone/Target	Actual	Milestone/Target	Actual	Milestone/Target	Actual
			2016/17	2018		2019		2020	
Quality Relevance and Integrity	2.2a – Take the necessary actions to ensure that 100% of educational institutions in operation meet MEST minimum standards together with other requirements spelt out in a revised/updated 2010 Education Policy	% of institutions at different levels meeting minimum standards + Updated Ed. Policy in use - 100% by 2020	N/A	25%		60%		100%	
Quality Relevance and Integrity	2.3a: Sensitise learners on their rights and referral channels in regards to corruption and exploitation at JSS, SSS, TVET, HEIs and learning centres	No. of institutions complying - A total of 9,000 by 2020	N/A	2000		6000		9000	
Quality Relevance and Integrity	2.3b - Develop and implement a National Strategy and Action Plan on Examination Malpractices, Unethical and Corrupt Practices in Education	Exam malpractices reported as % of 2018 baseline + implementation of Action Plan	No National Strategy and Action Plan on Examination Malpractices, unethical and corrupt practices in education in existence	A% + Yes		(a*40%) + Yes		(a*20%) + Yes	
Quality Relevance and Integrity	2.4a - Establish and implement a system for the professional development, induction and continuous development of teachers and school heads making use of what has been learnt from interventions such as the lesson plans introduced in 2017	% of teachers benefitted from CPD programmes in last 3 years + No. trained through CPD annually	N/A	25% + 12,382		50% + 12,382		70% + 12,382	
Quality Relevance and Integrity	2.4b - Develop and implement a set of reforms in pre-service education that are consistent with norms and standards for effective teacher performance	No. of reforms implemented based on findings of reform study - 5	N/A	1		3		1	

Theme	Input intervention	Performance Indicator	Baseline Assumption	Milestone/Target	Actual	Milestone/Target	Actual	Milestone/Target	Actual
			2016/17	2018		2019		2020	
Quality Relevance and Integrity	2.4c: Build strong foundation for early learning through training of early grade teachers in reading, writing and mathematics	Number of teachers trained	N/A	9763		9763		9763	
Quality Relevance and Integrity	2.4d - Establish and implement a system for strengthening the management of the teacher workforce (recruitment, deployment, promotion, etc.)	No. of teachers receiving (i) subject (ii) needy area allowances	0	(i) a ; (ii) x		(i) a+15 ; (ii) x + 15		(i) a + 20; (ii) x + 20	
System Strengthening	3.1a – Obtain support to staff up the highest priority MEST HQ professional staff vacancies for a minimum period of 2 years	No of unfilled high priority positions	14 High priority HQ MEST vacancies not filled	10		4		0	
System Strengthening	3.1b – Secure the support necessary for TSC to be able to fill key HQ positions and become fully functional	No of key TSC HQ positions unfilled	Key TSC HQ positions unfilled	10		4		0	
System Strengthening	3.2 – Develop and maintain clean teacher payroll records	No of written complaints about payroll and records received by TSC - decreases by 20% + % of teachers in GoSL and Assisted schools that have been approved for financial support are on payroll - rises to 95%	PRP study conducted on Teacher payroll	A/A%		a - 10% / 90%		a - 20% / 95%	
System Strengthening	3.3a – Disseminate the MEST Service Charter widely and conduct an annual education service delivery survey	% Change in service delivery ratings	Draft Service Delivery Charter Available	A%		A + (10% of A)		A + (20% of A)	
System Strengthening	3.3b – Provision of capacity development training based on a comprehensive MEST staff development programme	Service Delivery Rating	No staff development programme in use	A%		A + (10% of A)		A + (20% of A)	

Theme	Input intervention	Performance Indicator	Baseline Assumption	Milestone/Target	Actual	Milestone/Target	Actual	Milestone/Target	Actual
			2016/17	2018		2019		2020	
System Strengthening	3.3c – Provide inputs and resources to (i) make possible the release of WAEC results to schools within a maximum of 75 days after the sitting of the last paper, and (ii) carry out analysis of the performance of schools and candidates in the examinations	No. of days taken for release of results and Pass Rates for BECE and WASSCE	N/A	75		70		70	
System Strengthening	3.3d – Introduce Performance Based Financing (PBF) by the GoSL for the financing of schools, colleges, polytechnics and universities	No. of institutions meeting requirements for full PBF	Pilot of PBF by MEST through the GPE REDiSL project	A%		a + (20% of a)		a + (30% of a)	
System Strengthening	3.4a – Equip and empower each DEO to collect and analyse data on education in each district	% of DEO able to collect own data for ASC and display overall totals	DEOs partly equipped to collect data	30%		100%		100%	
System Strengthening	3.4b – Enable Paramount Chiefs to participate in the education monitoring process and produce termly reports on education in their Chiefdom	% of PCs submitting termly reports	Mobile phones distributed to 149 paramount chiefs	50%		100%		100%	
System Strengthening	3.4c – Strengthen EMIS to become a 'one-stop shop' for all MEST data on education	EMIS Data Desk established & functioning + Website Data Access Point	Operational EMIS	Fully functional EMIS		Fully functional EMIS		Fully functional EMIS	
System Strengthening	3.4d - Strengthen and improve partner coordination	4W Database operational - partner interventions evenly distributed and duplication minimised	Operational Partner Coordinating Office	Fully functional Partners Coordinating Office		Fully functional Partners Coordinating Office		Fully functional Partners Coordinating Office	
Emergency Preparedness and Response	4.1 Development, Printing and Distribution of an Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan, Handbook, and Phone Directory for all Educational Institutions	No. of institutions. with EPRP Handbook + Phone Directory	No Emergency preparedness and response plan	a		a + (50% x a)		100%	

Theme	Input intervention	Performance Indicator	Baseline Assumption	Milestone/Target	Actual	Milestone/Target	Actual	Milestone/Target	Actual
			2016/17	2018		2019		2020	
Emergency Preparedness and Response	4.2a Provision of sensitisation and awareness raising on the Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan as well as necessary training	Jingles aired / Posters on display	Regional sensitisation done (South and North-east)	Awareness Raising/ Training and sensitisation conducted		Awareness Raising/ Training and sensitisation conducted		Awareness Raising/ Training and sensitisation conducted	
Emergency Preparedness and Response	4.2b Establish strong coordination with the Situation Room for real time data and information dissemination and further, disseminate information through the Ministry's EMIS and Website	Updated information on website	Strong coordination on emergency preparedness and response not established	Coordination, Data and monitoring systems support (including support for website)		Coordination, Data and monitoring systems support (including support for website)		Coordination, Data and monitoring systems support (including support for website)	

ANNEX II – M & E Framework Matrix – Part 2

Theme	Input intervention	Performance Indicator	Output	Outcome	Means of Verification	Monitoring Frequency	Implementing Office	Responsible Office/ Directorate/ Division/ Unit for Monitoring
Access Equity and Completion	1.1a: Reduce the cost of schooling to parents and households (primary)	% of 6-11 years old out of school / Girls out	A reduction in the % of children out of school especially girls due to cost reduction. 15% reduction for boys and 15% less for girls	All Children enter school and complete primary education	Sector Analysis & ASC report	Yearly (Conducted once)	Primary Division, Gender Desk	Planning & policy-Monitoring and Evaluation Unit Basic Education Secretariat, primary division, and Gender desk
Access Equity and Completion	1.1b: Encourage and motivate parents and communities to have children start primary schooling at the official starting age of 6 years	Primary/Class 1 NIR/ Girls NIR - A 3% increase in the 2018 value for both by 2019 and a 6% increase by 2020	More children starting school at age 6 years (6% increase in Class 1 NIR)	All Children enter school and complete primary education	Sector Analysis & ASC report	Yearly (Conducted once)	Inspectorate	Planning & policy-Monitoring and Evaluation Unit Basic Education Secretariat, Primary Division, and Gender Desk
Access Equity and Completion	1.2a: Develop a policy and costed action plan to guide expansion of quality pre-school education	Pre-primary GIR/ Girls Pre-prim GIR - % increases as shown in table	Policy and Costed action plan developed and made available for use and % pre-primary GIR for boys reaches 24%, and GIR for girls reaches 11 percentage points above 2018 levels	Increased access to pre-school for children 3 to 5 years old	Policy and Costed action plan, Sector analysis & ASC	Yearly (Conducted once)	Pre-Primary Division, Gender Desk	Planning & policy-Monitoring and Evaluation Unit Basic Education Secretariat, primary division, and Gender desk
Access Equity and Completion	1.2b: Develop strategy for expansion of public pre-school education in existing primary schools, and continuing the development and piloting of community-based cost effective pre-primary education models	Pre-primary GER - 9% increase by 2020 relative to baseline	Expansion Strategy Developed and more children attending pre-primary school (Pre-primary GER reaches 20% in 2020)	Increased availability of primary school places and more children starting primary schooling having benefited from pre-primary schooling	Strategy document, Sector Analysis & ASC report	Yearly (Conducted once)	Pre-primary Unit & Partners	Planning & Policy-Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, Basic Education Secretariat & Pre-primary unit

Theme	Input intervention	Performance Indicator	Output	Outcome	Means of Verification	Monitoring Frequency	Implementing Office	Responsible Office/ Directorate/ Division/ Unit for Monitoring
Access Equity and Completion	1.3a: Improved government-led school feeding programme through the establishment of strong partnerships	% of GoSL. & GoSL assisted schools benefiting from the national school feeding programs	More children receiving school feeding - 100% in GoSL and GoSL-assisted primary schools	An improved and more effective school-feeding programme for primary schools	Sector Analysis, Service Delivery Survey report, reports from Situation Room monitors & ASC report	Monthly for SF unit, yearly-ASC & once for Sector analysis, Quarterly for MOFED	School Feeding Unit & Partners	Planning & Policy-Monitoring & Evaluation Unit and School Feeding Unit, MoFED .
Access Equity and Completion	1.4a: Expand the tuition support programme for girls at JSS level to improve gender parity	Primary to JSS Transition Rate for Girls - 10% increase by 2020	JSS girls receiving full tuition support even in JSS2 and JSS3 and primary to JSS transition rate for girls reaches 94%	Increase in primary to JSS transition rates for girls	Disbursement Report from MOFED, Sector analysis & ASC.	At the end of every school term-MOFED, yearly-ASC & sector Analysis	PPD, Gender Desk, MOFED	Planning & Policy Directorate, Inspectorate, Gender Desk
Access Equity and Completion	1.4b: Formalise policy for re-entry of teenage mothers into the school system	JSS GER for girls - 7% increase between 2018 and 2020	Existing policy revisited, fine-tuned as necessary and formalised and as a result JSS GER for girls reaches 67%	More girls re-entering the school system and contributing to an increase in the GER for girls at the JSS level	Formalised Policy Document, ASC report, Sector Analysis report	Yearly (Conducted once)	Gender Desk & Development partners	Non-formal education / Programmes
Access Equity and Completion	1.4c: All schools are safe for girls through curbing sexual violence and exploitation in schools	JSS GCR/PCR for girls - 10% increase between 2018 and 2020	Fewer reports of sexual violence and exploitation coming to MEST via the free call line and reports from Situation Room monitors consequently JSS PCR for girls reaches 50%	Increase in GCR/PCR for girls at JSS level	Sector Assessment Report, ASC	Yearly (Conducted once)	Gender Desk & Development partners	Planning & Policy directorate & Gender desk& Quality Assurance Directorate

Theme	Input intervention	Performance Indicator	Output	Outcome	Means of Verification	Monitoring Frequency	Implementing Office	Responsible Office/ Directorate/ Division/ Unit for Monitoring
Access Equity and Completion	1.5a: Ensure equity by providing scholarships to SSS students satisfying predefined criteria	GER + GPI - % increases as shown in table	More poor and disadvantaged students, girls in particular, enrolled in SSS and GER increases to 32% in 2020 and GPI to 0.96	Increased equitable access to Senior Secondary School (SSS) as shown by increase in GPI and SSS in poor areas with more students enrolled	Sector Assessment Report, ASC	Yearly (Conducted once)	Programme Dir. - Secondary Div. and Gender Desk	Planning & Policy Directorate & Secondary Div., & Quality Assurance Directorate
Access Equity and Completion	1.6a: Construct additional fully functional and equipped classrooms to accommodate current and projected demand as well as phase out double-shift schooling	% Prim., JS; SS categorised as over-crowded + No. of classrooms constructed	New classrooms and schools constructed and percentage of schools categorised as overcrowded reduces as shown in table	Fewer schools overcrowded and fewer running double shift	Sector Assessment Report, ASC + Awards Body (ies)	Yearly (Conducted once)	Educational Programmes and Services	Policy & Planning Directorate; Educational Programmes and Services, Quality Assurance Directorate
Access Equity and Completion	1.6b: Ensure at least 15% of existing schools have ramps for students with disability	Number of schools given ramps	Schools with ramps - 15% additional schools	Schools more disabled friendly and inclusive	Sector Assessment Report, ASC	Yearly (Conducted once)	PPD, Inspectorate, Contracted Entities	PPD- M&E Unit and Quality Assurance Directorate
Access Equity and Completion	1.7a: Develop an implementation plan of the TVET policy	Implementation plan developed and in use	A TVET implementation plan in use	Better quality TVET and increased equitable access to TVET	Approved TVET Implementation Plan	Yearly (Conducted once for sector assessment report) 2020-quarterly monitoring	TVET Unit & HEST and partners	HEST & TVET Unit
Access Equity and Completion	Intervention 1.7b: Formal constitution and operationalisation of NCTVE	Fully functional NCTVE guided by a constitution	Approved NCTVE constitution and a fully functional NCTVE	Increased equitable access to Technical and Vocational Education	NCTVE Constitution, NCTVE Reports & Sector Assessment Report	Yearly (Conducted once for sector assessment report)	TVET Unit & HEST supported by partner(s)	HEST & TVET Unit
Access Equity and Completion	1.7c: Strengthen and streamline Public/Private partnership in provision of TVET	Additional PPP established to boost support to TVET activities - 20 by 2020	New TVET Public Private Partnerships - 20 new by 2020	Increased equitable access to Technical and Vocational Education	20 PPP agreements & reports on PPP support	Yearly	TVET Unit & HEST supported by partners	HEST & TVET Unit

Theme	Input intervention	Performance Indicator	Output	Outcome	Means of Verification	Monitoring Frequency	Implementing Office	Responsible Office/ Directorate/ Division/ Unit for Monitoring
Access Equity and Completion	1.8a: Develop a higher education strategy/ framework to consolidate the policies for addressing equitable growth, quality, and relevance	Stakeholders rating of higher education	Higher education strategy/ framework in use and stakeholders rating of higher education increases by 10%	Increase in stakeholders rating of higher education	Higher Education Strategy/ Framework, Sector Assessment Report	Yearly for Sector Assessment	HEST and the TEC	PPD, HEST and TEC
Access Equity and Completion	Intervention 1.8b: Provide better targeted financial support (scholarships/ grants/loans) to the neediest students, and continue support for students with disabilities as well as females in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)	GPI + % Students with disabilities in HED - GPI increases by 0.15 by 2020 and % of students with disability in HED by 3%	More females and more students with disabilities in higher education hence GPI increases by 0.15 by 2020 and % of disabled students increases by 3%	Increased equitable access to higher education	Approved scholarship lists	Yearly at target intervals	HEST and the Student Awards Unit	Student Awards Unit + PPD
Access Equity and Completion	1.9a: Provide accelerated primary education for older children and youth ages of 10 to 15 years old	No. registered in programme - Increases by 20% by 2020	More youths enrolled in accelerated learning programme - 20% more by 2020	Improved literacy rate for youth and adults	Sector Assessment Report	Yearly once for every target Interval	Non Formal Dir. Supported by Partner(s)	Office of the CEO, Nonformal Directorate
Access Equity and Completion	1.9b: Increase and regularise the funding for non-formal and adult education	Literacy rate - Increases by 4% between 2018 and 2020	More people able to read and write - Literacy rate increases to 56%	Improved literacy rate for youths and adults	Sector Budget Allocation Report from MOFED	Yearly	Non Formal Dir. and supporting Partner(s)	PPD, Nonformal Division
Quality Relevance and Integrity	2.1a: Conduct annual sample-based learning assessment for selected pupil levels in English Language Arts and mathematics	Learning Assessment - % at expected Prim + JS learning / performance level	More primary and JSS students at the expected learning/performance level - 15% increase between 2018 and 2020	Measurable improvement in the learning and performance students at the primary and JSS level	School performance Analysis report, ASC and sector analysis	Yearly based on academic calendar	PPD & Basic Education Secretariat & Leh Wi Learn	PPD & BES & Leh Wi Learn
Quality Relevance and Integrity	2.1b: Undertake curriculum revision/updating and reform as necessary	Teachers trained in use of updated SSS curriculum	Updated SSS Curriculum and teachers trained in its use	Improvement in the performance of learners at the SSS level	School performance Analysis report, ASC and sector analysis	Yearly based on academic calendar	Programmes Dir. + BES and Leh Wi Lan	Programmes Dir. + BES and Leh Wi Lan

Theme	Input intervention	Performance Indicator	Output	Outcome	Means of Verification	Monitoring Frequency	Implementing Office	Responsible Office/ Directorate/ Division/ Unit for Monitoring
Quality Relevance and Integrity	2.1c - Stimulate greater interest and uptake of the sciences by stimulating interest in the sciences starting at the early primary level and supporting the establishment/ rehabilitation of equipped science laboratories, starting with two secondary schools per district	Pass Rates in Int. Sc. at BECE and in Bio and Chem at WASSCE	Increased Pass Rates in Int. Sc. at BECE and in Bio and Chem at WASSCE	Improvement in the learning and performance of learners in the sciences	Exam results, School performance Analysis report, ASC and sector analysis	Yearly	Secondary Division, BES & supporting Partner(s)	BES & Secondary Div.
Quality Relevance and Integrity	2.1d: Undertake studies in assessment, performance and employability of learners	All Findings of studies made public	Study reports, recommendations and findings made public	Better assessment of students	Study reports	Yearly	PPD, BES	PPD, BES
Quality Relevance and Integrity	2.2a – Take the necessary actions to ensure that 100% of educational institutions in operation meet MEST minimum standards together with other requirements spelt out in a revised/updated 2010 Education Policy	% of institutions at different levels meeting minimum standards + Updated Ed. Policy in use - 100% by 2020	All (100%) educational institutions meeting MEST minimum standards+ updated education policy in use	Educational institutions providing a better learning environment and producing better graduates	Sector Assessment Report, Updated Education Policy & ASC	Yearly	Inspectorate / Quality Assurance Directorate	Inspectorate / Quality Assurance Directorate / programmes
Quality Relevance and Integrity	2.3a: Sensitise learners on their rights and referral channels in regards to corruption and exploitation at JSS, SSS, TVET, HEIs and learning centres	No. of institutions complying - A total of 9,000 by 2020	Fewer cases of corruption and exploitation reported to MEST - institutions complying	Improved teaching / learning environment	Sector Assessment Report, Service delivery survey report, reports from Situation Room monitors	Yearly	Inspectorate / Quality Assurance Directorate	Office of the CEO and Quality Assurance Division
Quality Relevance and Integrity	2.3b - Develop and implement a National Strategy and Action Plan on Examination Malpractices, Unethical and Corrupt Practices in Education	Exam malpractices reported as % of 2018 baseline + implementation of Action Plan	National Strategy and action plan developed and implemented - malpractices reduced by 80%	Unethical and corrupt practices in education minimised and greater confidence in achievements of graduates of the system	National Strategy and Action plan, Service delivery survey report, Situation Room and PC reports	Yearly	PPD and Inspectorate / Quality Assurance Directorate	Office of the CEO and Quality Assurance Directorate

Theme	Input intervention	Performance Indicator	Output	Outcome	Means of Verification	Monitoring Frequency	Implementing Office	Responsible Office/ Directorate/ Division/ Unit for Monitoring
Quality Relevance and Integrity	2.4a - Establish and implement a system for the professional development, induction and continuous development of teachers and school heads making use of what has been learnt from interventions such as the lesson plans introduced in 2017	% of teachers benefitted from CPD programmes in last 3 years + No. trained through CPD annually	Teachers receiving CPD - 70% benefitting by 2020	Teachers are competent/ professionally qualified, motivated and demonstrate high performance standards	CPD training reports	Monthly	TSC with support from development partners	TSC
Quality Relevance and Integrity	2.4b - Develop and implement a set of reforms in pre-service education that are consistent with norms and standards for effective teacher performance	No. of reforms implemented based on findings of reform study - 5	5 pre-service reform programme developed & implemented	Better quality teachers	Pre-service reform programme report, reports from teacher colleges	Yearly	HEST, TSC and support from development partner(s)	Office of the CEO & HEST and TSC
Quality Relevance and Integrity	2.4c: Build strong foundation for early learning through training of early grade teachers in reading, writing and mathematics	Number of teachers trained	Greater number of teachers trained in early grade reading; writing and mathematics	More competent early grade teachers	Reports from trainers and HEST	Yearly	HEST, TSC and support from development partner(s)	Office of the CEO & HEST and TSC
Quality Relevance and Integrity	2.4d - Establish and implement a system for strengthening the management of the teacher workforce (recruitment, deployment, promotion, etc.)	No. of teachers receiving (i) subject (ii) needy area allowances	Subject and needy area allowances being paid	Competent/ professionally qualified more equitably distributed, motivated and demonstrating high performance standards	TSC report on teacher management and supervision	Yearly	TSC	TSC

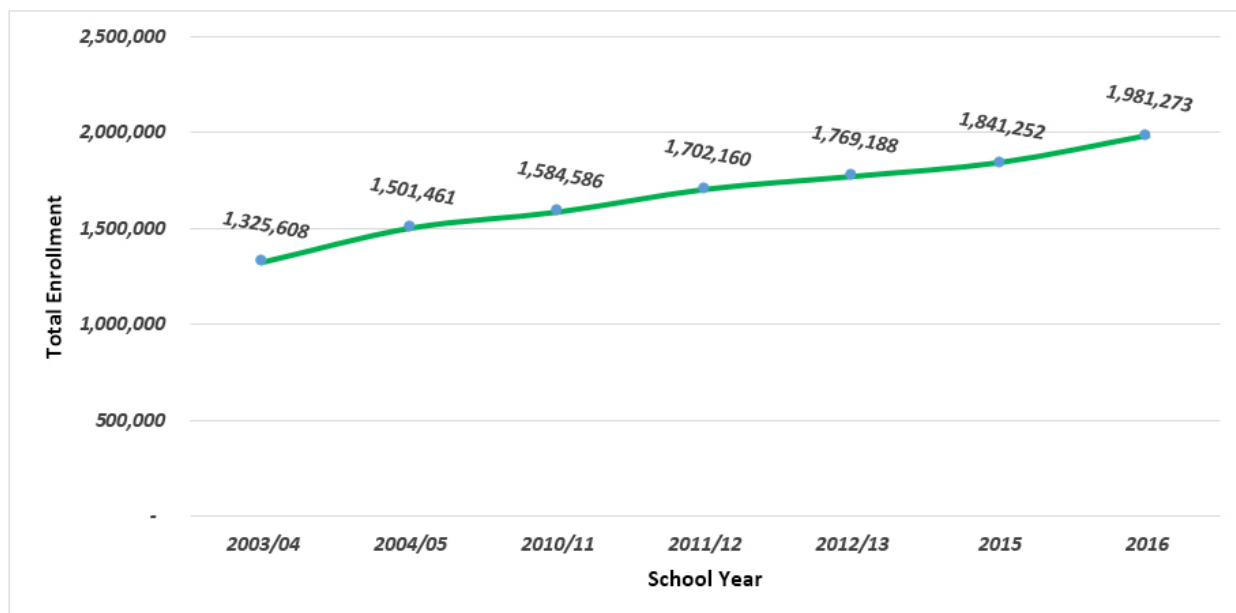
Theme	Input intervention	Performance Indicator	Output	Outcome	Means of Verification	Monitoring Frequency	Implementing Office	Responsible Office/ Directorate/ Division/ Unit for Monitoring
System Strengthening	3.1a – Obtain support to staff up the highest priority MEST HQ professional staff vacancies for a minimum period of 2 years	No of unfilled high priority positions	14 High priority MEST positions filled	MEST able to function more effectively and to improve in performance	Letters of appointment and occupancy of offices	Yearly	Human Resource Unit	Office of the Permanent Secretary & Human Resource Unit.
System Strengthening	3.1b – Secure the support necessary for TSC to be able to fill key HQ positions and become fully functional	No of key TSC HQ positions unfilled	14 key TSC positions filled	Teaching Service Commission (TSC) able to better fulfil its role and mandate	Letters of appointment and occupancy of offices	Yearly	TSC	TSC
System Strengthening	3.2 – Develop and maintain clean teacher payroll records	No of written complaints about payroll and records received by TSC - decreases by 20% + % of teachers in GoSL and Assisted schools that have been approved for financial support are on payroll - rises to 95%	A clean teacher payroll records - 20% fewer payroll complaints + 95% of teachers in GoSL and GoSL-assisted schools that have been approved for financial support are on payroll	Develop and maintain a clean teacher payroll and records	Teacher Payroll Record	6 monthly / Yearly	TSC, MOFED & with support from Development Partner(s)	Office of the CEO, TSC, MOFED
System Strengthening	3.3a – Disseminate the MEST Service Charter widely and conduct an annual education service delivery survey	% Change in service delivery ratings	Service Charter disseminated and in use - 20% increase in MEST service delivery rating	A more accountable Ministry that improves in service	Service Delivery Survey Report, Sector Assessment Report	Yearly	PPD and Inspectorate / Quality Assurance Directorate	PPD and Inspectorate / Quality Assurance Directorate
System Strengthening	3.3b – Provision of capacity development training based on a comprehensive MEST staff development programme	Service Delivery Rating	MEST staff trained as part of the staff development programme + 20% increase in MEST service delivery rating	Better trained and more competent staff contributing to improving service delivery	Staff development programme, Training Reports & approved staff performance appraisal	Yearly	Human Resource Unit	Office of the PS, Human Resource Unit
System Strengthening	3.3c – Provide inputs and resources to (i) make possible the release of WAEC results to schools within a maximum of 75 days after the sitting of the last paper, and (ii) carry out analysis of the performance of schools and candidates in the examinations	No. of days taken for release of results and Pass Rates for BECE and WASSCE	Timely release of public examination results and performance of schools and candidates - within 70 days	Public perception of WAEC and MEST improved	Public announcement of release of results	Yearly	Office of the CEO	Office of the CEO

Theme	Input intervention	Performance Indicator	Output	Outcome	Means of Verification	Monitoring Frequency	Implementing Office	Responsible Office/ Directorate/ Division/ Unit for Monitoring
System Strengthening	3.3d – Introduce Performance Based Financing (PBF) by the GoSL for the financing of schools, colleges, polytechnics and universities	No. of institutions meeting requirements for full PBF	PBF in use	Educational institutions making better use of resources provided by the GoSL - 30% increase in institutions meeting requirements for PBF	PBF disbursement reports	Yearly	MOFED, PPD, QAD/ Inspectorate	MOFED, PPD, QAD/ Inspectorate
System Strengthening	3.4a – Equip and empower each DEO to collect and analyse data on education in each district	% of DEO able to collect own data for ASC and display overall totals	DEOs fully equipped to manage data - 100% able to collect own data and display totals	Timely, reliable and accurate data and information on education readily accessible and in use	District generated reports	Monthly	QAD/Inspectorate	QAD/Inspectorate / Planning and Policy Directorate
System Strengthening	3.4b – Enable Paramount Chiefs to participate in the education monitoring process and produce termly reports on education in their Chiefdom	% of PCs submitting termly reports	All (100%) PCs involved in monitoring and reporting as required on time	Timely, reliable and accurate data and information on education readily accessible and in use	PC monitoring reports and DEO reports	Termly	QAD/Inspectorate	QAD/Inspectorate
System Strengthening	3.4c – Strengthen EMIS to become a 'one-stop shop' for all MEST data on education	EMIS Data Desk established & functioning + Website Data Access Point	All data on education consolidated and well managed - EMIS Data Desk established & functioning + Website Data Access Point	Timely, reliable and accurate data and information on education readily accessible and in use	Quarterly & Yearly EMIS Report	Quarterly and Yearly	EMIS	PPD
System Strengthening	3.4d - Strengthen and improve partner coordination	4W Database operational - partner interventions evenly distributed and duplication minimised	Partner activities/ support well-coordinated to avoid duplication of efforts - 4W database operational	Timely, reliable and accurate data and information on education readily accessible and in use	Quarterly Report on Partner Coordination	Quarterly and Yearly	Partner Coordinating Office & NGO Desk + PPD	Partner Coordinating Office & NGO Desk + PPD

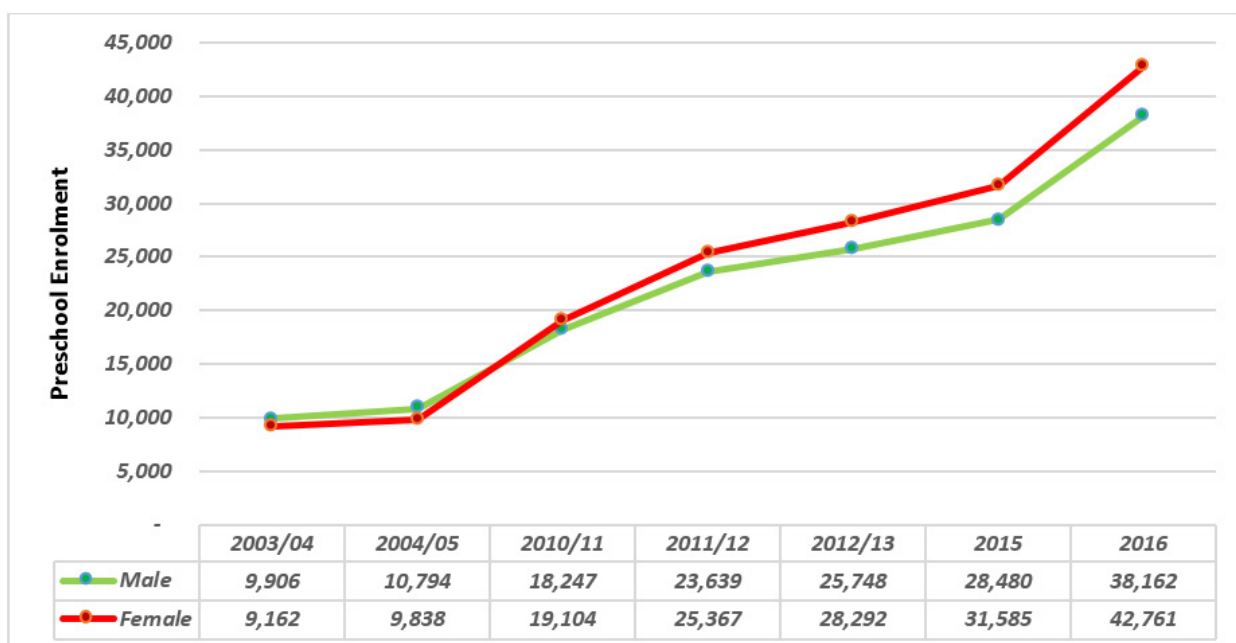
Theme	Input intervention	Performance Indicator	Output	Outcome	Means of Verification	Monitoring Frequency	Implementing Office	Responsible Office/ Directorate/ Division/ Unit for Monitoring
Emergency Preparedness and Response	4.1 Development, Printing and Distribution of an Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan, Handbook, and Phone Directory for all Educational Institutions	No. of institutions. with EPRP Handbook + Phone Directory	Emergency preparedness, response plan and phone directory in 100% of educational institutions	Education better prepared to respond to emergencies	Emergency Preparedness, response plan and phone directory	6 monthly	Situation Room, QAD / Inspectorate, PPD	Situation Room, QAD / Inspectorate, PPD
Emergency Preparedness and Response	4.2a Provision of sensitisation and awareness raising on the Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan as well as necessary training	Jingles aired / Posters on display	Awareness raising/ training and sensitisation / communication - Jingles, posters, etc., in use and in all educational institutions as well as MEST offices	Education better prepared to respond to emergencies	Activity Reports produced by EMIS	conducted during and after sensitisation at specific yearly intervals	EMIS and Development Partners	PPD & EMIS
Emergency Preparedness and Response	4.2c Establish strong coordination with the Situation Room for real time data and information dissemination and further, disseminate information through the Ministry's EMIS and Website	Updated information on website	Updated information on website	Public better informed on current matters of education	SR-Reports, Website content, ICT Unit Report	6 monthly	PPD, Situation Room, ICT Unit	PPD, Situation Room, ICT Unit

ANNEX III - School Level Enrolment Trends 2003/04 – 2015/16 School Years

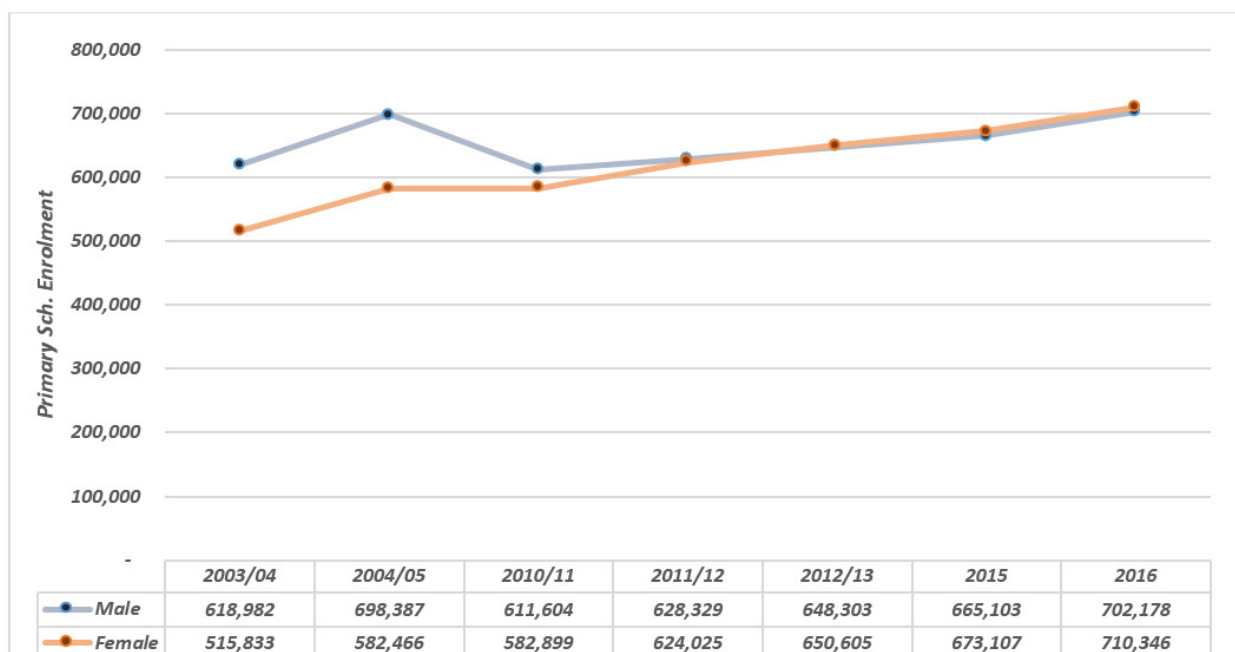
Total School Enrolment for 2003/04, 2004/05, 2010/11, 2011/12, 2012/13, 2015 and 2015/16



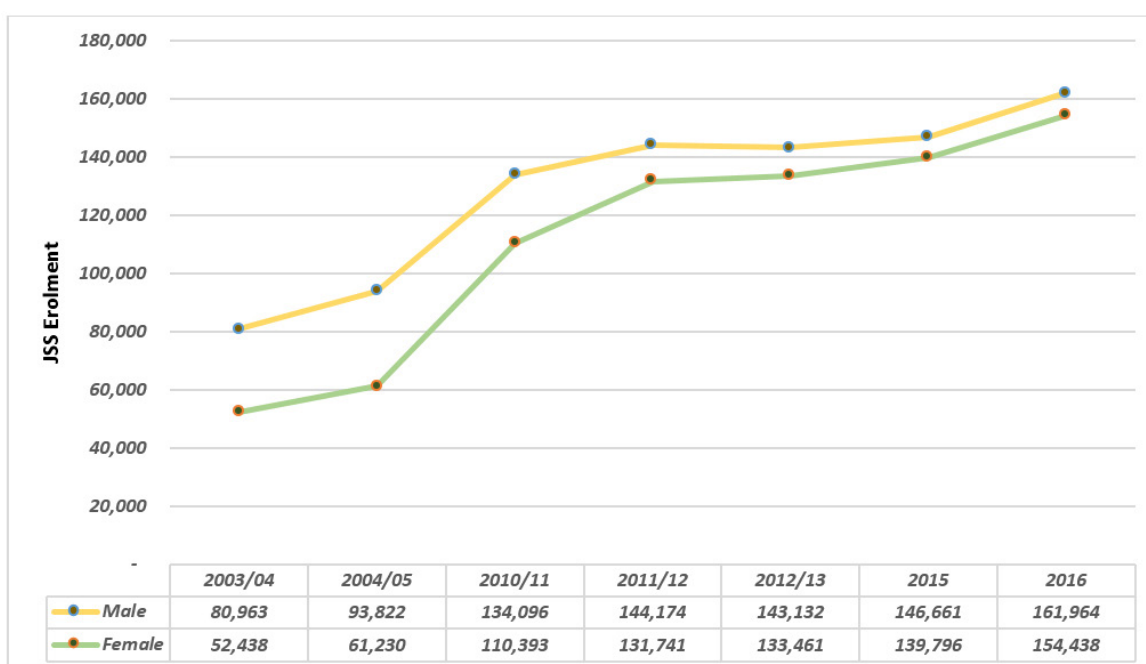
Preschool Enrolment for 2003/04, 2004/05, 2010/11, 2011/12, 2012/13, 2015 and 2016



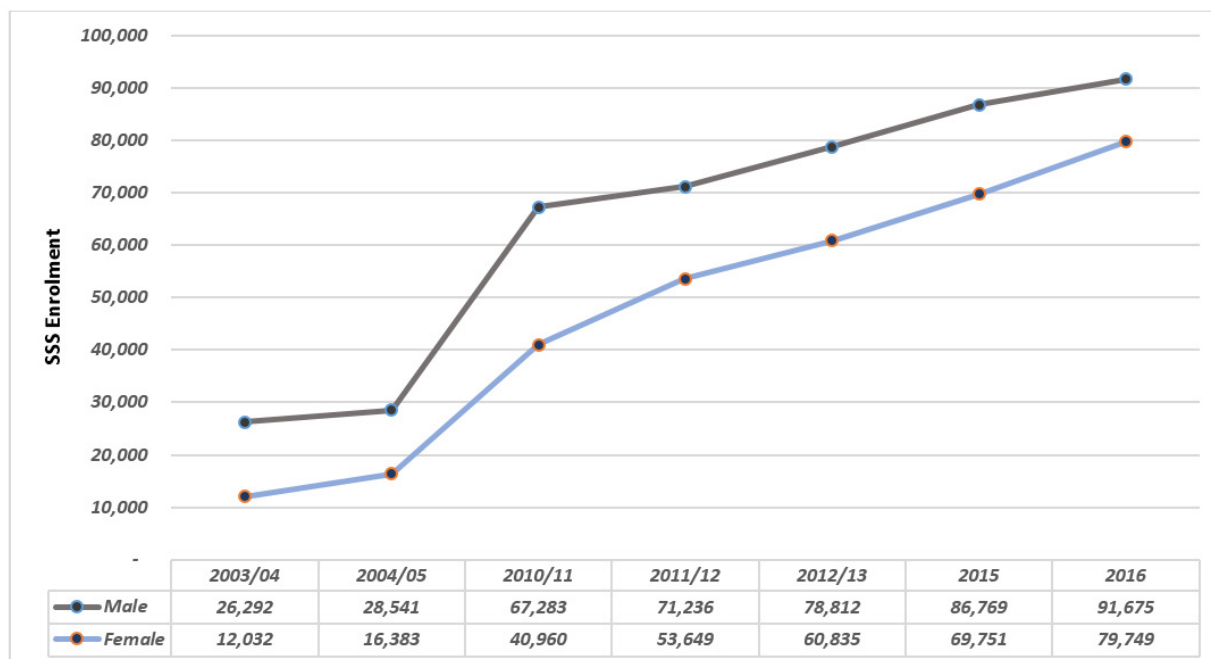
Primary School Enrolment for 2003/04, 2004/05, 2010/11, 2011/12, 2012/13, 2015 and 2016



JSS Enrolment for 2003/04, 2004/05, 2010/11, 2011/12, 2012/13, 2015 and 2016



SSS Enrolment for 2003/04, 2004/05, 2010/11, 2011/12, 2012/13, 2015 and 2016



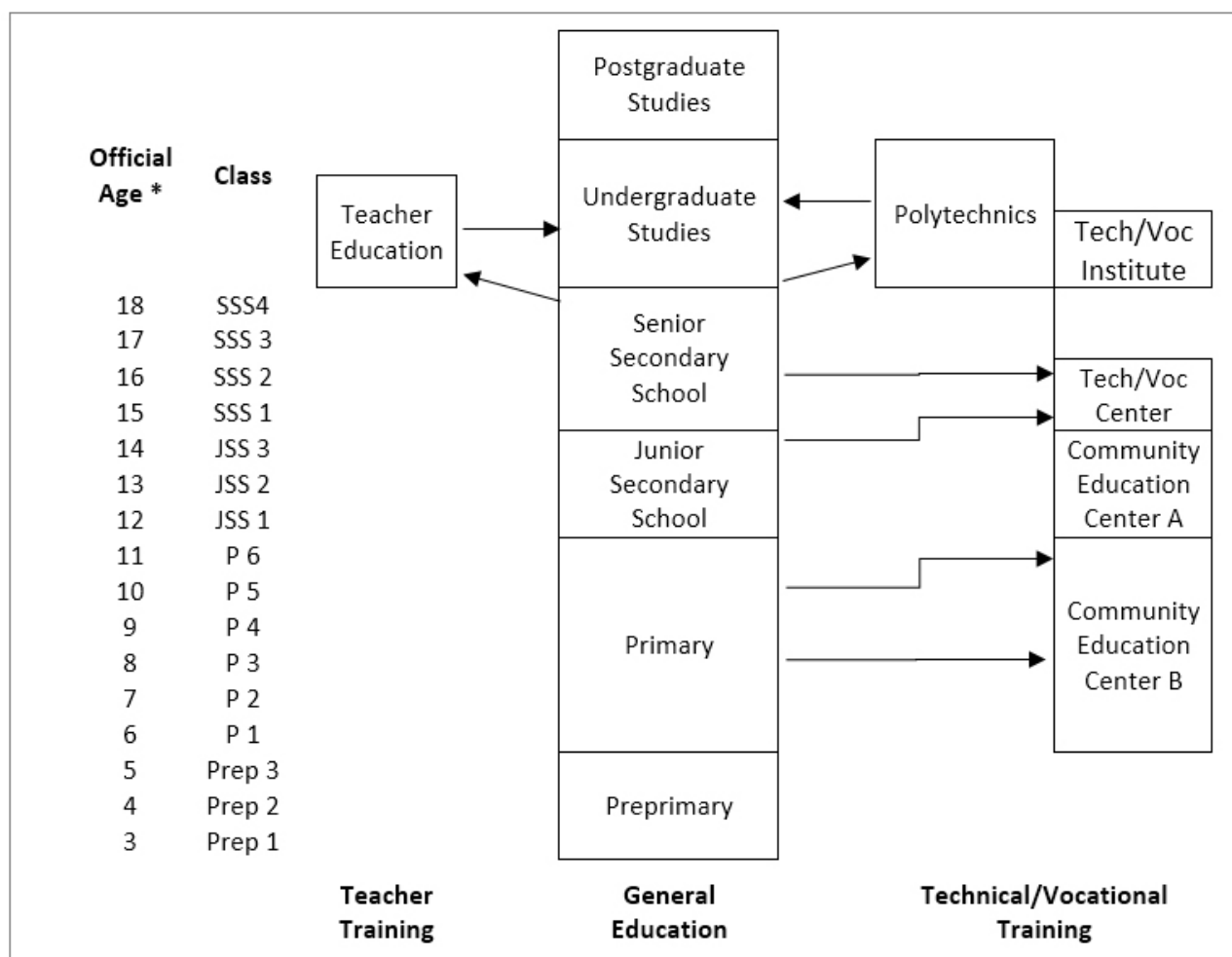
ANNEX IV - Structure of Education System*

The education system is organised into the sub-sectors below:

- Pre-primary + Basic education (primary + junior secondary);
- Senior secondary;
- Technical and vocational education and training (TVET);
- Tertiary education (universities, polytechnics and teacher education); and
- Non-Formal Education, that includes literacy programmes.

The different levels are:

- (i) Preprimary education, with a theoretical entrance age of three years and a duration of three years. The objective of this programme is to contribute to children's physical, cognitive, emotional and social development and to prepare them for primary school.
- (ii) Primary education, that generally starts at age six and lasts for six years. At the end of the last grade all pupils are required to pass the National Primary School Examination (NPSE) designed by the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) to proceed to secondary education.
- (iii) Secondary education, which is divided into: (i) Junior secondary school (JSS), the final cycle of basic education, validated by the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE); and (ii) Senior secondary school (SSS), validated by the West Africa Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE). Both examinations are administered by the WAEC.
- (iv) Tertiary education, that includes: (i) University, leading to bachelor's (four years), master's and doctorate degrees; (ii) Teacher training, leading to the Higher Teacher Certificate (HTC - three years); Polytechnics, leading to the Higher National Diploma (HND – two years), and other vocational courses.



Source: 2013 CSR with author's modification.

Note: * Official school ages apply to general education only.

Non-formal education (NFE) includes all organised educational and training activities and processes outside the formal education system, that are designed to meet the learning needs of out-of-school children, youths and adults. These include adult and continuing education, NFE for children, skills

The technical and vocational stream offers a variety of programmes and certificates, available at all stages of education, either as an alternative to completers of a given cycle, or independently from the general stream. Technical/Vocational Centers and Institutes are alternatives to further general education for BECE and WASSCE holders, respectively.

***This annex consists wholly of an extract from the 2013 CSR**

ANNEX V - Sustainable Development Goal for Education and Associated Targets

Goal 4 of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) initiative, succeeding the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), is to 'ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.' SDG4 is the main goal for education. The targets set to be achieved under this goal is presented in the box below. SDG4 has 10 targets to be achieved for education at the international level. However, member states are expected to domesticate these, integrating them into their national sectoral and national plans. In Sierra Leone, work is advanced in this area. Sierra Leone specific indicators and targets have been drafted, and baselines defined for a number of them. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology monitors and reports on the targets annually.

Box 6.1

Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes

4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education

4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university

4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship

4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations

4.6 By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy

4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development

4.a Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all

4.b By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries

4.c By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States

ANNEX VI - 2017 District Level ESP Consultations Attendance

	NO	NAME	ORGANISATION/DESG.	CONTACT NUMBER
WESTERN AREA	1	ESTHER M. SANDY	STUDENT	030-284-096
	2	SHEIK I. CONTEH	STUDENT	030-421-640
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	4	HAJA RUBIALA CONTEH	MARKET WOMAN	030-216-632
	5	GRACE A. FULLAH	TVET	076-613-075
	6	WOROKIA CONTEH	MSWGCA	076-724-852
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	8	LOMA CONTEH	MSWGCA	078-159-878
	9	HAJA F.WURRIE JALLOH	FCC	078-463-275
	10	SYLVINO KAMARA	FBC	077-852-757
	11	EMMANUEL SATTIE	HRD Network	076-508-888
	12	HAWANTU BANGURA	PARENT	088-255-070
	13	SAIDU FOMEH	PARENT	076-803-672
	14	MOHAMED A THOWLA	NACOHT	076-852-584
	15	MATILDA KROMA	PDT	076-543-843
	16	MICHEAL JIMMY	PDT	078-955-575
	17	JATTU OLTERRBEIN	MEST	078-110-982
	18	JENEBA SANDY	SECRETARIAT	078-840-289
	19	JAMES A. DAWOBU	WARD C	076-619-188
	20	ABDUL NICESOSY	SUPERVISOR-MEST	076-769-000
	21	EKUNDAYO C.A COKER	CPSS W/A	078-668-838
	22	VICTOR KAMARA	P.S.S	078-290-559
	23	MAMOUD TURAY	DECENTRALISATION	076-220-055
	24	AGNESS KEBBIE	IAMTECH	078-803-142
	25	MOHAMED S. BANGURA	WACHOTS WARD C	099-755-445
	26	KADIATU MANSARAY	W/R PARENT	099-724-006
	27	MOSES KOROMA	WHADA	
	28	SUNKARIA KARGBO	MARKET SELLER	030-142-819
	29	NANCY KOROMA	STUDENT-IPAM	088-630-948
	30	MOBWEF FILLH	MEST	088-840-083

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	7	FODAY SAMA	B.R.U	079-031-304
	8	EDWARD P. LASSAYO	TVET	076-643-627
	9	JOHN B. CHARLES	CPSS	076-627-003
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	11	ALPHA M. LEBBIE	LECTURER	076-645-361
	12	MARIE BURF	STUDENT	076-889-393
	13	ISATA KANU	TEACHER	088-968-408
	14	ALFRED SAIDU	STUDENT	079-745-930
	15	ABU BAKARR SESAY	TRADER	078-809-550
	16	EDWARD A. KOROMA	HTC	078-300-218
	17	ABUDUL LAHAI		076-306-372
	18	ERIC WILLIAMS	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	076-169-200
	19	ADAMA LAMIN	PRIVATE SCHOOL	076-524-096
	20	KENNETH JAMES	STUDENT	076-882-422
	21	AUGUSTINE K. ABU	BO DC	076-562-134
	22	FATMATA KONDEH	B.D.E.C	
	23	FLORENCE BOCKARIE	KAKUA	
	24	MARTIN SAW	MEST	078-423-341
	25	LAHAI FEIKA	MEST	078-808-562

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	4	ALLICIUS S. MALLAH	DEO	
	5	IBRAHIM B. SWARAY	CSM	076-437-327
	6	ABDULAI KAMARA	CSO	079-505-848
	7	REV. IRADI LAHAI	CPSS	076-632-261
	8	JEBBEH KEBBIE	PUPILS	
	9	MATTU KALLON	SLC	
	10	JANET J. WUBAY	SSTVSS	
	11	MARIAMA SHERIFF	TEACHER	076-957-674
	12	SIDIE JAH	TUTOR FTC	078-699-874
	13	SYLLAS J ROGERS	WICM	076-597-249
	14	THOMAS M. CONTEH	NACOTH	078-706-990
	15	VANDI S. ROGERS	ADMIN.	079-505—999
	16	FRANCIS SWARAY	PARENT	078-433-677
	17	CATUMU JOHNNY	PARENT	077-090-161
	18	BINTA JALLOH	TRADER	076-722-316
	19	ALPHA A. MANSARAY	OKADA	078-446-577
	20	ADAMA ROGERS	MARKET WOMAN	078-674-263
	21	ALHAJI MANSARAY	MSWGCA	078-221-254
	22	ELIZABETH M. JAH	TEACHER	076-927-016
	23	YATTA SUMAILA	TEACHER	079-502-765
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	6	HAWANATU M. DASHE	SLOIC/MVTC	088-716-903
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	9	MARY CONTEH	SLMB	088-302-335
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	11	MARIAMA BARRIE	FAWE	
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	13	PETER J. THOMAS	MEST	076-650-425
	14	JOSEPHINE BANGURA	MEST	078-435-985
	15	MOHAMED J. KARGBO	BDC	
	16	FATMATA SESAY	B.D.C-PUPIL	-
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	18	SUARD H. KOROMA	M.C.C	078-299-407
	19	SANTIGIE T. KAMARA	BEN. IS. SEC. SCH.	078-229-133
	20	ISATU D. KAMARA	BEN.IS. SEC. SCH.	077-814-138
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	26	JOSEPH THULLAH		030-510-153
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	29	CATHERINE Z. TARAWALLY	E.B.K UNIVERSITY	076-697-753
	30	HENRIETTA KALAKOH	PDT	078-262-593
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	6	MOMODU TURAY	PRINCIPAL	076-481-069
	7	YEABU O. MANSARAY	VP MARKET WOMEN	076-837-948
	8	NAMISA A. DABOH	FAWE-PUPIL	079-424-727
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	10	HAWA S. MARAH	D.E.C PUPIL	
	11	BALLA L. KOROMA	I.T MEST	076-307-670
	12	MOHAMED BAH	PDT	078-303-170
	13	BALLA SESAY	TEC-VOC.	076-906-018
	14	RONALD O'NELL	CRS	076-985-612
	15	ABDULAI KAMARA	CRS	076-200-194
	16	SORIE SESAY	PUPIL	
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	18	SALU JALLOH	CIVIL SOCIETY	079-588-493
	19	RICHARD F THORUNKA	PRINCIPAL	076-569-245
	20	FRANCIS C. THOLLEY	PRINCIPAL	078-771-999
	21	WURRIE MT BARRIE	SAB PROGRAMME	078-195-696
	22	ABDULAI SESAY	PARENT	088-624-320
	23	ZAINAB JABATIE		088-288-903
	24	ABU TURAY		030-461-344
	25	SACCOH SESAY		077-547-365
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	12	IBRAHIM KUYATEH	BRU	030-622-400
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	17	AUGUSTINE A. SANNOH	CIVIL SOCIETY	076-643-117
	18	JAMES IBRAHIM	PUPIL	079-221-540
	19	YAWA MUSA	EPT	030-318-013
	20	AMARA P. KANNEH	EPT	078-311-740
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	22	DAUDA SANDI	PRIVATE SECTOR	077-425-425
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	12	ZAINAB B. SAMAI		088-221-294
	13	FANTA S. KAGBANDA		076-707-666
	14	NYANQUOI M. HARRIS		077-960-510
	15	KINGSLEY K. ALLIEU		077-960-510
	16	RAMATTU JALLOH		030-371-811
	17	MBALU KOROMA		088-350-594
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	20	BOCKARIE S. NGERWO		076-189-246
	21	FRANCIS HALLZE		079-157-768
	22	ALBERT CAULKER		077-696-242
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	12	ISATU KOROMA	MDEC SCHOOL	
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	19	ALPHA NEMAH		030-636-967
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	21	SEPHIN BEN DIOH	JHMS	078-655-816
	22	JOSEPH P. SMART	PARENT	088-803-434
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	10	RANDOYLLN KALFA	PRIVATE SCH.	076-694-968
	11	AUGUSTINE I M COMBEY	PRIVATE SCH.	078-499-484
	12	MICHEAL KPANA	PRIVTAE SCH.	078-181-461
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	19	EZEKIEL MANNEH	PUPIL	088-972-022
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	25	MOHAMED KAMARA	LECTURER	030-480-118

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	5	MOHAMED S. KAMARA	FTC	088-443-551
	6	PETER ANSUMANA	SCHOOL	088-781-571
	7	MOHAMED JABBIE	CIVIL SOCIETY	076-634-332
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	9	KOMBA LEBBIE	CIVIL SOCIETY	088-948-083
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	11	RICHARD T. MORY	TVEC	077-233-815
	12	TAMBA D. LANSANA	CPSS	076-211-127
	13	ALPHA AMADU BAH	AIBSSS	030-358-828
	14	SAHR S. ARUNA	COUNCIL	076-413-890
	15	MOIWA B. GANDI	NACOHT	076-412-079
	16	MUSA THULLAH	NaCSA	079-419-752
	17	JOSEPH KAI	MSWGCA	078-404-084
	18	KUMBAL FILLIE	PARENT	088-631-107
	19	TAMBA KABBA	TRADER	077-772-845
	20	KOMBA SENESIE	BLIND SCHOOL	030-145-963
	21	SAHR GBORIE	BRU	078-714-963
	22	TAMBA MAFINDA	DRIVER	025-621-732
	23	SAHR KAIGBAJA	FTC	076-677-669
	24	FINDA TACHAQUOI	PARENT	077-664-397
	25	TAMBA MARYEH	PARENT	030-492-752
	26	HAWA KOMBA	BLIND SCHOOL	030-608-204

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	8	ALUSINE BANGURA	TDC SCHOOL	077-582-241
	9	THOMAS LARKOH	PARENT	077-153-485
	10	ALIE BOBSON KAMARA	SAVC- EBKURST	076-479-038
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	12	ADAMA SANKOH	H/TEACHERS COUNCIL	077-966-870
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	5	ANNIE KABBA	TRADER	088-869-654
	6	IBRAHIM K. KAMARA	TEACHER	099-049-616
	7	ABASS CONTEH	PARENT	030-684-540
	8	SANTIGIE BANGURA	TRADER	088-475-800
	9	CHRISTINA SAWYER	FACILITATOR	078-123-124
	10	MOHAMED SUMA	HEAD TEACHER	099-475-352
	11	ABDUL R. SESAY	COUNCILLOR	077-957-198
	12	ALPHA SESAY	DEAN OF CAMPUS	088-146-413
	13	ANTHONY H. KAMARA	MEST	079-183-491
	14	MOMODU A. KAMARA	MEST	076-873-435
	15	BAINA K. KARGBGO	MEST	088-800-298
	16	USMAN B. MANSARAY	TRPC	030-140-033
	17	IDRISSA M. CONTEH	NACOHT	076-412-296
	18	ISATU M. SESAY	PUPIL	
	19	ALIMAMY KAMARA	MEST	076-443-762
	20	SAMUEL JAY KAMARA	DHMT	076-818-346
	21	PAUL YAYAH BANGURA	CPSS	077-953-761
	22	ALIMAMY LAHAI KAMARA	DBOC	076-786-818
	23	ISATU JALLOH	STUDENT	077-651-467
	24	MARIAMA KAMARA	PARENT	077-654-908
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	26	ABDUL SESAY	BRU	076-946-705

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	5	SINNAH BANGURA	PARENT	030-120-494
	6	YA ADAMA KAMARA	PARENT	
	7	IBRAHIM SORIE KARGBO	STUDENT	088-410-876
	8	MOHAMED WOBFA	BRU	077-589-992
	9	ROSALINE Y. KAMARA	H/TRS COUNCIL	088-451-844
	10	ISATA G. KABIA	HEALTH	078-746-769
	11	ESTHER D.SONGO	LECTURER	088-716-859
	12	WARRAH A.T SESAY	STUDENT	030-838-170
	13	KADIATU MANNAH	TRADER	088-990-840
	14	BOB A. SESAY	MEST P/L	076-558-682
	15	JOSEPH KARGBO	PLDC	077-830-902
	16	MOSES S.M. KOROMA	BRU	077-312-978
	17	SIMLON A.BANGURA	PLDC	076-206-363
	18	OSMAN SESAY	PLUC	077-526-885
	19	S.G MUNU	PLUC	077-869-582
	20	ALHAJI M.F. KAMARA	MEST	076-254-767
	21	ANDREW A. SWARAY	CPSS	099-096-242
	22	IBRAHIM S. BANGURA	PLDC	076-866-621
	23	FRANCESS SESAY	FAWE	
	24	PHILIP M. SESAY	PELRIERY TEAM	076-365-711
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ANNEX VII - Extract from Leh Wi Learn Preliminary Results for Secondary Grade Learning Assessment – 2017 - Preliminary Results on Learning Outcomes in JSS2 and SSS2

The results below address two key questions about the status of secondary grade learning, namely:

- What are current levels of learning for JSS2 and SSS2 pupils in English and maths? What are the English and maths skills typically demonstrated by pupils in these grades?
- Are there significant differences in pupil learning outcomes by gender and other background characteristics?

Before discussing the baseline pupil learning results, a summary of pupil background characteristics is given in Box 1 to provide some context.

Box 1. Background characteristics of secondary grade pupils in Sierra Leone

- The average age of pupils in JSS2 and SSS2, at the end of the academic year, is 15 and 18 years respectively.
- In JSS2, 38% of the pupils were age-appropriate for the grade (13-14 years old) while 58% were overage (older than 14 years). There was a similar pattern of overage pupils in SSS2 (39% age-appropriate, i.e. 16-17 years; 56% overage).
- Depending on the province, pupils reported the main language they speak at home as Krio in the West; Krio, Mende and Kono in the East; Krio and Temne in the North; and Krio and Mende in South. Based on this, around 21% pupils can be categorised as minority language speakers for the region they live in, i.e. they did not speak Krio or one of the above predominant languages of their region, at home.

Each pupil was administered a test of 40 questions covering both English and maths, and some background questions (e.g. pupil age, main language spoken at home, household assets, etc.). The test took approx. 45 minutes per pupil, and was administered on a one-on-one basis by enumerators to individual pupils. This assessment will provide evidence complementary to information derived from Sierra Leone's extensive examination system. While the test will be linked to the curriculum it will not focus on curriculum content coverage per se, which is already the focus of the examination system. The test will rather focus on learning outcomes and skills linked to the curriculum. The skills tested in this assessment are in line with the learning outcomes of the P4-6, JSS and SSS curriculum. Inclusion of questions from P4-6 curriculum was seen as necessary to avoid floor effects – this arises when a large proportion of pupils taking an assessment find most questions in the test too difficult, resulting in a large proportion of pupils scoring near the bottom of the scale, also referred to as “clumping near zero”.

In a benchmarking workshop with JSS and SSS curriculum experts in English language and maths, examiners, teachers and principals; we grouped skills tested in the assessment into four categories or performance bands. These range from band 1 which is characterised by basic skills

(e.g. pupil can name some common objects in English) up to band 4 which is linked to more demanding skills which require inference and reasoning.

The English performance bands are shown in Table 6 below. In the analysis and reporting, pupils are sorted into these four performance bands, each described by a set of skills in English language as shown below. This gives insights into the distribution of skills pupils possess at baseline, and can help identify relative strengths and areas for development in terms of specific skills. Additionally, it indicates whether learning outcomes across all groups of pupils (boys and girls, poorer and richer, by province, by remoteness of school, etc.) are equitable.

Table 6. Performance bands for English assessment

Performance bands	Band descriptors: the typical student in this band shows the skills for lower bands and also ...
Performance Band 1	can name some common objects and understand a simple English sentence
Performance Band 2	can locate and extract explicitly stated information and infer meaning from simple short continuous and non-continuous texts
Performance Band 3	locate, extract and interpret immediate and overall meaning and information from 1-6 sentences of continuous or short non-continuous texts
	understand the immediate impact on meaning of quantifier words (e.g. some, most, all, only.)
	apply basic grammar conventions
Performance Band 4	identify meaning and locate and extract information from various sources such as short continuous (2-3 paragraphs) and non-continuous texts including pictures and tables using, where necessary, inductive reasoning and low level inferences to reach an overall understanding
	infer the meaning of unfamiliar words from their context
	use technical language for the function of a word in a sentence

Figure 1 and Figure 2 shows that 7% of JSS2 and 13% of SSS2 pupils typically demonstrate skills linked to performance band 4. Pupils in this band are also very likely to demonstrate skills associated with lower performance bands. A vast majority of pupils in both grades fall within performance bands 2 and 3. Around 8% of JSS2 and 4% of SSS2 pupils typically demonstrate skills linked to performance band 1, i.e. they can locate and extract explicitly stated information and infer meaning from simple short texts but are unlikely to demonstrate skills linked to higher performance bands. Both these figures also show the large and significant differences in performance of pupils in Western region versus rest of the country. The figures also show that, across both grades, boys perform significantly better than girls. The figures below also suggest that this gap in their performance appears to widen as they move from JSS2 to SSS2. Finally, across both grades, pupils from the richest households (i.e. top 20% pupils based on a household asset index) perform significantly better than pupils from the poorest 20% of households.

Figure 1. Distribution of JSS2 pupils across performance bands for English

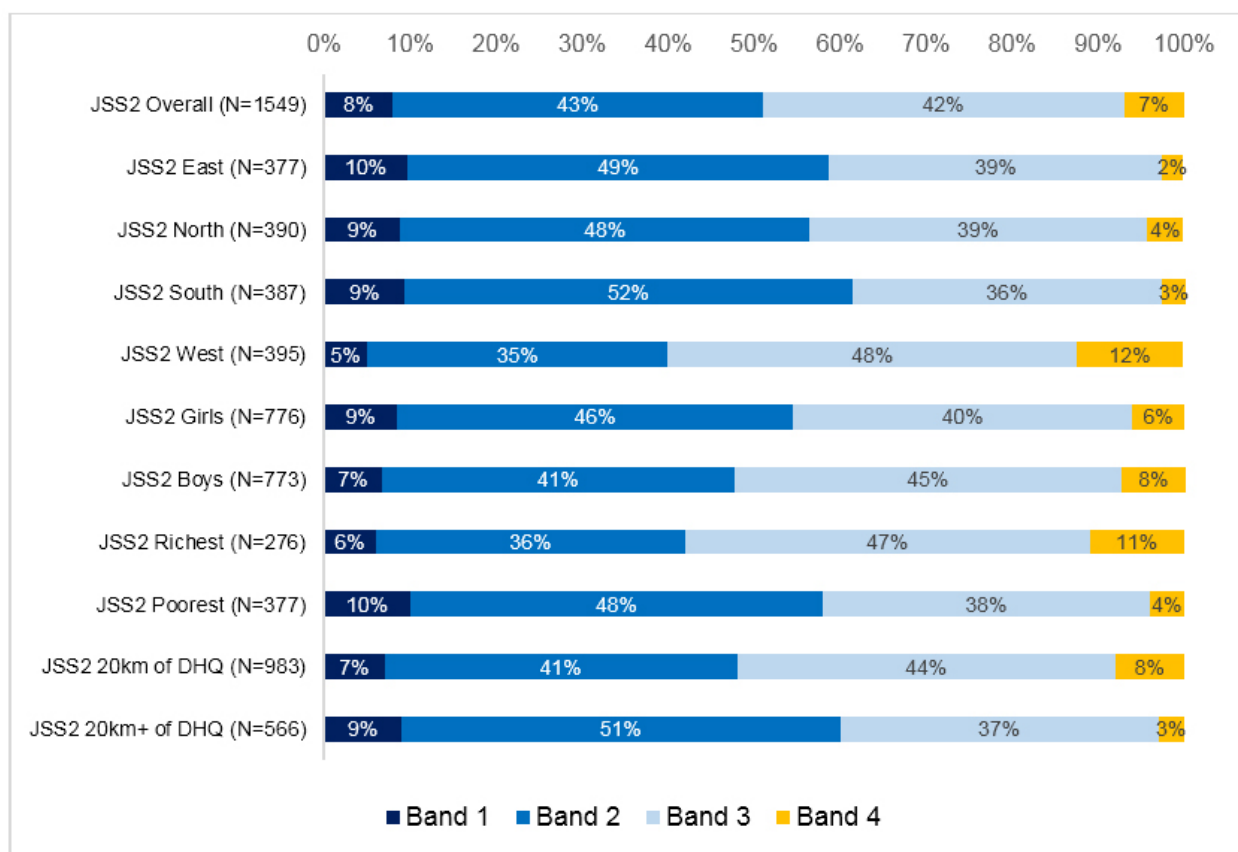
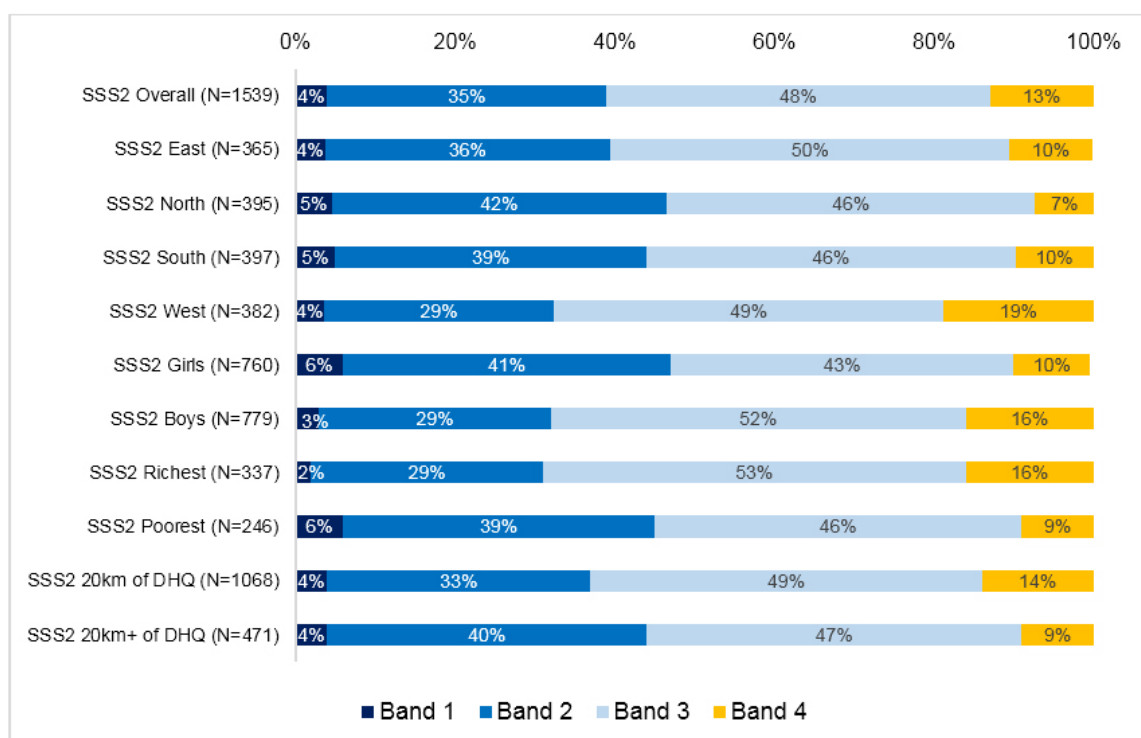


Figure 2. Distribution of SSS2 pupils across performance bands for English



Similarly, we categorised maths skills tested in the assessment into broad categories or performance bands with band 1 linked to fairly basic skills (e.g. can extract values from a barplot) and band 4 linked to more demanding skills like performing multi-level procedures simultaneously applying several mathematical operations. These are shown in Table 7 below. As done with English, in the analysis and reporting, for each subject, pupils are sorted into these four performance levels, each described by a set of skills given in the table below. This gives insights into the distribution of skills pupils possess at baseline, and can help identify relative strengths and weaknesses in terms of specific skills; and indicates if specific groups of pupils perform differently.

Table 7. Performance bands for maths assessment

Performance bands	Band descriptors: the typical student in this band shows the skills for lower bands and also ...
Performance Band 1	extracts values shown in a barplot and visualises changes shown graphically
Performance Band 2	recalls and applies learned procedures for addition and subtraction of numbers set out in column form and for procedures such as HCF of 2-digit numbers; recalls and applies basic shapes to real objects; extracts numerical information from text and barplots to make simple comparisons;
Performance Band 3	extracts information from textual and visual representations to apply a one or two step procedure using simple arithmetic, comparisons, estimations and approximations; applies addition operations on clock time; understands place value; recalls and applies learned procedures for multiplication, addition and subtraction of multiple-digit numbers set out in column form;
Performance Band 4	extracts information from textual and visual representations to develop and apply a multi-step procedure using simple arithmetic, estimations and approximations; understands the concepts of fractions, decimals and percentages and applies basic operations to these correctly and appropriately; understands the basic properties of simple geometric figures

Figure 3 and Figure 4 show that 7% of JSS2 and 12% of SSS2 pupils typically demonstrate math skills linked to performance band 4. Pupils in this band are also very likely to demonstrate skills associated with lower performance bands. A vast majority of pupils in both grades fall within the lower performance bands 1 and 2. More specifically, 37% of JSS2 and 25% of SSS2 pupils typically demonstrate skills linked to performance band 1, i.e. they can extract values shown in a barplot and visualise changes shown graphically but are unlikely to demonstrate skills linked to any higher performance bands. The figures also show that, across both grades, boys perform significantly better than girls. The figures below also suggest that this gap in their performance appears to widen as they move from JSS2 to SSS2. Finally, across both grades, pupils from the richest households (i.e. top 20% pupils based on a household asset index) perform significantly better than pupils from the poorest 20% of households.

Figure 3. Distribution of JSS2 pupils across performance bands for maths assessment

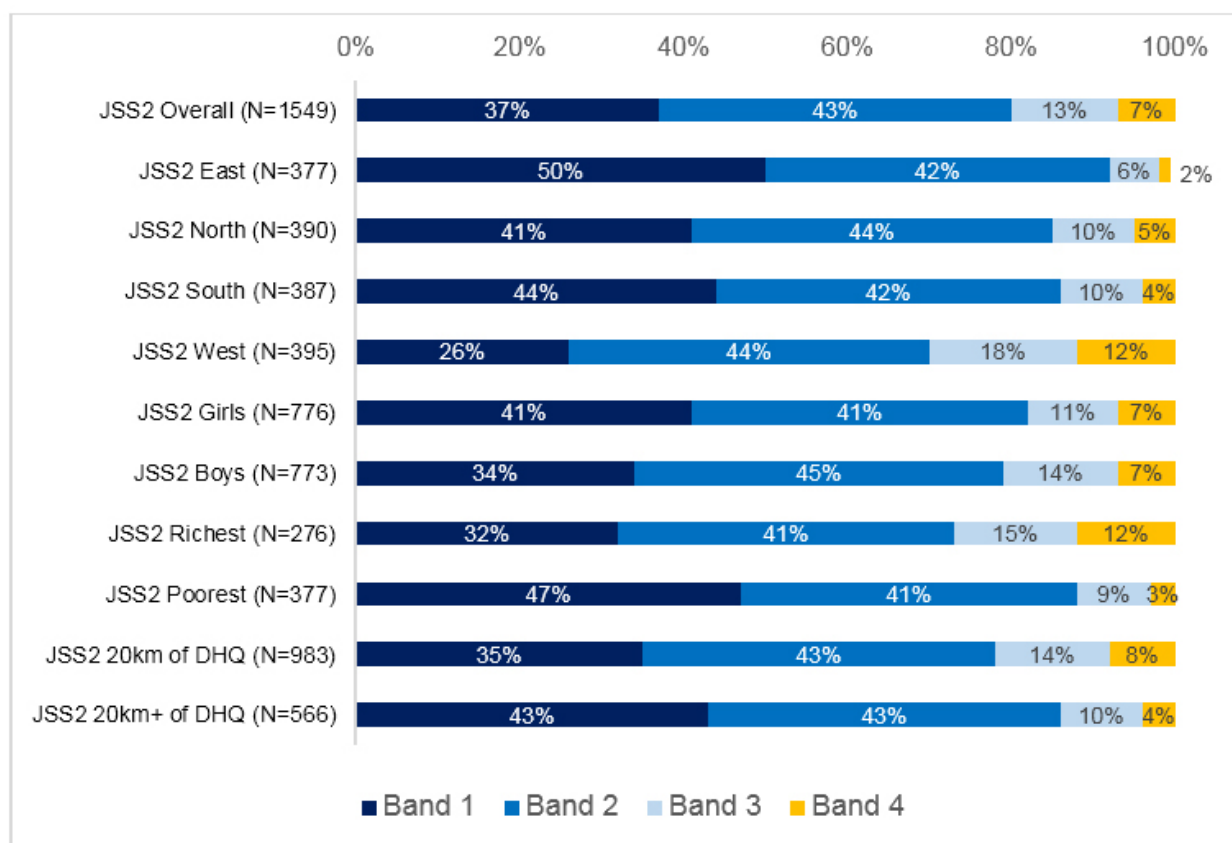
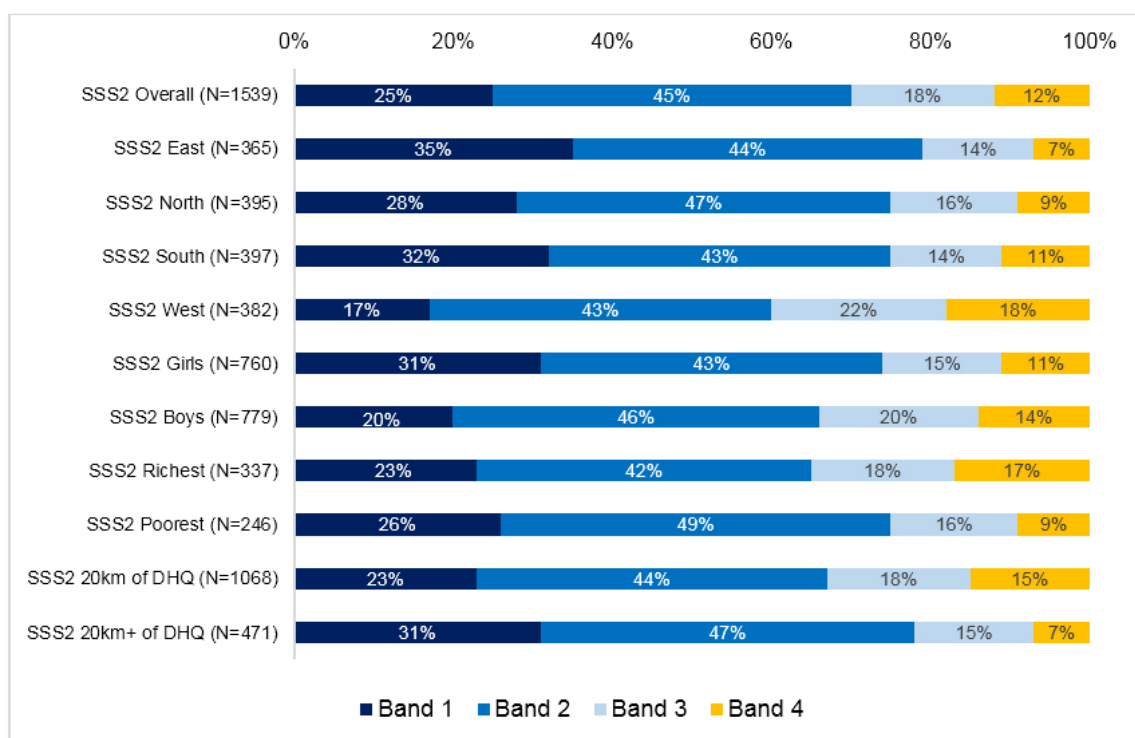


Figure 4. Distribution of SSS2 pupils across performance bands for maths assessment



While the English and maths assessments required application of different skills and are therefore not perfectly comparable, the evidence presented above appears to indicate that pupils found the maths questions harder than the English questions, and overall appear to demonstrate a relatively better grasp of English than maths skills.

For both English and math assessments, we also looked at the association between pupils' performance and the remoteness of their school, measured by the distance of the school from the district capital or headquarter town⁷. We compared performance of pupils from schools within 20 kilometres of the district capital town (i.e. less remote) versus pupils who studied in schools that were more than 20 kms. away from the district capital⁸. In both subjects and across both grades, there appears to be a statistically significant negative relationship between remoteness of school and pupils' performance, i.e. scores drop as we move from schools that are less remote (i.e. closer to the district capital town) to those that are more remote.

⁷ Distances were computed using the GPS coordinates of the schools, recorded during the school visit.

⁸ The overall results don't change if we use 10kms or 40 kms as the cut off point.

ANNEX VIII - School Level Waec Conducted Examinations – Some Details And Pass Rates – 2012, 2013, 2014 – 2017

National Primary School Examination (NPSE)

Year	Schools	Entry	Sat	Passed	Pass Rate
2013;	3,358	94,012	93,767	71,077	76%
2014;	3,401	100,678	100,508	76,733	76%
2015;	3,363	104,722	104,656	79,399	76%
2016;	3,434	115,706	115,556	86,985	75%
2017;	3,494	121,318	121,027	95,603	79%

Year	M_Sat	F_Sat	M_Pass	F_Pass	M_Pass Rate	F_Pass Rate
2014;	50,301	50,207	39,166	37,567	78%	75%
2015;	52,213	52,443	40,426	38,973	77%	74%
2016;	57,556	58,000	43,914	43,071	76%	74%
2017;	60,662	60,365	48,646	46,957	80%	78%

Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE)

Year	Schools	Entry	Sat	Passed	Pass Rate
2013;	677	76,057	75,357	35,747	47%
2014;	781	90,788	90,616	43,911	48%
2015;	717	92,881	92,418	56,451	61%
2016;	752	101,734	101,425	66,188	65%

Year	M_Sat	F_Sat	M_Pass	F_Pass	M_Pass Rate	F_Pass Rate
2014;	47,502	43,114	24,436	19,475	51%	45%
2015;	48,784	43,634	31,047	25,404	64%	58%
2016;	52,076	49,349	35,290	30,898	68%	63%

West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE)

Year	Schools	Entry	Sat	Passed	Pass Rate
2012;	226	58,195	56,893	4,177	7%
2014;	224	27,370	26,782	1,889	7%
2015;	214	24,300	23,587	3,445	15%
2016;	205	36,696	35,938	6,095	17%
2017;	186	29,922	29,222	5,728	20%

Year	M_Sat	F_Sat	M_Pass	F_Pass	M_Pass Rate	F_Pass Rate
2014;	16,066	10,716	1,221	668	8%	6%
2015;	13,714	9,873	1,994	1,451	15%	15%
2016;	20,489	15,449	3,663	2,432	18%	16%
2017;	16,617	12,605	3,336	2,392	20%	19%



Government of Sierra Leone