

**NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
(2001-2010)**

A POLICY FRAMEWORK

ERADICATING POVERTY AND UNIFYING GUYANA

A CIVIL SOCIETY DOCUMENT

ANNEX 18

EDUCATION

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Equivalent Chapter in Core Document: Used as Background Material for Chapter 18

The Annexes to the National Development Strategy: An Explanatory Note

In June 2000, the National Development Strategy (NDS) of Guyana was formally presented to the President of Guyana and the Leader of the Opposition in the form of a core document, a 348 page distillation of the main elements of the analysis of the Guyana situation and the resulting strategy for action drawn from material prepared by 24 sectoral committees of the National Development Strategy Committee (NDSC). While Chapter 1 of the core document provides an outline of the origins of the NDS and the methodology of its preparation, the purpose of the present note is to explain the Annexes to the core document.

The Annexes are edited versions of the original drafts that the sectoral committees prepared, using a format that facilitated systematic thinking, though at the cost of some repetition. They are therefore longer than the corresponding Chapters of the core document, and also differ from them in other ways:

1. While the Annexes were individually edited in terms of their content, in the core document, disagreements or dissonances between Chapters were removed; for example, if the Chapter on the Private Sector proposed a strategy for Education that was in contradiction with a strategy proposed in the Chapter on Education, the two were rationalised.
2. While the core document was updated with the most recent data where possible, the Annexes generally retain their original data; for recent economic and social statistics, the attention of readers is particularly drawn to the recently completed *1999 Guyana Survey of Living Conditions*. In addition, again because of differences in when they were prepared, what was a Bill at the time of the original draft may have become an Act by the time the core document was being edited. This type of difference may be footnoted in the Annexes.
3. The treatment of the Annexes as historical documents occasionally produced another kind of difference, the main example of which is the Annex on Energy which was written before the privatisation of the Guyana Electricity Corporation, and whose strategy was largely preempted by that privatisation; while the edited Annex deliberately relied on the original material, new material was developed for the core document. These differences may also be footnoted.

It is worth noting that the updates found in the core document usually demonstrate the soundness and continued applicability of assessments made on the basis of earlier data or other information.

There are fewer Annexes than there are Chapters in the core document. For various reasons, some sectoral committee drafts were finalised in the same format as the Chapters of the core document, and there would therefore be little difference between the Chapter and the corresponding Annex. (Examples of this are the Macro-Economic Strategies and the Management of the economy; Sugar; Urban Development; Land; Housing; and The Family). The core document also includes Chapters for which there were no corresponding sectoral committee drafts; the first three Chapters of the core document (Origins and Methodology, National Objectives and Governance) are examples.

For those sectors where there are both separate Annexes and core document Chapters, the titles and numbering of the two correspond except in two cases: one, the corresponding Annex for the Chapter on Manufacturing is titled Manufacturing and Technology and includes material on Science and Technology that the core document had placed elsewhere; and two, the corresponding Annex for Chapter 4, Macro-Economic Policy, is Annex 4, Financial Sector Policy, because the material prepared for the Financial Sector Policy Annex was incorporated into the Chapter on Macro-Economic Policy.

The National Development Strategy was published in summarised form (the core document) for the practical reason that few people would have the time to read the over 700 pages represented by the Annexes. Yet the Annexes have a clear value. They include background information and assessments that were too detailed for inclusion in the core document, but which trace the process that shaped the strategy. Above all, they preserve for us and for posterity the earlier thinking, and the full range of thinking, of the women and men whose work provided the foundation of the NDS. In doing so, they honour the labour which the sectoral committees put into distilling their own work and life experience and the views of the public they consulted in the process. It is this foundational material that is now being published, making the National Development Strategy of Guyana available in both summary and extended forms.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

BERMINE	Berbice Mining Enterprise
BIT	Board of Industrial Training
BNTF	Basic Needs Trust Fund
CAPE	Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CBR	Community Based Rehabilitation
CHS	Community High School
CPCE	Cyril Potter College of Education
CXC	Caribbean Examinations Council
FEUG	Faculty of Education, University of Guyana
GCE	General Certificate of Education
GEC	Guyana Electricity Corporation
GNEC	Guyana National Engineering Corporation
GSS	General Secondary School
GUYSUCO	Guyana Sugar Corporation
GVC	Guyana Volunteer Consultancy
IDCE	Institute of Distance and Continuing Education
LINMINE	Linden Mining Enterprise
MOE	Ministry of Education
NCERD	National Centre for Education, Research and Development
NFFAT	National Fourth Form Achievement Test
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation

NPA	National Plan of Action
PEIP	Primary Education Improvement Programme
PTA	Parent-Teacher Association
SIMAP	Social Impact Amelioration Programme
SSEE	Secondary School Entrance Examination
SSPE	Secondary School Proficiency Examination
SSRP	School Secondary Reform Project
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UG	University of Guyana
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund

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ANNEX 18

EDUCATION

Introduction

A. The Vision

The vision for education in the National Development Strategy is that during the first decade of the 21st Century, the highest priority will be the country's human resource development. Consequently, through various programmes assisted by international funding agencies, the physical infrastructure for education at the primary, secondary, tertiary and technical levels will be re-organised and expanded. Particular emphasis will be placed on the development of the country's human resources in the hinterland.

There will also be a special focus on the training of teachers at all levels. This upgrading in quality will be accompanied by further increases in teachers' emoluments. Schools and other educational institutions, again through international assistance, will be provided with modern instructional materials.

Throughout the educational system, special emphasis will be placed on computer training, and by 2010 most of the students in primary and secondary schools will be computer-literate. Indeed, a considerable proportion of Government's expenditure on education, will be devoted to this aspect of development.

However, at the secondary and tertiary levels of education, greater emphasis will also be placed on Science (including Environmental Studies) and Technology, and first degrees as well as post-graduate work will be undertaken in disciplines such as Forestry, Geology, Computer Science and various aspects of Engineering Science.

By 2010, there will be an increase in the number of private schools at all levels, operating under policies and guidelines established by the Government. The Government or State schools will also be managed by Boards comprising mainly members of civil society. Indeed, conscientiously and deliberately, the Government will involve the NGOs and community-based organisations in the formulation and implementation of all aspects of human resource development at both the national and regional levels.

An increasingly greater proportion of the country's revenue will be expended on education between 2000 and 2010, with the higher percentage being spent on primary education.

More than that, to a large extent, by the end of the first decade, the inequality in expenditure on education between hinterland and coastal areas, and among Regions, will be corrected. Special incentives will be provided to teachers who chose to work in the hinterland.

The inequality of expenditure between the poor and the rich will also be addressed, and more resources will be targeted on the more needy students and on remedial courses for the young and mature.

A two-pronged approach will be used to tackle deficiencies in the delivery of basic education. The first is preventative, to be taken initially at the level of primary education. The second, remedial or recuperative, to be taken at the level of adult education for early school leavers and other adults who have not attained sufficient or adequate levels of literacy.

B. Summary Of The Main Concerns

The degree to which a national education system is successful determines to a large extent the development status of the nation. In his article, "Education for All: a Challenge for the Year 2000", Fredrick Mayor, the Director General of UNESCO, states:

The level of education of the overall population of a particular country and the range and quality of educational initiatives within it determine that country's ability to share in world development, to avoid lagging further behind, to compensate for and regain time lost, to benefit from the advancement of knowledge and to make progress itself while contributing to the progress of others.¹

The importance of an effective education system is also clearly outlined in Harbison's statement that "human resources constitute the ultimate basis for the wealth of a nation. ... Clearly, a country which is unable to develop the skills and knowledge of its people and to utilize them effectively in the national economy will be unable to develop anything else."²

At a regional level, CARICOM Heads of Government have placed tremendous emphasis on education and human resource development as the major mechanisms for bringing about the transformation that will help the region meet the economic, social and technological challenges of the twenty-first century.

In Guyana, two national policy documents on education, produced by different political administrations, have also explicitly recognised the critical role of a good education system in the promotion of sustained economic and social development in the country.

A review of the literature suggests that although Guyana's educational system was considered one of the best in the Caribbean during the 1960s, it is probably the weakest today. Its decline is due to a number of factors including deteriorating social and economic situations in the 1970s and 1980s, the loss of influence of the Church, and a decrease in available human resources as a result of migration. In particular, the mass out-migration of the last thirty years removed a large proportion of community leaders, including teachers, who would have

¹ Mayor, F. (1990). Education for All: A Challenge for the Year 2000. Prospects. Vol. XX, No. 4, p. 445. Quoted in Zellynne Jennings, Nipped in the Bud – Young Guyanese Adults and their Functional Literacy. East Bank Demerara, Guyana: Educational and Development Services Inc., 1998, p.49.

² Quoted from Michael P. Todaro's "Education and Development: A New Look At Old Shibboleths." Comparative Education Review, June 1973, p. 225 in Boodhoo, Martin and Ahmad Baksh. The Impact of Brain Drain on Development: A Case Study of Guyana. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Percetakan Intisari, 1981. P.35.

contributed to maintaining cultural, ethical and civic standards in Guyana's society. The role this played in the deterioration of the education system is probably equal in size and scope to the role played by the more obvious lack of financial resources, which have now declined to a level well below that in other Caribbean countries.

Learning in the schools, as measured by national and Caribbean-wide examinations, is extremely low. A large proportion of the teaching force is unqualified and untrained, absenteeism on the part of both teachers and students is a matter of serious concern, and textbooks and other instructional materials are often unavailable. Guyana's success in achieving universal access to primary school in the early 1970s appears to be eroding and is accompanied by rising repetition and dropout rates. Moreover, a survey of school leavers and the adult population reveals high levels of functional illiteracy. Between 80 to 89 percent of the youth of the country are achieving at low to moderate levels of functional literacy. Indeed, it is estimated that the overall functional literacy rate in the country is in the lower 50s.³

The following issues have emerged on the education and training agenda and have received prominent attention, especially over the last decade.

1. Examinations at critical points in a student's career – the Secondary School Entrance Examination (SSEE), the Secondary School Proficiency Examination (SSPE), the National Fourth Form Achievement Test (NFFAT), and the Caribbean Examination Council Examination (CXC) - highlight the inadequacies of the educational system and the gaps that need to be bridged, namely, the disparity between "good" and "bad" primary schools, the lack of places at secondary schools that are properly supported by qualified teachers and facilities, and the whole gruelling culture of extra lessons which is an attempt by parents and students to buy quality education.

2. Expenditure patterns do not reflect international norms for spending on primary education and the importance that should be accorded to it.

3. The cost effectiveness of President's College and other residential secondary schools needs to be reviewed, and the allocation of funds to all schools needs to be put on a more rational and equitable basis, having regard to considerations such as location and programme.

4. Other major issues include:

a. The low quality and rapid turnover of educational facilitators (i.e., teachers, lecturers, instructors).

b. Overcrowding in schools which are considered better in terms of the education they provide or their location.

³ Jennings, Z. (1998). *Nipped in the Bud: Young Guyanese Adults and their Functional Literacy*. (East Bank Demerara, Guyana: Educational and Development Services Inc.), p. 18.

c. The shortage of non-teacher inputs, such as school furniture, textbooks, and equipment; according to the 1992/93 Living Standards Measurement Survey, over half the students attend schools in which there are no textbooks.

d. The need for an improved interpretation and delivery of the curriculum to prepare students to function effectively in society.

e. Large regional differences in the availability and condition of the physical infrastructure and quality of educational inputs.

f. The emergence of increasing inequities in access to education, in the form of a growing parallel fee-paying system of delivery of education at all levels.

Faced with this situation, the current administration has set itself as an objective "To provide equal access to quality education to Guyanese children and young people." Achieving this goal requires a focus on fundamental policy reforms, as well as on the issues peculiar to each level within the educational system.

I. Basic Features of the Sector

A. Institutional and Regulatory Framework

Guyana's educational system closely resembles the systems in other Caribbean countries. It includes (non-compulsory) preschool, six years of primary school, four to seven years of secondary school, and between three and four years of higher academic or practical education. Schooling is mandatory up to age fifteen years and six months.⁴ This means that the average student is required to complete the full primary course plus three years of secondary education. The statutory age for entering school is five years nine months, and students are usually expected to remain in the school system until age sixteen. Individuals who may have left the school system with low scores or no qualifications have an opportunity to participate in a limited number of adult education courses offered by the University of Guyana, the Institute of Distance and Continuing Education (IDCE), or the Adult Education Association, as well as by various NGOs and the private sector.

With the introduction of the regional system in 1980, a greater element of decentralisation was introduced into the educational system. As early as 1985, the ten Regional Democratic Councils were given the mandate to construct and maintain schools in their jurisdictions; allocate resources among schools; recruit and pay teachers;⁵ and ensure that schools operate according to regional and national objectives. The central Ministry retained responsibility for monitoring educational indicators across the Regions; ensuring that there are no significant disparities in the quality of education across Regions; procuring and delivering textbooks to all schools; coordinating and administering the main primary and secondary school examinations; providing support services to the schools in Georgetown; and controlling the operations of most of the institutions of higher

⁴ The eight-year compulsory education was introduced in 1876.

⁵ Although recruitment of permanent staff is still the function of the Teaching Service Commission, the Regional Education Officer is responsible for the identification and appointment of temporary staff.

education, including the post-secondary institutions and the Teacher Training College.

The University of Guyana is autonomous in academic matters, while the bulk of its funds come directly from the Ministry of Finance.

B. The Educational System

The educational system has four basic levels: nursery, primary, secondary, and post-secondary. Table 18-1 below shows the educational levels, number of schools, student enrolment, and number of teachers.

There is a total of 894 schools in Guyana. Table 18-2 below presents the distribution of this total by level and region.

The most recent information from the Ministry of Education (1997-1998) shows that the number of teachers in Guyana is 9,495. Table 18-3 below presents the distribution of teachers by gender and level. Women dominate the teaching staff at almost every level.

Table 18-1
Summary of Education System of Guyana , 1997 – 1998

Type of Institution	Number of Institutions			Student Enrolment			Number of Teachers			Student/Teacher Ratio
	Discrete	Class	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Nursery	305	81	386	16,983	16,383	33,366	11	1,959	1,970	17:1
Primary	418	8	426	51,369	49,629	100,998	535	3,175	3,710	27:1
Secondary Dept of										
Primary Schools	322	0	322	7,436	5,726	13,162	263	406	669	20:1
Community High	31	5	36	7,016	5,405	12,421	180	435	615	20:1
General Secondary	63	5	68	15,554	20,116	35,670	655	1,089	1,744	20:1
Special Education	6	1	7	439	146	585	4	24	28	21:1
Technical/Vocational	6	15	21	2,528	779	3,307	119	49	168	20:1
Teacher Training	1	0	1	190	1,045	1,235	26	44	70	18:1
University	1	0	1	1,819	2,852	4,671	263	120	383	12:1
(*) Private Schools	5	0	5	797	793	1,590	34	104	138	12:1
TOTAL	1,158	115	1,273	104,131	102,874	207,005	2,066	7,405	9,495	

Source: Ministry of Education

*Figures include nursery, primary and secondary.

Table 18-2
Number of Education Institutions by Education District, 1997 – 1998

EDUCATION DISTRICT	LEVELS																		TOTAL	
	NURSERY			PRIMARY			SEC DEPT. OF PRI	C.H.S.			General. SEC			TECH/VOC			SPECIAL ED.			
	SCH	CLASS	TOTAL	SCH	CLASS	TL		SCH	CLASS	TL	SCH	CLASS	TL	SCH	*PIC	TL	SCH	CLASS		TL
REGION 1	7	4	11	38	1	39	34	0	1	1	2	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	88	
REGION 2	25	19	44	37	0	37	28	3	0	3	4	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	117	
REGION 3	47	14	61	60	3	63	41	5	1	6	7	0	7	0	2	2	0	0	180	
REGION 4	55	7	62	55	1	56	39	6	1	7	7	0	7	0	3	3	1	0	175	
G/TOWN	40	0	40	35	0	35	6	11	0	11	19	0	19	4	5	9	3	1	124	
REGION 5	33	3	36	32	0	32	37	2	0	2	4	1	5	0	2	2	0	0	114	
REGION 6	60	7	67	57	0	57	47	3	0	3	14	0	14	1	2	3	1	0	192	
REGION 7	14	10	24	24	0	24	15	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	65	
REGION 8	2	9	11	14	1	15	15	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	43	
REGION 9	5	3	8	36	1	37	35	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	82	
REGION 10	17	5	22	30	1	31	25	1	0	1	5	0	5	1	1	2	1	0	87	
TOTAL	305	81	386	418	8	426	322	31	6	37	63	5	68	6	15	21	6	1	1267	

Source: Ministry of Education

Note: Class refers to a part (or level) of an institution of multiple levels. It is not a discrete institution.

*PIC means Practical Instruction Centre.

Table 18-3
Distribution of Teachers by Gender and School Level, 1997 - 1998

LEVEL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Nursery	13	1,965	1,978
* Primary	798	3,581	4,379
Secondary	655	1,089	1,744
Community High	180	435	615
Total	1,646	7,070	8,716

Source: Ministry of Education

Note: Figures include teachers in primary and secondary departments of primary schools.

1. The Nursery Level

Nursery education is available to children who are 3 years 9 months by the end of the first term of the school year. Pupils spend two years in a programme designed to develop their social, intellectual and psychomotor skills through activities that are based mostly on child development rather than on subject matter discipline. The basic tenet of the programme is that social skills are developed in nursery activities.

The programme is delivered in discrete nursery schools and in primary schools that carry nursery classes. There were 386 schools/classes in the public system in the 1997-98 academic year. There were also three private schools operating nursery classes.

There has been a significant improvement in the buildings housing nursery schools. More than half of these schools are now in purpose-built structures. This compares with about 20 percent in 1990.

Table 18-4 presents data on the qualifications of nursery school teachers. The table also shows that about 37 percent of nursery school teachers are trained.

2. Primary Level

Primary education is compulsory and of six years' duration. The official age of entry is 5 years 9 months by December 31 of the year of admission. This level of education is aimed at providing basic literacy and numeracy skills. The curriculum is organised on a subject basis. English, Mathematics, Social Studies and General Science are regarded as the core subjects, but schools may also offer other subjects such as Agricultural Science, Health Education, Music and Art. Net enrolment, using population estimates provided by the Statistical Bureau, is about 98 percent. Attendance rates have been improving, but there is still great variation among Regions.

In the 1997 - 98 academic year there were 418 discrete primary schools and eight primary classes in the public system. There were also five privately-run primary schools. Table 18-5 presents the total number of teachers at this level by gender and region. Pupil/teacher ratios range from 21:1 to 33:1. The ratio of students to trained teachers is less satisfactory, ranging from 41:1 to 186:1. There has been a steady decline in the percentage of trained teachers: while in 1985/86 some 77 percent of teachers were trained, by 1997/98 only about 50 percent were. The shortage of trained teachers is more pronounced in the hinterland areas, where over 60 percent of the teachers are untrained.

TABLE 18 – 4
NURSERY EDUCATION
NUMBER OF TEACHERS BY EDUCATION DISTRICT, QUALIFICATION & SEX
1997 – 1998

EDUCATION DISTRICT	GRADUATE				OTHER QUALIFIED						TOTAL		
	TRAINED		UNTRAINED		TRAINED		UNTRAINED		UNQUALIFIED				
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
Region 1	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	2	19	2	23	25
Region 2	0	4	0	0	0	53	0	21	0	78	0	156	156
Region 3	0	9	0	0	0	80	0	27	0	182	0	298	298
Region 4	1	9	0	0	0	154	0	62	1	167	2	392	394
Georgetown	0	23	0	0	1	154	1	74	1	150	3	401	404
Region 5	0	2	0	0	0	53	0	25	0	59	0	139	139
Region 6	0	4	0	2	1	103	0	95	0	161	1	365	366
Region 7	0	0	0	0	2	12	0	4	1	32	3	48	51
Region 8	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	15	0	18	18
Region 9	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	4	0	16	0	23	23
Region 10	0	0	0	0	0	48	0	27	2	27	2	102	104
TOTAL	1	51	0	2	4	666	1	340	7	906	13	1965	1978

TABLE 18 - 5
PRIMARY EDUCATION
NUMBER OF TEACHERS BY EDUCATION DISTRICT, QUALIFICATION & SEX
1997 – 1998

EDUCATION DISTRICT	GRADUATE				OTHER QUALIFIED						TOTAL		
	TRAINED		UNTRAINED		TRAINED		UNTRAINED		UNQUALIFIED				
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
Region 1	0	1	0	0	6	24	4	3	26	69	36	97	133
Region 2	1	3	0	0	35	106	12	81	13	93	61	283	344
Region 3	3	6	0	0	40	194	11	82	17	143	71	425	496
Region 4	2	16	0	0	23	248	11	95	17	158	53	517	570
Georgetown	5	42	0	0	35	403	17	134	18	169	75	748	823
Region 5	2	1	1	0	24	126	6	60	2	59	35	246	281
Region 6	1	2	0	1	80	224	24	126	18	94	123	447	570
Region 7	0	0	0	0	9	26	1	19	5	35	15	80	95
Region 8	0	0	0	0	1	6	0	0	11	31	12	37	49
Region 9	0	0	0	0	10	11	5	4	27	63	42	78	120
Region 10	1	4	0	0	6	122	3	41	2	50	12	217	229
TOTAL	15	75	1	1	269	1,490	94	645	156	964	535	3,175	3,710

Note: Data obtained from Annual Statistical questionnaires

TABLE 18 – 6
SECONDARY EDUCATION
NUMBER OF TEACHERS BY EDUCATION DISTRICT & QUALIFICATION
SECONDARY DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS
1997 – 1998

EDUCATION DISTRICT	GRADUATE				OTHER QUALIFIED						TOTAL		
	TRAINED		UNTRAINED		TRAINED		UNTRAINED		UNQUALIFIED				
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
Region 1	0	1	0	0	8	8	3	1	8	13	19	23	42
Region 2	0	0	0	0	19	13	7	9	9	21	35	43	78
Region 3	1	3	0	0	24	21	3	9	11	21	39	54	93
Region 4	1	4	1	2	20	28	7	11	3	32	32	77	109
Georgetown	0	1	0	0	5	19	2	2	0	2	7	24	31
Region 5	4	1	0	0	10	17	5	10	2	15	21	43	64
Region 6	3	1	0	0	21	19	8	11	5	14	37	45	82
Region 7	0	0	0	0	4	2	0	1	5	4	9	7	16
Region 8	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	8	9	9	13	22
Region 9	1	0	0	0	21	6	2	1	18	6	42	13	55
Region 10	0	0	0	0	4	40	4	13	5	11	13	64	77
TOTAL	10	11	1	2	137	177	41	68	74	148	263	406	669

TABLE 18 – 7
SECONDARY EDUCATION
NUMBER OF TEACHERS BY EDUCATION DISTRICT & QUALIFICATION
COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOLS
1997 – 1998

EDUCATION DISTRICT	GRADUATE				OTHER QUALIFIED						TOTAL		
	TRAINED		UNTRAINED		TRAINED		UNTRAINED		UNQUALIFIED				
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
Region 1	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	3	2	5
Region 2	1	2	0	0	22	29	7	13	3	10	33	54	87
Region 3	2	2	0	0	14	32	2	6	6	25	24	65	89
Region 4	4	8	0	0	14	42	6	13	11	35	35	98	133
Georgetown	6	18	2	2	18	47	5	22	13	40	44	129	173
Region 5	2	2	0	0	8	15	4	16	0	0	14	33	47
Region 6	1	1	0	0	12	23	4	8	0	3	17	35	52
Region 7	0	0	0	0	4	5	2	4	1	3	7	12	19
Region 8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	2
Region 9	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	2	2	4
Region 10	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	0	0	1	3	4
TOTAL	18	33	2	2	95	197	30	84	35	119	180	435	615

TABLE 18 – 8
SECONDARY EDUCATION
NUMBER OF TEACHERS BY EDUCATION DISTRICT & QUALIFICATION
GENERAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS
1997 – 1998

EDUCATION DISTRICT	GRADUATE				OTHER QUALIFIED						TOTAL		
	TRAINED		UNTRAINED		TRAINED		UNTRAINED		UNQUALIFIED				
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
Region 1	2	1	0	0	3	2	2	2	0	0	7	5	12
Region 2	12	7	0	0	31	34	6	13	2	5	51	59	110
Region 3	15	18	1	1	21	55	33	29	2	13	72	116	188
Region 4	11	15	4	9	21	44	13	24	11	8	60	100	160
Georgetown	37	115	12	33	63	148	61	51	8	34	181	381	562
Region 5	8	7	1	2	23	41	14	24	5	7	51	81	132
Region 6	23	9	11	3	77	68	63	136	5	5	179	221	400
Region 7	2	0	0	0	3	6	1	3	0	1	6	10	16
Region 8	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	2	1	0	1	5	6
Region 9	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	2	1	3	4	7
Region 10	3	21	3	4	10	41	23	37	5	4	44	107	151
TOTAL	113	194	32	52	253	444	216	321	41	78	655	1,089	1,744

3. The Secondary Level

There are two secondary education programmes:

a. A four-year programme which is offered in the secondary department of primary (all-age) schools and discrete community high schools. This programme offers a mix of academic and pre-vocational skills, with a strong bias towards the pre-vocational skills, especially in the final year.

b. A five-year programme which is done in general secondary schools and which prepares students to write the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) Examinations and/or the General Certificate of Education (GCE) Examination Ordinary Level. This programme is more academically oriented. Students who perform well at these examinations have an opportunity to pursue studies for the GCE Advanced Level ("A" Level) Examinations or Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations (CAPE).

Statistics for the 1997 – 98 academic year show that there were 322 primary schools with secondary departments, 36 community highs and 68 general secondary schools (see Table 18 – 1).

About 55 percent of the teachers at this level are professionally trained. This represents a 10 percent reduction from the proportion of trained teachers in 1986.

In view of the need to improve the quality, relevance, equity and efficiency of education in the country, preliminary work began on a Secondary School Reform Project (SSRP) in 1995 with funds from the World Bank. Under this project, twelve pilot schools – (one senior secondary school, one general secondary school, seven community high schools, and three all-age schools) - are being used as the testing ground for the reform. The current and first phase of the SSRP is of five years duration and focuses on improving the lower forms (Forms 1 to 3) of the secondary system. With a common curriculum in use in the core subjects (English, with special emphasis on Reading, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies), it is intended that the present four-year programme will eventually be converted into a five-year programme, with students offering subjects at the CXC level.

4. The Post-Secondary Level

Post-Secondary education is provided by:

a. The University of Guyana: UG offers courses leading to first degrees in the Faculties of Agriculture, Arts, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Medical Sciences, Education, and Technology. In addition to these programmes, several diploma and certificate courses are conducted in the fields of Public Administration, Personnel Management and Public Communication. There are also three Graduate Diploma programmes, including those in Education, Development Studies, and International Studies. At the moment, programmes leading to

the Master's degree are offered in Guyanese History, Social Sciences which includes International Studies, Sociology, Economics, Communications, Social Work and Public Management, Chemistry, Geography and Education.

b. The Cyril Potter College of Education: The teacher training programme at this institution falls into two categories:

- (i) In-service training for teachers already in the service, comprising a two-year nursery teachers' training programme and a two-year primary teachers' training programme.
- (ii) Pre-service training for individuals intending to make teaching a career, including a two-year primary teacher training programme and a three-year secondary teacher training programme.

Training for teachers within Georgetown and its environs is provided at the Cyril Potter College of Education, with centres at Anna Regina, Linden, New Amsterdam, and Rose Hall.

c. Technical and Vocational Education and training (TVET): A network of technical and vocational education and training institutions offers a wide range of training programmes. These institutions include:

- (i) The Government Technical Institute, the New Amsterdam Technical Institute and the Linden Technical Institute, which offer courses at craft, technician and diploma levels. Craft courses cover a wide range of programmes including Carpentry, Plumbing, Electrical Installation, Welding, and Bricklaying. The courses offered for technicians are Mechanical and Electrical Engineering, Building and Civil Engineering, Surveying, and Telecommunications. The Technical Institutes also offer courses in Commerce and Secretarial Science at certificate and diploma levels.
- (ii) The Guyana Industrial Training Centre offers accelerated training courses of not more than 48 weeks duration in seven craft disciplines: Carpentry, Electricity, Agriculture, Mechanics, Fitting and Machining, Masonry, Welding, and Plumbing.
- (iii) The Carnegie School of Home Economics provides full-time courses in Household Management, Catering, Garment Manufacturing, Cosmetology, and Clothing and Textiles. The students may write external examinations, e.g., CXC in Needlecraft and Food and Nutrition. Evening classes for adults are held in a variety of subjects, including Home Management, Craft Skills and Visual Arts.
- (iv) The Guyana School of Agriculture offers courses leading to a Certificate or Diploma in Agriculture. The curriculum includes Natural Science subjects, Economics, and the practical aspects of Crop Farming and Animal Science. On graduation, the students are equipped to be teachers of Agriculture, foremen, extension workers, and agricultural field assistants. Diploma students are eligible for entry into the University of Guyana.

d. Alternative education

The following institutions make significant contributions to education but operate outside the formal educational system.

- (i) The Board of Industrial Training (BIT): Under the aegis of the Ministry of Labour, BIT is responsible for apprenticeship and in-plant skills training, and carries out its mandate through the official technical and vocational schools and approved industrial training institutions.
- (ii) The Private Aircraft Owners' Association is a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) which operates a training centre for pilots and aircraft engineers. The World Aircraft Association accredits its programme.
- (iii) GUYSUCO, LINMINE, BERMINE, GNEC, GEC and several other large and medium-sized industrial companies have also established industrial training centres to develop skilled workers in their specific areas.
- (iv) Over the last decade there has been a proliferation of private schools in Computing, Accountancy and Business, Electronics and Mechanics. These institutions fall outside the current scope of the MOE's mandate. That apart, the amount of resources required to monitor, evaluate and regulate these institutions would only serve to increase the strain on the already depleted educational resources.

5. Out-of-School Education

During the last decade, what may be described as a parallel system has developed alongside the formal Ministry-controlled system of education. Naturally, both because of its nature and because no serious analysis of it has yet been done, there are few, if any, quantifiable data available.

The out-of-school education system developed initially as a response to the perceived shortcomings of the formal education system, as parents began to experience anxiety about whether their children would be successful at the SSEE, given such problems as the overcrowding in primary schools, the low proportion of trained teachers and frequent teacher absences. Pressure from parents, in the form of requests to teachers with good track records for private coaching for their children, coupled with the enormous economic difficulties faced by the teachers themselves, soon led to a growing pattern of "after school lessons." It has been argued that some effects of this are:

- a. what is learned during school hours has become less important;
- b. teachers are often less concerned about their classroom teaching than about the private tuition;

- c. children who do not attend such lessons are at a disadvantage by comparison with those who do attend when they take the examination;
- d. the tiredness children feel after spending hours at extra lessons results in apathy or absenteeism from school;
- e. there is an increasing tendency for children to avoid essential curricular activities such as sports and cultural events, and to concentrate on examination activities; and
- f. the examination syndrome is reinforced.

A similar system has developed at all critical points in the educational system, especially in preparation for NFFAT, CXC, and GCE "O" and GCE "A" level examinations, to the extent that what were initially private lessons given almost individually have now become a full network of parallel schools and schooling.

6. The Role of Non-Governmental Organisations and the International Donor Community

Many Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are involved in education, including various religious institutions, parent associations, community groups, and firms.

Very little information exists regarding the contribution made by the NGOs to the running of schools in Guyana. What is clear, however, is that the level of financial, material, and human resources being transferred into the education system by NGOs has increased dramatically since the mid-1980s. Such contributions include:

- construction of schools, donation of land, materials, labour, and funds
- provision of security services
- repairs to fencing, building and residences
- donation of books
- provision of furniture and equipment
- educational training
- provision of transport for school functions
- free use of facilities for school functions
- supervision (or even teaching) of students during school hours

This list is not exhaustive, but it does indicate the dimensions of the contributions made by NGOs.

In addition, the international donor community has long recognised the need to strengthen Guyana's educational system and provides support in numerous ways.

II. Policies of the Sector

A. Past Evolution of Policies

In 1976, a decision was taken to transfer all responsibilities for education to the public sector. All private schools were absorbed into the public system and Government undertook to fully subsidise education from nursery through university including the cost of textbooks, exercise books, and writing materials. At all institutional levels, the imposition of fees was strictly prohibited. There were no changes of significance in the structure of the educational system or in teacher training.

B. Description of Current Policies

Educational policies have remained relatively unchanged over the last three decades. However, the current attempts at cost recovery, especially at the tertiary level, stand out as a significant change in recent times.

The primary objectives of current educational policy are:

1. Improving equality of access to education through:
 - a. enhancement of physical plants;
 - b. expansion of education services in general and in particular for children with special needs;
 - c. collaboration with other government agencies, NGOs and community-based organisations and the international donor community; and
 - d. reformation and upgrading of the legal and regulatory framework of the system.

The broad intention has been to provide the means whereby everyone has the opportunity to participate in the educational services provided. Focus is intended to be placed on improving not only geographic, but socio-economic access. Initial teacher training, technical services and vocational facilities, especially in hinterland regions, are being expanded. Much effort will also be channelled toward the enhancement and expansion of educational services to children with special needs. That apart, several critical issues of a regulatory and legislative nature must be addressed in order to make Government's policies enforceable.

2. To make curriculum more demand-driven rather than supply-pushed by:

- a. facilitating the acquisition of life skills by young people through the continuous review and updating of the present curriculum, including its evaluation at all levels of the system; and
- b. improving the quantity and quality of instructional material and facilities at all levels.

The goals are to revise the curriculum to facilitate the acquisition of the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and values that will enable all citizens to contribute meaningfully to national development, and to make the curriculum more flexible and relevant to the needs of the society and the demands of the labour market. The focus is intended to be on improving students' performance through a variety of new approaches to the teaching-learning process, including the acquisition of skills in the management of sensitive issues.

3. To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the system through the strengthening of the managerial, administrative, and supervisory capacities of the system. In particular, the focus here is on efficient management of all resources through strategic planning, establishment of reliable data bases, development of procedural manuals for managers at all levels of the system, and the professionalisation of education at the school level.

- 4. To provide a well-trained and qualified cadre of educational personnel through:
 - a. the expansion of current in-service teacher training centres;
 - b. the use of distance education to improve the quality and quantity of teachers in the hinterland and deep-riverain areas;
 - c. the re-institution of career path development for all teachers and administrators in the system through on-the-job training and the enhancement of work conditions.

5. To cultivate and strengthen effective relationships with local and extra-local communities, in order to mobilise resources to complement current budgetary allocations.

Attempts have been made to strengthen partnerships with community action groups, the private and business community, and religious and secular organisations, and to secure resources and support from donor countries and agencies. The achievement of these objectives would allow for the expansion of school programmes, greater security of buildings, better management of educational assets in the community, and in general, the undertaking of joint efforts in the pursuit of quality education.

Finally, on the fiscal side, the share of the Central Government's budget allocated to education has increased in recent years, but still falls considerably short of norms for all developing countries and for the Latin America and Caribbean region. As part of the greater emphasis on education, teachers were granted an exceptional salary increase in 1994, but salaries are still not competitive with Caribbean norms or the private sector.

III. Issues and Constraints

A. Sector-wide Issues

This section describes the principal issues affecting the functioning of the education system at all levels, from nursery to tertiary education.

1. Financing of Education

The enviable reputation established by Guyana in the 1960s as having one of the best education systems in the Caribbean was based in large measure on a system of private and public schools, and payment of tuition fees.

Even in the Government-owned secondary schools at the time, fees had to be paid by non-scholarship holders, although they were not set on a full cost-recovery basis. In the privately-owned schools, fees were paid even at the primary level.

After all schools were brought under State control in 1976 and fees were abolished for all levels of education, two developments occurred. First, education came to be viewed as a public good and a public entitlement, free of charge. Second, due to financial stringency, there was a steady reduction of the ability of the Government to meet growing public expectations for full access to free, high-quality education at all levels. Declining budgetary allocations since the late 1970s caused both the quality and the equality of access to education to erode.

The expenditure of several regions of the world on education as a share of their total expenditure in the 1989-1992 period is illustrated in the following table:

Table 18-7
Comparative Expenditure on Education As A Percentage of Total Expenditure, 1989-92

Africa	15.7%
Asia	14.0%
Middle East	14.3%
Western Hemisphere	13.9%
Global average	13.0%
Guyana	5.5%

Source: (except for Guyana) World Bank, Latvia Public Expenditure Review, 1994
for Guyana: Ministry of Education

By 1994, the figure for Guyana had improved slightly to 5.8 percent⁶ and by 1998 to 12.9 percent, but was still short of norms for the hemisphere and the world. Two of the most grievous consequences of this are the low level of teachers' salaries and the shortage of funds to improve physical plants and supply materials.

⁶ This figure refers to expenditures incurred by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Not included are expenditures on education by other agencies (such as the Ministry of Agriculture) which comprise about 5 percent of total spending on education.

2. Balance Between Different Levels of Education

Studies in many countries have demonstrated that returns to the nation are greatest from investments in primary education. Yet data from 1994 show that public expenditures on education in Guyana were running at US\$39 per primary student, US\$67 per secondary student, and US\$701 per university student. There is a need for national commitment, as a matter of fundamental urgency and priority, to basic education and re-education, both in the outlying regions and in the capital city and its environs. Primary education, the platform for all future learning, where the fundamentals of the basics are learned or not, is woefully underfunded, far below international norms. But it is during this time that there is the highest participation rate among school-age children.

3. Inequities in Spending on and Access to Education

Recent patterns in educational spending show a distinct bias in favour of students who are academically more advanced, many of whom come from families who might be capable of defraying part of the cost of their children's education.

This phenomenon is part of a larger syndrome in which educational expenditures do not seem to target the most needy students. It must be recognised that the provision of free education amounts to a fiscal subsidy. Better targeting of educational expenditure in this sense would enable the existing levels of funding to be more effectively used for raising the quality of education.

An inequitable pattern, directly linked to the issue of teachers' salaries, is emerging; families who are able to afford the cost of private tutoring increasingly use that option, while the children of poorer families who are unable to provide this benefit become disadvantaged educationally.

4. Gender Sensitivity

Issues of gender sensitivity are present at all levels of education in Guyana. For example, few female students specialise in the areas of Science and Technology, despite the fact that boys and girls are required to be involved in all subject areas up to Form 3 (Grade 9). The large drop-out rate of male students could be related to the fact that there are relatively few male role models in the profession, a development which may be linked to low salary levels. The drop-out rate among male students is high throughout the Caribbean, a situation that requires more study.

Differences in male and female learning styles require the development of more approaches that take these differences into account.

5. Administration of Education

Programmes implemented by Regional Administrations sometimes deviate significantly from plans and programmes of activities as they are initially set by the Ministry of Education, in conjunction with the Regional Education Department. In addition, there is an absence of definite and systematic budgetary monitoring procedures to ensure both the direction and magnitude of the annual expenditure by education level and region.

Gaps in the current structure of relationships among the Central Ministry, the Regional Education Department, and Regional Democratic Councils are testing the capacity of the educational system to effectively absorb the recent surges of capital and technical assistance inflows from bilateral and multilateral agencies. Moreover, planning at the regional level does not always include officials serving in the respective communities.

6. Quality of Education

The overriding concern at the level of the entire educational sector is to improve the quality of education, i.e., improve the process by which children and youth learn. Achieving this objective will require an array of measures, ranging from improvements in the salaries, academic and technical qualifications, and training of teachers, to curricular changes and improvements in physical plant, and to the promotion of greater community involvement in schools.

7. Social Infrastructure

The collapse of the social infrastructure - pride in community, social values and graces, civility - has made the teaching environment more difficult.

8. Current Levels of Literacy

There is a literacy problem in Guyana, due in large measure to weaknesses in the education system. Indeed, it is estimated that there is 21 percent rate of absolute illiteracy in the country and as mentioned earlier, an overall functional literacy rate in the lower 50s. Increasingly, this is the situation that characterizes the parents of school-age children, and teachers therefore cannot rely on the support of homes where there is a culture of literacy or an environment which values education. The result is that many students graduate with low levels of literacy and have little or no opportunity of developing into functionally literate citizens.

B. Issues Specific to Levels of Education

1. Pre-school Child Care

In terms of formal requests, the demand for day care and play school facilities has risen significantly, particularly in Georgetown and arguably in other urban centres. While the problem may not be as acute in the rural areas, hard data on which to base any type of planning of facilities are difficult to acquire. However, a survey on early childhood education is being conducted by a UG lecturer and a preliminary report is being prepared.

The provision of day care and play school facilities is not within the competence of the Ministry of Education. However, there is a logical link between the day care and the play school systems on one hand, and the formal schooling system on the other, particularly at the entry level of nursery education. Given this nexus, all concerned stand to gain by at least exchanging views and reaching broad agreements on the relationships between the two, in order to ease the transition from one stage to the other and to enhance the level of comfort of the new entrants into the schooling system.

2. Nursery Level Education

The two-year programme at the nursery level is designed to provide young children with a learning environment that will facilitate their physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development, as well as the development of basic skills and desirable attitudes to learning. However, the majority of Guyanese children speak home languages that are different from the official language of the country, and unless this fact is recognised, the literacy and language problems which characterise our school-age children at present, will continue.

Overcrowding exists, especially in Georgetown schools, for two main reasons - (a) parents' requests that children be placed in schools near to their place of work rather than home, and (b) parents' perception that some nursery schools are linked to "good" primary schools.

The Government's school feeding programme, supported by the World Food Programme, is not fully accessed, particularly in areas where nutritional deficiency is more pronounced. Forty percent of the children in this category have no access to vital supplements. The percentage may be as high as 60 in the riverain and hinterland areas.

3. Primary Level Education

The schools with successful track records are experiencing growing overcrowding, while the ones with poor records are underpopulated. This has created gross imbalances in the demand and supply of educational facilities. The persistence of these imbalances is based on the parents' and pupils' perceptions of the performance or non-performance of individual schools as measured by the SSEE. While some may question whether the SSEE should be retained, or propose a system of continuous student assessment based on performance norms for each grade level, it should be noted that the function of the SSEE as a placement test would be diminished if there were places available in quality schools with qualified teachers for all students. Eliminating the SSEE will not address the issue of the availability of quality secondary education.

Because of the pivotal role of primary education in regard to eventual access to higher education, and subsequently to the job market, access to quality primary and basic education has been identified as critical to poor families, indigenous peoples, and marginal workers. A matter of very serious concern is the high percentage of students who leave primary school unable to read, write or count. As noted above, State funding for education has failed to reflect the priority of primary education. In many developing countries, primary education accounts for 40 to 50 percent of total spending on education, but in Guyana that share has been about 27 percent.

The apparent wide-ranging differences in the interpretation and delivery of the curriculum offered at various primary schools throughout the system is also a source of much concern.

Other basic needs at this level are for an increase in quality-time spent by teachers in the classroom, the promotion of more faithful attendance by pupils, improved provision of instructional materials, improved facilities, and greater parental and community involvement in the schools. Teachers, and especially head teachers, need professional training in administration and in managing the relationship between school and community.

The Primary Education Improvement Programme (PEIP) has improved buildings, provided libraries and library packages, and up-dated curriculum guides within the past two years.

4. Secondary Level Education

Given the three-part structure of the secondary programme and the use of the SSEE to screen students entering from the primary level, about 50 percent of the nation's eleven year olds are directed into schools having programmes of shorter duration than the GSS, a majority of under-qualified and untrained teachers, poor buildings and a poor learning environment. In this respect, a strategic concern that merits review is the present structure under which a child's education fate is virtually sealed at the end of primary school, when the examination results determine whether his or her future track will be academic or vocational. Given that there are "late bloomers" in any system, the present structure may be shunting aside potential academic talent.

A growing number of students, especially boys in the secondary department of the primary programme and the CHS, are dropping out before grade 9 (before the completion of basic education).

The secondary school curriculum and the general teaching methodology are driven by the examination process and not by an overriding concern to stimulate and encourage critical thinking and optimise assimilation of material. As a consequence, the evaluation mechanism which monitors the reliability and consistency of the teaching-learning process is deficient.

The persistent shortage of secondary school teachers has created a situation where about half of the secondary school teaching staff is employed on a part-time basis. Although salaries were increased in 1994, conditions of service remain uncompetitive with respect to the packages offered by the local private sector and in overseas teaching jobs. The net result is an increase in the syndrome of extra lessons throughout Guyana. This in turn leads to limited participation of pupils in both co- and extra-curricular activities, despite sporadic attempts by the management of schools to organize and structure such activities on a regular basis.

The core curriculum, in these days of globalisation and informatics, fails to provide students with basic computer literacy and foreign language competence. The attempts to correct this are still too feeble.

Secondary schools, like primary schools, need greater parental and community involvement, rehabilitation of facilities, and better instructional materials.

5. Training of Teachers

Teacher training is currently conducted at the Cyril Potter College of Education (CPCE) and at the Faculty of Education in the University of Guyana (FEUG). While the primary role of the CPCE is initial training, that of the FEUG goes beyond but may also include initial training. In addition the National Centre for Education, Research and Development (NCERD) offers short non-certificate training programmes.

The shortage of suitably qualified applicants has caused the CPCE and the Faculty of Education to lower their entry requirements. The high demand for graduates from these institutions has often permitted graduates to be recruited to teach at higher levels in the system than those for which they were trained. Two other major difficulties are the recruiting of suitably experienced lecturers and the inability of the current staff to properly assess the practical aspects of the training.

The Ministry of Education continues to assess teaching and learning activities in relation to curriculum and programme implementation as well as the educational environment of the schools. Inspection is done at all levels, nursery, primary and secondary. However, it is carried out on average only once every three years as a consequence of the shortage of staff, the non-existence of necessary amenities such as computers, and the scarcity of transportation facilities.

6. University Education

Tertiary institutions generally enjoy a level of autonomy which frees them from political and extraneous influences that would jeopardize or impair their ability to accomplish their mission. There are clear indications that the University of Guyana does not enjoy this level of autonomy. Heavy reliance on Government funding, and the uncertainty of the level of funding, have undermined its ability to operate as an autonomous tertiary institution.

The University of Guyana is not performing to its full potential because of a number of factors, including undue interference in its management, many years of inattention to its physical plant, and a deterioration in the quality of its instruction. There is a lack of basic equipment and facilities and the University has also failed to keep pace with the development of technology.

Low standards of intake adversely affects the University's performance, as some of its limited resources are being used to deliver remedial courses to bring students up to entry level requirements.

The University needs to mobilise more financial resources and improve the management of its existing resources. In other words, it must improve its capacity for financial management and increase its cost effectiveness, although the intensity of this latter need varies by faculty.

The University records highlight a strong student bias towards the Social Sciences and the

Arts and away from Technology and the Natural Sciences. This bias may also be a reflection of the state of education at the primary and secondary levels. Given the current demand for engineers and technicians, it is critical to raise enrollment in the relevant areas, either directly at the University or indirectly in special contractual arrangements.

7. Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

Technical education in Guyana appears to be delivered haphazardly, and to be without a vision or a grand design. It is poorly financed and managed, the linkages between those who deliver TVET and the private sector which absorbs the graduates are tenuous, and the basic training of the students is often inadequate.

A few industries provide their own training programmes, but they are primarily for a narrow range of skills.

A survey of existing TVET institutions ought to be speedily made, and a system developed to use their combined facilities in a more rational manner. There is a dearth of female students entering the field of technical education. The reason for this state of affairs ought to be identified and rectified.

8. Special Needs Education

The term “special needs” is used to refer to slow learners and children with emotional and physical disabilities as well as the gifted. There are few schools in Guyana dedicated to children with special needs. These are David Rose School, Saint Barnabas School, and the Sophia Special School. Four other schools have a classroom dedicated to children with special needs: Saint Rose's High School for the blind, the South Ruimveldt Park Primary School for the hearing-impaired, Diamond Primary School for children with multiple disabilities, and the New Amsterdam Primary School for the blind. These facilities are meant to respond to all levels of children with disabilities. Mainstream schools do not adequately cater to the needs of most special needs children.

A Committee which, in conjunction with the Planning Department, previously dealt with all matters relating to curriculum and physical facilities for special needs children, has been in abeyance for some time.

Considering the limited available resources, it could be presumed that most of the children are either in regular schools or at home, and that their special education needs are unmet.

9. Adult Literacy Programmes

As a consequence of the decline of educational standards in recent decades, there is now a significant number of adults who are illiterate, or at least not functionally literate. There has not been enough emphasis on adult literacy campaigns in order to enable these persons to participate more fully in our society.

Absolute illiteracy and functional illiteracy must be considered disabilities which deserve, and indeed require, special education. For the individual and the society, they have grave social and economic implications.

C. Constraints

1. General Constraints

a. In spite of an upward trend in recent years, budgetary allocations to education are still far from adequate. There is room for improvement in both the allocation and the utilization of expenditure in the sector.

b. Budgetary constraints lead to many deficiencies, including teachers' salaries that in general, are too low to attract and retain the most qualified staff. Among other consequences are an insufficiency of instructional equipment and materials, teacher absenteeism and deteriorated physical plants.

c. Since the take-over of schools in 1976, exclusive reliance on the public sector to provide education has led the country to forego the efficient, high-quality education which the private sector used to offer.

d. Levels of training for many teachers are inadequate, especially in the hinterland Regions.

e. Many teachers are not academically qualified for the level or subject they teach.

f. The relative lack of amenities in many hinterland areas makes it more difficult to recruit teachers for those posts.

g. There is no strong tradition of involvement in the schools by parents and communities, although there is a growing trend in this direction. Experience worldwide has shown that such involvement tends to raise the quality of instruction, reduce student absenteeism, help improve the condition of the physical plant, and assist in identifying supplementary sources of financing for schools.

h. The underrepresentation of men in the teaching profession has led to a relative lack of role models for boys. This situation has been exacerbated by the emigration of suitable male role models in all fields of endeavour, whether from rural areas to the city, or from Guyana to other countries.

i. There is no systematic socio-economic information about students' families.

2. Constraints Specific to Levels of Schooling and Functions

In addition to these general constraints which affect education at all levels, there are a number of additional constraints which are specific to each level.

- a. The administration of education is faced with the following weaknesses:
 - (i) A shortage of skilled manpower
 - (ii) Poor conditions of service.
 - (iii) Inadequate central and regional interface.
 - (iv) Poor communication facilities.
 - (v) Inadequate data to monitor the budget, enrolment, and school and teacher performance.
 - (vi) A poor regional department/school interface.
- b. Regarding pre-school care of children, the provision of day care and play school facilities is not within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education.
- c. In nursery level education:
 - (i) Some teachers and many parents persist in presenting the curriculum in a subject-centred mode.
 - (ii) The lack of data in the Ministry of Education on the demand for nursery schools, by Region, is a major constraint to the planning and development of additional facilities.
- d. In Primary Education:
 - (i) A significant number of teachers have no curriculum guide to follow, while others have only limited access to these basic support documents.
 - (ii) The curriculum is dominated by the drive to prepare the students for the SSEE (and even this preparation is at times done without a curriculum guide).
 - (iii) In many instances, educational programmes are not articulated to facilitate smooth transitions from one level to the other.
 - (iv) Not enough teaching is being done in most classrooms due to lack of discipline and frequent absences by teachers, while some teachers are overloaded with non-teaching work.
 - (v) Funding at this level is exceptionally low, well below that of other Caribbean countries on a per-pupil basis.

e. In Secondary Education:

- (i) There is a shortage of instructional supervision for teaching staff and a relatively poor quality of administration of the system at this level.
- (ii) Structural and regular staff development programmes for both teaching staff and regional supervisory officers are inadequate.
- (iii) The physical condition of schools is poor and there is a persistent shortage of equipment (science, audiovisual, technical, and sports), textbooks, library books, and teaching aids, especially in the CHS and the secondary departments of primary schools.
- (iv) The funding of CXC examinations and President's College places a heavy burden on general education funds.

f. In teachers' training constraints include:

- (i) Unacceptable standards in the quantity and quality of present staff .
- (ii) A shortage of full-time staff at CPCE and at the in-service centres.
- (iii) Poor conditions of service (including salaries) for teacher educators, and a shortage of trained teacher educators.
- (iv) Inadequate focus in the teacher training curriculum on the impact of sensitive issues on the development of children.
- (v) Lack of effective coordination in the preparation of teachers for the educational system among CPCE, NCERD, the Education Faculty of the University of Guyana, and IDCE.
- (vi) Absence of continuous evaluation of teacher training programmes.

g. At the University of Guyana:

- (i) Student-teacher ratios are very low in some faculties, raising the unit costs of instruction.
- (ii) The University administration has a weak capacity in financial management.
- (iii) Although salaries have improved, they remain unattractive, and many lecturers have been forced to pursue outside opportunities at the expense of their students.
- (iv) A decline in the quality of first-year students entering the University over the last decade, has caused growing concern.

- h. In technical vocational education and training:
 - (i) The volume of TVET in relation to the growing needs of industry and commerce is insufficient.
 - (ii) TVET curricula are not fully attuned to the requirements of employers.
 - (iii) There is a lack of mechanisms for wider private sector participation in funding the costs of TVET.
 - (iv) There is an absence of continuous evaluation of TVET programmes.
- i. In special needs education:
 - (i) Adequate provisions have not been made in the existing schooling system for children with special needs.
 - (ii) There are insufficient data on the total numbers, geographic distribution, school levels, and classification of special needs children. Some research is being done by the Community-Based Rehabilitation Programme on these issues, but the results are not yet available.
- j. For functionally illiterate out-of-school youth and adults, there is no coordination of efforts to provide a second chance, or coherence in programming that would lead to a national certificate of literacy. It is therefore difficult for these individuals to re-enter the learning stream.

IV. Sectoral Objectives

A. Philosophy

In reviewing the evolution of educational policy in Guyana, emphasis will be put on the importance of pursuing a radical approach to arrest any further decay of the current education system and its output. In this regard, reference is made to two international meetings of immense importance to the development of the education sector as a whole, and children in particular. The first is the 1990 World Summit for Children, held in September 1990, where seventy-one heads of State met under the auspices of UNICEF and agreed to seek substantial improvements in the situation of women and children by the year 2000. With this goal in mind Guyana has determined to focus on:

1. Legislative reforms to strengthen the education system.
2. The integration of children with special needs into family and community life.
3. Placement of violence against children on the public agenda.

4. Placement of moral, spiritual and ethical standards on the national educational agenda.
5. Improvement of the quality of life for children in especially difficult circumstances.
6. The establishment and maintenance of national data bases on these issues.

The National Plan of Action developed to meet the specific needs of Guyana's children sets itself three broad tasks:

1. To implement, among others, programmes for the generation of employment and income in the poorest rural and urban areas, and to promote a culture of respect for human rights, especially the rights of children.
2. To review our legislation and legal statutes and establish judicial procedures in support of the rights of children and women.
3. To institutionalise the National Plan of Action for Children, incorporating the objectives, strategies, and indicators in national development plans and policies.

More specifically, the NPA's goals within the education sector are as follows:

1. To improve the quality of service provided to children in day care centres and provide access to day care services appropriate to identified needs.
2. To make nursery education available and accessible to all children from age 3 years 6 months.
3. To ensure access to quality primary education in an appropriate learning environment for all children.
4. To provide access to relevant secondary education to all primary school graduates.
5. To promote literacy and numeracy programmes for early school leavers and those who have already passed through the school system without acquiring adequate language skills.
6. To strengthen community alliances.

The second reference to International Conventions is to the World Declaration on Education for All, held in Jomtein, Thailand, again in 1990. This Convention focuses on the rights of the child and is very useful in building a strategy and elaborating the mechanisms necessary for both the conceptualisation and delivery of quality education in Guyana.

In this context, the philosophy governing education in Guyana will rest on the following

broad principles:

1. Every child has an inherent, inalienable right to an education that promotes self-realisation of all capacities, regardless of gender, ethnic, religious, social and economic antecedents, and whatever abilities or disabilities he or she may have.

2. Education, the basis of the human resource development of all nations, is fundamental to the prosperity of this country, nation-building and a strong sense of citizenry, and hence to civic responsibility.

3. Students vary in natural ability and schools will provide, for all students, programmes adapted to varying abilities and that promote useful talents.

4. Research and development in the field of human learning will be continuously used for effective teaching and to improve the educational system.

The philosophy that guides these objectives must also relate to conditions in Guyana as they are, and as we want them to be. Guyana is a plural society with a fair degree of tolerance, yet with high levels of tension, division and discrimination between citizens of different races, genders, socio-economic backgrounds, ages, and abilities. In addition, the economic deterioration in the country over more than two decades fostered a breakdown of family and community. In these circumstances, our educational system must also be based on the following principles:

1. Families have a major responsibility for the welfare of children, and the well-being of children will be promoted by the strengthening of the bonds between the family, the community and the school.

2. The curricular arrangements that underpin the educational system will offer choices that ensure that cultural, ethnic, class, and gender needs are effectively addressed and inculcate a strong sense of ethical, moral, and civil responsibility.

3. Since the educational system is best served when there is consensus in civil society on the philosophy and policy on which it is based, vigorous efforts will be made to promote this consensus.

B. Objectives

The three fundamental, all-embracing, objectives of the nation's educational system will be:

1. Raising levels of literacy and numeracy in the population.

2. Improving the population's command of life skills.

3. Meeting the special education needs of children who are physically or mentally challenged in one way or another.

Achievement of these objectives will give our citizens more control over their destinies, increase their economic earning power, and enable them to enrich their lives socially and culturally. Moreover, these are the fundamental objectives that support all aspects of the National Development Strategy.

To facilitate the achievement of these basic objectives in the context of the current issues and constraints affecting the educational system, the following broad operational 'objectives will be pursued.

1. Increasing the relative importance accorded to primary education within the system.
2. Undertaking a remedial or recuperative campaign at the level of adult education for all school leavers and other adults who have not attained sufficient levels of literacy.
3. Increasing student attendance.
4. Increasing the effectiveness of instruction at all levels in the system, per unit of resources expanded.
5. Mobilising greater amounts of financial resources for all levels and types of education.
6. Targeting the expenditures on basic education more effectively.
7. Maximising the results throughout the education system.
8. Increasing public awareness of the value of education and functional literacy.
9. Making the system more flexible in order to accommodate students who mature academically at different rates.
10. Reducing regional inequalities in education.
11. Providing better opportunities for children with special needs and educating the public about special disabilities.
12. Increasing the gender sensitivity of the system at all levels with regard to specific issues affecting male and female students.
13. Increasing the focus on scientific and technical education, computer literacy and informatics.

V. The Strategy

1. Financing of Education

In view of the issues and constraints previously described in the area of financing, there is no single solution and the way forward must contain multiple elements. Making basic education accessible to all will be a cornerstone of public educational policy, but new mechanisms will be put in place so that those families who can afford to pay part of the schooling costs will in fact do so. It must be borne in mind that the pretence of providing free education to all is in reality leading to the emergence of an inequitable system, in which the better-off families purchase a higher quality of education for their children. Increased community contributions in kind and in cash will also be encouraged.

Notwithstanding these measures, the share of the national budget that is allocated to education will be increased.

Given the importance of primary education, the policy will be to allocate the majority of each year's increment in the national educational budget to primary education, until the goal of raising its share from the present level of 27 percent to the target of 35 percent by the year 2005, is attained, with a further increase to 40 percent by the year 2010.

Following this path means that secondary and tertiary education will not have to suffer any budgetary reductions, and will in fact receive some increases each year, at the same time that the share devoted to primary education is being increased.

Additional funds will be used to increase teachers' salaries and improve teacher training - the two most basic problems affecting education in Guyana. Rehabilitating schools, and providing educational materials in greater quantity and at higher quality, are already being undertaken through the PEIP and SSRP. These improvements will be sustained through adequate allocations for preventative maintenance and continued developmental activities.

To give concrete expression to these central thrusts of policy for financing education, the following specific policies are proposed for the sector:

The share of the national budget allocated to education will be raised continuously from the present level of approximately 14 percent to 20 percent by 2005, and will be sustained at or above that level for the rest of the decade.

All current barriers to the setting up of private schools will be removed, but private schools will be required to comply with Ministry guidelines on curriculum, teacher qualifications and safety standards of the physical plant. Maximum flexibility will be given to these schools in respect of staff management and promotion, the kinds of educational materials used, and other areas of operational decision. It is performance that ultimately matters, in terms of improved learning, and not how each school chooses to achieve that performance. Indeed, better performance is likely to be registered over time if innovation is encouraged in school administration. By permitting private schools to emerge and absorb part of the student

population in a self-financing way, the resources available to the public system will yield higher levels of support per student.

Steps will be taken to expand and systematise approaches for consulting communities and target groups on cost-sharing activities and the development of financial plans and related topics, and for involving community watchdog groups in monitoring the use of physical facilities to reduce repair costs.

Selected school administrative services that could be more competitively delivered commercially, will be contracted out; examples include transport and catering.

A modest basic fee that would contribute to books and materials, school security services, first aid services, and the mechanisms for parent involvement and consultations, will be established for primary and secondary schools. The demonstrated willingness of parents to pay for their children's education needs to be channelled in directions that will help strengthen the system. Every effort will be made to enhance partnerships between parents and schools. Mechanisms will be put in place to identify those families that should be exempted from paying these fees.

Examination subsidies for CXC and GCE, except for the poorest families, will be reduced significantly; payment of these subsidies will be based on satisfactory performance by students at the national fourth form test.

The restructuring of administration, enrolment and expenditure at President's College will be continued. Attempts will be made to maintain standards and the capacity to deliver quality education. Other residential schools will be improved to bring them more in line with President's College.

Aspects of the Secondary School Reform Project (SSRP) and the Primary Education Improvement Programme (PEIP) support the involvement of parents and other members of the community in the developing of school improvement plans. Partnerships will be expanded and schools will be allowed to raise, by these and other mechanisms, supplementary funding without prejudicing their regular allotment from the Ministry of Education. In this way, schools will be given additional incentives to strengthen community alliances. The supplementary funding mobilised in this way may be used for purchasing additional equipment and materials, establishing programmes of teacher incentives, providing additional funding to special education, and establishing bursaries for students from low-income families.

Modest charges for the after-school care of young children will be allowed. Care of this kind can become an activity that more than pays for itself, thus contributing to funding the central educational mission of the schools.

School premises will be hired out during periods when they are not utilised for schooling.

2. Targeting Educational Expenditures

The financing policies outlined above will also enable improved targeting of educational expenditures on needy students, so that in the end the subsidies implicit in these expenditures go to those who most require them.

At the same time, the educational system will undertake to reduce the variations in the amount of spending per student between Regions with similar characteristics.

3. Balance between Different Levels of Education

Notwithstanding the emphasis that needs to be placed on primary education because of its fundamental place in the acquisition of basic education, it is also essential to realize the interdependence that necessarily exists among the various levels of the educational system. One level feeds the other both up and down the system. Today's unqualified or under-qualified teachers are the products of yesterday's classrooms. The nation cannot wait ten years to see improvement in the functional literacy levels of today's six-year-olds, while at the same time seeing its stock of functionally illiterate out-of-school youth and adults increase.

To break the cycle, emphasis will be placed on securing appropriate literacy and numeracy skills throughout the system. There will be an attack on illiteracy from multiple points, including testing for literacy levels and building in remedial programs well in advance of CXC examinations. This will be the premier priority for the first decade of the country.

Candidates for entry to UG and CPCE will be required to either (a) write admission tests in English Language, Mathematics and Social Studies with difficulty levels at least on par with an upgraded fifth form level; or (b) successfully complete a remedial programme as a requirement for entry. To facilitate improved standards, students who enter these institutions will be required to demonstrate the ability to write cohesive prose compositions free of spelling and grammatical errors.

4. Gender Sensitivity

In order to increase the gender sensitivity of the system, the following policies will be instituted:

a. Specific material on gender sensitivity will be included in the curriculum for teacher training. Trainee teachers will be exposed to gender-free teaching skills and techniques so that they learn to better manage the mixed classroom situation, thereby allowing both male and female students to more fully realise their potential.

b. A special commission will review the curricula of the system, and its teaching and learning materials, with respect to gender considerations, and appropriate revisions will be made.

c. Appropriate monitoring tools and mechanisms will be developed by the Ministry of Education for following the treatment of gender issues in the school system, and for providing corresponding feedback to school administrators and teachers.

d. Special bursaries will be established to encourage girls to go into scientific and technical vocational fields. Business will also be priced to encourage boys to complete high school and to develop intellectually, and positive role models will be used to help them discover the value of education.

5. Administration of Education

a. Action will be taken to develop and implement improved arrangements for collecting and computerising baseline data and for systematic budgetary monitoring .

b. The relationships between and among the Central Ministry, the Regional Education Departments and the Regional Democratic Councils will be redefined and clarified, and their respective coordination mechanisms strengthened.

c. Training programmes for school administrators, central educational authorities and regional officials will be strengthened and applied more broadly. Special orientation and training programmes will be instituted for newly-appointed regional officials.

d. Mechanisms will be developed to involve community members more fully in annual planning exercises for each school and in the implementation of such plans. Particular emphasis will be given to involving the families of children with special needs.

e. Similarly, mechanisms will be developed for involvement of representatives of local communities and regions in overall education planning and delivery, including issues related to the curriculum.

A. Policies Specific to Levels of Education

1. Pre-School Care

The basic orientation of policy for pre-school care is to establish more widely available and more structured programmes, which provide socialisation activities and prepare the way for the transition into school itself. Specifically:

a. Training will be provided to day care and playgroup instructors.

b. A survey will be conducted in order to develop a greater understanding of the demand for day care and play school facilities.

c. Based partly on the results of this survey, a programme will be launched to upgrade existing facilities and build new ones. Regular meetings will be set up between

concerned agencies and representative parents and teachers, in order to arrive at a common understanding of the basic elements of a "curriculum" for day care and play groups.

d. A campaign will be carried out to establish strategic alliances with the business sector, NGOs and community-based organisations to provide enhanced child care facilities within nursery schools in general, and in the main urban centres in particular.

2. Nursery Level Education

Considerable effort is needed to expand the availability of nursery-level education and to improve its quality. Specific policies towards those ends are as follows:

a. The new curriculum which has been formulated will be continually monitored to:

- (i) help students deal better with sensitive issues such as gender biases and discrimination by race, religion or social status, and to minimize the emergence of such attitudes as the children mature;
- (ii) facilitate the children's transition from use of their dialect or home language to standard English and back;
- (iii) assist children to validate themselves personally in the context of the society, i.e., to develop respect for the achievements of their ancestors and a sense of pride in their own person, interests and talents; and
- (iv) encourage children's sense of curiosity and willingness to explore their world on a conceptual plane.

b. Campaigns will be undertaken to increase the enrolment in nursery schools by at least 15 percent over the next five years, with particular emphasis on the hinterland and deep riverain areas. By 2010, nursery education will be available to all children in the relevant age cohort.

c. Expanded training activities will be provided for teachers to improve their capabilities, especially for dealing with the points mentioned above under refinement of the curriculum. The quantitative goal of the expanded training programme will be to increase the number of trained teachers at this level by at least 15 to 20 percent annually.

d. The number of facilities specifically built for nursery schooling will be increased. Through the PTAs, the private sector will be encouraged to help in providing more of these facilities.

e. Learning materials will be developed in indigenous languages, where possible, and material will be prepared that includes stories about all groups in society, cutting across issues such as gender, race and social status.

- f. Teachers at this level will also be trained to teach English a second language.
- g. Informational material and short courses will be developed for community groups, NGOs, and parents who wish to participate in the delivery of early childhood education. This will expand initiatives already started by the Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) program and the MOE Parent Education program.
- h. Provision will be made for the nursery schools to offer supervision for children who cannot be picked up immediately at the end of the session. As noted in the section on policies for financing education, fees commensurate with the effort will be charged for providing this service, or alternatively, parent volunteers will be recruited.
- i. Guidelines and documentation will be available to communities that wish to start their own nursery schools.

3. Primary Level Education

National priority will be given to providing access to high quality primary education. The planned increase in funding will help in this regard. It is also important that additional funds be spent wisely. The specific policies set out below indicate some of the most important ways in which primary education will be improved.

- a. The percentage of primary teachers who are professionally trained will be increased annually, so that the proportion of trained teachers is at least 75 percent by the year 2010. Distance learning methods for in-service training will be utilised as well as the regular programme of the CPCE. Care will be taken to ensure that training programmes are conducted in such a way as not to have a disruptive effect on students.
- b. A programme for raising salaries with the additional budgetary allocations will be developed, giving special consideration to hinterland areas and introducing mechanisms for the effective implementation of performance-based incentives (merit increments) for all teachers. Performance-based incentives, including financial assistance, will also be given for the attainment of appropriate, relevant and additional academic and professional qualifications.
- c. Except where there is a major learning difficulty, the focus at the primary level will be on improved literacy, numeracy and communication skills.
- d. Curricula relevant to the lives of students and to challenges of current and evolving trends will be developed, including introduction to a foreign language and computers and the development of life skills or problem-solving abilities. Values, moral underpinnings and factual material for good citizenship will also be stressed. A panel of experts will be convened for the purpose of revising the curricula.

e. There will be a review of current assessment practices, leading to the institutionalisation of a system of continuous assessment, supported by improved record-keeping in schools. In addition, student performance norms according to grade, level and subject will be developed. This system of continuous assessment which will contribute to effecting a smoother transition from primary to secondary level, will be supported by the use of the cumulative record cards, currently being developed. A national committee will be convened to evaluate the SSEE with the performance norms and continuous assessments being established.

f. There will be more than one entry point into the academic stream. Eliminating the SSEE will not alleviate the problems associated with the lack of sufficient places in good schools and the lack of qualified teachers.

g. Primary teaching guides will be available to all teachers in the system at this level. The guides will also be provided to all supervisory staff, in order to improve the capacity of the inspectorate and regional supervisory staff to monitor the implementation of the curriculum.

h. Assistance from external donors and local NGOs will be used to strengthen school-feeding programmes so that virtually all primary schools are covered.

i. The programmes of rehabilitation and construction of schools will continue. Assistance for this activity and for the design of purpose-built structures for different levels of enrolment will be sought from donor agencies.

j. The location of new schools and the rationalisation of existing schools will be informed by data gathered in a recently completed School Mapping Exercise, and by norms established in the new Education Act and Regulations. The School Mapping data-base will be updated each year by information gathered from the returns of the annual statistical questionnaires which are sent out to all schools.

k. Alliances with programmes such as SIMAP, BNTF and others, for activities such as the repair of schools, provision of furniture, creation of libraries, and supply of developmental materials, will be maintained and strengthened. PTAs will be actively involved in the coordination of outside support for the schools.

l. The libraries established under the PEIP will be maintained developed. PTAs will be encouraged to undertake the establishment of school and community libraries in cooperation with headteachers, teaching staff and students.

m. Depending on the outcome of the current project, additional schools with past achievement rates that are below average will be converted into magnet schools through an intensive and coordinated programme of renovation of the physical plant, introduction of additional teaching materials, and provision of intensive in-service training to the teaching staff.

n. Ancillary staff will be reintroduced into schools with more than 500 pupils.

o. The testing of strategies for facilitating the transition between nursery and primary and between primary and secondary, which has been started with assistance from UNICEF, will continue. By the end of the decade, there will be well-researched and documented strategies for improving transition between these levels.

4. Secondary Level Education

a. Community High School programmes will be extended by one year. The first year will be used for repeat and remedial work in Language, Mathematics and Science, as a first step in the unification of the GSS, the CHS and the secondary departments of the primary schools.

b. The relevance of the curriculum will be improved by incorporating at least one foreign language, beginning with Spanish, more exposure to computer training, and basic competence in technical vocational subjects and general life- skills.

c. A more structured system of supervised teaching in the secondary schools will be enforced, especially from Form One to Form Three, where the learning of basic concepts is crucial to increasing students' capacity to understand and apply analytical tools at subsequent levels in the educational system and later in the world of work.

d. Guidelines for teachers to help students develop cognitive learning skills will be developed and distributed. Teachers will be encouraged to foster analytical skills, critical thinking and advanced application skills and to set questions that test all levels of the cognitive domain.

e. A better system will be established for awarding CXC subsidies to students based on need, performance, and demonstrated ability.

f. A programme of implementing measures to increase the cost-effectiveness of all residential schools will be initiated: the pupil-teacher ratio will therefore be increased, but not to exceed the national recommendation for secondary schools which will be outlined in the new Education Act; greater accommodation will be made for students from the hinterland, and the administrative staff will be rationalised.

g. A policy of assigning available and experienced form teachers who are able to offer advice, guidance and pastoral care to all students, and in particular to those of Forms One and Two, will be implemented. In addition, consideration will be given to engaging the services of persons qualified to give guidance and care to students and if necessary, to families.

h. Efforts to ensure that the first forms have a full complement of teachers for all subject areas will be redoubled. Whenever possible, experienced teachers will be placed in the early forms as well as in the examination classes.

i. The compulsory age of education will be extended to 16 or the completion of a five-year secondary programme.

j. Certification at the secondary level will be broadened to include an examination which, by means of content and reporting, will indicate students' level of achievement.

5. A Second Chance at Basic Education

a. The non-formal system of education will be strengthened. Programmes will be designed both to develop basic literacy skills and to raise the level of functional literacy and numeracy of young Guyanese adults, as well as the older members of the population. This will be a part of the priority programme.

b. A Guyana Council for Adult and Continuing Education will be established as a coordinating body involving all stakeholders in adult education. This body will set strategic directions, develop logical progressions, ensure coherence and standards in the learning path for adults, including certification, seek funding, and establish creative partnerships between centres for basic and functional literacy and the private sector.

c. Basic and functional literacy classes for adults, as well as classes based on the core secondary curriculum, will be conducted at suitable locations. Teachers and other literacy facilitators will be specially trained to teach adults.

6. Training of Teachers

In the area of teacher training there are two dominant needs: to improve the quality and relevance of training, and to very substantially increase the number of trained and academically-qualified teachers. Fulfilling these needs will require a number of reforms which will contribute to improvements in the technology, delivery systems for teacher training, cost-effectiveness, the mobilisation of resources, and opportunities and incentives for teachers to be trained. In quantitative terms, the goal is to ensure that 80 percent of all teachers are trained by 2010, and to increase the number of trained graduates by 50 percent in the same period.

The principal policy thrusts in this area are as follows:

a. New training centres will be created at the regional level and the modalities of distance training will be developed. The setting up of an accreditation body will ensure that there is sufficient equivalency in the various teacher-training programmes.

b. Assistance will be sought from external donors to secure access to improved technologies for teacher training.

c. The cost-effectiveness of teacher training will be improved by distance education methodologies. At the same time, improvements will also be made in the ratios between trained teachers and educators in teacher training programmes.

d. As mentioned earlier, a part of each year's increase for education in the national budget will be allocated to improving teacher salaries until they are at a realistic level. Savings

realised through increases in the cost-effectiveness of training programmes will also be directed in large measure to increasing salaries.

e. A more realistic assessment of the cost of training a teacher will be made, and this cost will be factored into contracts. In the event that teachers break their contracts, they will be required to repay on a pro-rata basis.

f. Entry requirements for teacher training programmes will be strengthened.

g. Teacher training will emphasise:

(i) Teaching the fundamentals of literacy and numeracy.

(ii) Teaching more analytical approaches to basic material and ways to encourage students to think creatively.

(iii) Approaches that will enable teachers to cope with the realities of the modern classroom which include various forms of indiscipline.

(iv) The importance of inculcating self-esteem and self-worth in students.

(v) The use of modern technology including the computer.

(vi) Greater emphasis on teaching foreign languages.

(vii) Techniques for teaching remedial classes.

(viii) Critical thinking on the part of teachers themselves, with greater openness to different methods of doing things.

(ix) Guidance and pastoral care in schools.

h. Greater opportunities will be provided for training the current stock of teachers through short courses and seminars given *in situ*, and through distance learning.

i. Incentives will be provided to teachers for participating in training programmes, especially those linked to the acquisition of knowledge and techniques in Mathematics, Sciences and Languages.

j. A system will be provided for highly qualified persons, who have not come through the educational curriculum in their tertiary studies, to acquire professional teaching competence through intensified and abbreviated courses in teacher training. In addition, provision will be made for such persons to participate in teaching on a part-time or occasional basis without having received full certification from a teacher training programme.

k. The relationships among CPCE, NCERD and the University of Guyana will be rationalised to emphasise greater linkages among their programmes. Systematic evaluation of all teacher training programmes will be done every five years, to establish levels, benchmarks and relationships between the various programmes. Provisions will be made for licensing teachers who are trained at institutions other than CPCE and the University of Guyana.

l. In the long term, all heads of schools will be required to be academically and professionally qualified prior to their appointment. They will also receive specific training in management and administration.

m. Provision will be made for teacher educators to receive periodic refresher materials and courses.

n. Guidance teachers and vocational guidance personnel will be trained and appointed to schools.

o. Instruction in the teaching of English as a Second Language will be provided at Teachers' College, and will be a requirement for certification.

p. All candidates for Teachers' College will be required to pass a college admission test in English and Mathematics.

q. There will be limits as to the length of time an unqualified or under-qualified teacher, currently employed, continues to teach without improving his/her academic and professional qualifications.

r. A code of conduct for teachers will be developed and implemented by the Teachers' Union and the Ministry of Education. This will cover proper dress and deportment, high standards of personal and professional discipline, high moral and ethical standards, and a culture of accountability.

s. Teacher training programmes and management courses will include the presentation of racial, ethnic, religious and other sensitive issues.

7. Tertiary Education

Major challenges for the University of Guyana include facilitating greater autonomy of the University in the management of its affairs, producing the greater concentration of graduates required by the growing economy, improving the University's cost-effectiveness, improving the quality and relevance of instruction, and attending to the needs of adult and continuing education

The following measures will be implemented in order to meet these challenges.

a. The University of Guyana Council will be appointed by a broad-based, non-partisan body.

- b. Measures for improving cost-effectiveness will include the following:
- (i) A predictable, reliable level of subvention to the University will be maintained over the long term, based on a transparent and workable formula.
 - (ii) The University will seek to have a more viable and cost-effective grouping of courses.
 - (iii) The University will seek to achieve more significant efficiency in the utilisation of its existing income by improving its management: attention will be paid to the number of administrative units and positions and to the ratio of ancillary to academic staff.
 - (iv) Management will act more speedily to commercialise the University's potential services in research and development, and consultancy services will be expanded.
 - (v) Fees will be maintained and may vary from programme to programme. A student loan scheme will be maintained with terms of repayment that are not burdensome for borrowers.
 - (vi) Greater support for the University will be mobilised through both domestic and foreign sources, including contributions to scholarship funds.
 - (vii) Training and assistance will be provided to improve the institution's capacity for sound financial management and coordination.
 - (viii) The public subvention to the University will be transferred in a lump sum on an annual basis, at least two months before the commencement of the academic year.
 - (ix) Rolling five-year plans will be prepared for capital and recurrent expenditures, to ensure greater predictability and probity in the use of funds.
 - (x) A University Grants Commission will be set up, with membership drawn in part from the University Council, to recommend medium-and long-term Government financial allocations.
- c. Improvement in the quality and relevance of the University will result from the following measures:
- (i) The University's entry requirement of five O' Levels or five CXC, inclusive of English, will be retained.
 - (ii) Students entering the University will be required to either pass an advanced literacy test, or successfully complete a remedial English programme as a requirement for entry.

- (iii) To expand the intake of students, high school diplomas will be considered in conjunction with other requirements for entry, and the possibility of a scholastic aptitude test will be considered as part of the selection process.
- (iv) The University's capacity to provide remedial teaching prior to enrolment will be strengthened.
- (v) Scholarships will be provided to needy students.
- (vi) Adult and continuing education programmes will be strengthened.
- (vii) Triennial reviews of course offerings will be undertaken with a view to revising them in the light of the requirements of the economy, modern trends and international developments.
- (viii) By 2001, the University will develop a long-term plan for establishing and strengthening centres of excellence which eventually could draw students from the Caribbean region and elsewhere. Special support from industry and international donors will be sought for research and teaching programmes (and student scholarships) in those centres. Topics that commend themselves as natural candidates for such centres include Tropical Forestry and Forest Management, Geology and Mining, and Fisheries Management.
- (ix) The university's foreign language offerings, especially Spanish, will be improved as a priority.
- (x) Forms of collaboration with the University of the West Indies and other universities will be intensified.
- (xi) The mainstreaming of gender will be introduced in more course offerings, and faculty and administrators will be given special materials and seminars on the subject.
- (xii) The availability of cultural and sports facilities for students will be increased, and support will be given to activities which enhance student life.
- (xiii) The most deteriorated aspects of the physical plant will be urgently rehabilitated and systematic maintenance of all facilities will be implemented.
- (xiv) A stronger University presence will be created in both Berbice and Essequibo, which may be expanded as demand and resources permit.

8. Technical and Vocational Education and Training

a. The main requirement for technical and vocational education and training is to improve its relevance to the needs of potential employers. A principal avenue to achieve this

aim is to involve the private sector more deeply in its financing, guidance and delivery.

A tripartite council comprising representatives of the trade union movement, the private sector and Government will be established. Such a council will also take responsibility for certification of graduating students and periodic evaluations of the TVET system. Involvement of employers will also lead to expanded opportunities for practical training via well-structured work experience programmes in firms. Employers will be encouraged to support TVET programmes in kind as well as in cash, by contributing employees' time and making equipment and materials available.

b. The TVET system will be structured so that it offers more short-term courses in general for those with a basic education, craft programmes for qualified Form IV graduates, technician and diploma programmes for Form V graduates with appropriate CXC qualifications, and the opportunity for admission to programmes at the University of Guyana for outstanding graduates.

c. Special emphasis will be given to short courses in rural areas on topics that have the potential to enhance the income of farmers.

d. The increased funding available for TVET will be used to expand its scope, and to improve the quality of instruction. In general, TVET offerings will be made more varied and frequent. Its expansion will take place in areas indicated by the tripartite council. Other reforms that will be pursued are as follows:

- (i) The introduction of Information Technology and design and technology programmes at primary and secondary levels.
- (ii) Widening of the geographical coverage of the TVET system and the provision of increased access to rural/hinterland communities.
- (iii) The initiation of a programme to increase the number of female applicants in non-traditional fields.
- (iv) Improvements in the articulation and fit between levels of education and equivalency vis-à-vis the CARICOM region.
- (v) Greater collaboration and co-ordination between the formal and non-formal TVET systems.
- (vi) The provision of entrepreneurial studies in the curricula of primary, secondary and tertiary institutions.

9. Special Needs Education

As mentioned earlier in this Annex, special needs in education have essentially been unmet by the educational system. Meeting these needs requires recognising the problem fully,

accurately diagnosing the nature of the needs, training teachers and administrators appropriately, and ensuring that programmes for special needs are included in all curricula.

- a. National Policy for Special Needs Education will broadly focus on the following:
 - (i) Putting children with special needs into the mainstream of education. Those who are severely challenged will be catered for in special institutions.
 - (ii) Ensuring an appropriate educational climate, including a relevant curriculum with effective instructional materials and the requisite support services and physical infrastructure.
 - (iii) Fostering informed involvement of the immediate families of children with special needs as well as interested communities.
 - (iv) Training teachers in the essential skills and techniques required in special needs education.
 - (v) Developing partnerships with support groups and Non-Governmental Organisations.
 - (vi) Ensuring the provision of suitable challenges for the gifted.

b. Specific policies that will be followed with regard to special needs education are as follows:

- (i) A programme of early and regular diagnostic testing will be instituted in the schools to identify learning difficulties and put in place timely remedial measures.

In this regard, the Ministry of Health will work in close collaboration with the educational system for the early detection of special physical needs and the design of timely interventions where necessary, preferably before school age. This cooperation will also encompass the educational needs of street children, dropouts, juvenile delinquents and abused children.
- (ii) All schools will be required to articulate their multi-year and annual plans and resource requirements for satisfying children's special needs.
- (iii) The nature of examinations and assessments to which special needs students are subjected will be reviewed to make them more varied and appropriate.
- (iv) Existing special needs schools will be strengthened in all aspects to enable them to cater more effectively to their students.
- (v) The Committee on Special Needs will be resuscitated, more formally recognised, expanded in the scope of its activities, and empowered to deal more effectively

with associated issues. The Committee's substantive responsibility will be to develop, introduce, support, and monitor appropriate educational programmes for students with special needs.

The Committee will establish sub-committees in order to be more effective locally. It will have jurisdiction for the design, implementation, support and monitoring of educational programmes for families of children with special needs, and the wider community, in order to minimise or remove widespread prejudices and barriers. It will also generate and maintain a data base on children with special needs and associated programmes, develop the terms of reference for the special needs task force to be set up in schools, and work to ensure career opportunities for special needs students.

10. Other Educational Policies

a. Guyana will become a centre of learning for English as a Second Language for persons from the countries of South America. A task force will be established to review possibilities in this area and formulate recommendations.

b. To preserve the country's traditions and meet the challenge of interacting on a greater scale with the external world, programmes will be developed to promote reading and creative writing as a means of sustaining Guyanese art forms.

c. Textbooks and other teaching materials will reflect the character of Guyanese society. Curricula will include ethical and moral instruction to provide the platform for discussing civic virtues, tolerance and understanding in a multi-racial society.

d. The school programme will also promote the finer social graces as a way of returning discipline, courtesy and orderliness to the society.

11. Role of Non-Governmental Organisations and the Media in Education

The role of NGOs in the provision and delivery of education and training in Guyana is a critical one, especially at this time. The participatory instructional methodologies being advocated by the Guyana Volunteer Consultancy (GVC), if extended to the training of teachers, will do much to improve current teaching methods and accelerate creative thinking among young people.

Government will therefore encourage and contribute financial and other resources in support of such NGOs. However, some form of regulatory framework will have to be developed and implemented to ensure quality control.

Partnership will also be encouraged with the media to produce educational programmes for both localised and nation-wide viewing.

VI. Legislative Changes

The Education Act and the Industrial Training Act will be amended as far as possible to reflect and give effect to the policies and recommendations contained in this Annex.