

# Understanding the Concept of Community Schools in Nepal Today

Looking for Sustainable Opportunities for Development  
of Kankali Secondary School in Kathmandu Valley

Final Report

QRI382  
August 2014

**QRI Consulting**  
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## FINAL REPORT



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# 1. Background...





## Background

- This report was undertaken following previous desk research and a field trip to Nepal in March 2014.
- During this field trip, André Linden and Simon Patterson met with the District Education Officer (DEO) of the Kathmandu Valley, who introduced them to Dr Martha Caddell's work on the Education System in Nepal.
- Dr Caddell conducted field work in Nepal in the early 2000s. Her work in Nepal focussed on conflict and development, exploring agency responses to war and violent conflict and the effects they have on education.
- Following conversations with the DEO and Dr Caddell, we are further exploring the concept of Community Schools.
- This report, based on research and analysis conducted by Simon Patterson and Francesca Malpass, is designed to explore the concept of community schools in Nepal within the contextual background of Nepal's educational system.



## 2. Timeline...





## Timeline

1815

Treaty of Sagauli signed between Nepal, India, and Britain preventing Nepal trading directly with other countries, isolating Nepal

1846

Rana Rule begins.  
Education is offered only to the ruling elite, in English.

1951

Rana Rule Ends.  
Education is now offered to all children in Nepal, in both English and Nepali

1972

National Education System Plan to nationalise Schools initiated. This was a failure and regarded as a setback to the education system.

1990

Nepal signs the World Conference on Education For All (EFA) Declaration

1992

Basic & Primary Education Project (BPEP) implemented in response to EFA

1996

Civil war between Maoist Party and Government begins.  
Schools become politically aligned<sub>7</sub>



- 2000** World Education Forum on Education For All lists six goals to be met by 2015
- 2002** Government transfers management of schools to communities, creating the first community schools
- 2004** Thematic Groups formed by Ministry of Education to assess the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and options of the education system
- 2006** Civil war ends
- 2009** BPEP & EFA Programs end  
School Sector Reform Program (SSRP) Approved  
SSRP Implemented
- 2010** Net enrolment rate into Basic Education (Grades 1-8) reaches 92%
- 2010** 2012 Net student flow from Grade 1-8 remains low at only 13-14%



### **3. History of the Development of the Nepalese Education System...**





## **i) Internal Political Influences**





# Internal Political Influences:

## Rana Rule and the Ruling Elite

- Schooling in Nepal has always been highly politicised with very particular visions of Nepali citizenship, development, and the 'educated person' promoted through the education system and changing with each shift in political governance.
- Under Rana rule (1846-1950) divisions based on ethnicity and caste were legalised in 1854 to ensure a national hierarchy and legitimise the ruling elite (Caddell 2007a).
- There was a strong recognition of the need for the ruling class to engage in Western-style education in order to increase their ability to participate effectively in negotiations and trading with other states (Specifically Britain, India, and trading with the East India Trading Company).



## Internal Political Influences: Rana Rule and the Ruling Elite

- Because of their isolation imposed in part by the 1815 Treaty of Sagauli (but also enforced by Rana to exclude ‘particular aspects of “foreignness”’ (Caddell 2007a) the only countries Nepal regularly engaged with were India and Britain.
- A Western education style came to symbolise political influence and social prestige.
- A Western-style (specifically “*British-style*”) education was made available to the ruling classes, but not to the rest of the population.



# Internal Political Influences:

## Educational Liberalisation

- Under Rana rule there was a concern over “*giving education to the common people, lest they should be awakened and be conscious of their rights*” (Caddell 2007b).
- After Rana rule collapsed in 1951 education was offered to *all* children in Nepal.
- The development and implementation of universal access to primary education was put into action by the Nepal National Education Planning Commission, helped by the United States Overseas Mission.
- It was decided that primary education should be taught in Nepali, but follow a US-based model, which it still does today.



## Internal Political Influences: Educational Liberalisation

- With increased economic and political liberalisation came an expansion of the education market.
- This in turn led to greater competition between schools and a perceived mark of prestige attached to certain schools rather than the fact of being educated.
- Despite the liberalisation of education, the bias towards Western-style education ignited by the Rana rule led to a large division between private and public schools, with the former offering education in English and, therefore, having a higher perceived value despite education being available to all social classes.



# Internal Political Influences:

## The Influence of Politics

- Politics has always had a strong influence over the education system in Nepal with each shift in political regime leading to a shift in educational content and a change in the system.
- Maoist groups have shown that people are willing to use violence to *“advance their belief that education should be a government responsibility”* (Caddell 2007a: 22-23).
- Politicised teacher unions block disciplinary actions against teachers and undermines the ability of district education officers and school officials to demand productivity.
- The issue of education has become the *“instrument of economic policy”*, leaving the *“fate of the nation”* dependent on the performance of children in the SLC examinations (Mathema & Bista 2005).



# Internal Political Influences:

## Politics in the Classroom

- Nepal underwent a decade long Civil War between Government forces and the Maoist Party, also known as the Unified Communist Party of Nepal, from 1996-2006.
- Private schooling emerged as a focus of the violent political conflict of the Maoist Party's 'People's War' against the Monarchy and the State (Caddell 2006), having a huge effect on education in Nepal.
- The Maoist party argued:
 

*“If government schools had good facilities and were providing a high quality education then there would be less demand for private schools, and less scope for profit-oriented businessmen to open schools”*

(Caddell 2007b: 1, Quoting Parajuli 2000 *Why is there a school Strike?*)
- Initially, all schools (private & public) were used as a way for the Maoists and government alike to build up support and spread their messages locally, with schools being politically affiliated and exclusive (Caddell 2007b).



## Internal Political Influences: Politics in the Classroom (1996-2006)

- The Maoist Party demanded an end to:
  - collecting fees from government school pupils
  - compulsory Sanskrit instruction
  - the practice of singing the national anthem during assemblies.
- Such moves were aimed both at gaining popular support for the movement and at highlighting the alternative vision of Nepal the Maoists wished to see develop – *“a republican state”* (Caddell 2007a: 24).
- However, Maoist insurgents began bombing and forcibly closing private schools, abducting students and teachers, publicly humiliating them, and creating such fear and terror that many people were too scared to send their children to school (Caddell 2006, Caddell 2007b)
- As a result of the actions of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), popular and political pressure for tighter controls on the Private sector increased



# Internal Political Influences:

## Politics in the Classroom

- The pressure exerted by the Maoist Party on private schooling has led to some changes in the school system, resulting in tighter controls and a re-think of how private schools operate, what they teach and the fees they charge (Caddell 2007a; Caddell 2007b)
- Schools had to identify themselves as:
  1. Private (facilities provided by individuals or private investors, but these individuals cannot make a profit from the school)
  2. Public (land and buildings owned by the government)
  3. Institutional (registered as a private company and taxed 1.5% of the school income)



## ii) Policy Reform





## Policy Reform: Education For All (EFA)

- In 1990 the World Conference on Education For All (WCEFA) called for a stronger focus on basic and primary education, and for universal primary education
- Nepal signed up to the WCEFA Declaration in 1990 (one of its first international agreements) (Caddell 2007a).
- This attracted financial support from the international community and Education For All was finally being implemented despite education being available 'universally' in Nepal since 1951
- In 1992 the Basic & Primary Education Project (BPEP) was implemented in response to the global initiative of EFA
- As the EFA programme was an international one, there became a need for comparability between the national BPEP and the international EFA to ensure that international standards were being met and maintained
- This led to the emergence of more quantifiable measures of achievement; commissioned studies aimed at key areas of interest to the 'global donor community' (Caddell 2007a: 22).



# Policy Reform:

## The Six Goals of the EFA

- In 2000 the World Education Forum on Education For All listed six main goals to be met by 2015 (Nepal National Commission for UNESCO 2003):

1. Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged
2. Ensuring that by 2015 *all* children have access to free and compulsory primary education of good quality
3. Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programs
4. Achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults
5. Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015
6. Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills



# Policy Reform:

## The School Sector Reform Program

- In 2004 Thematic Groups were formed by the Ministry of Education in order to assess the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and options for the school system in Nepal.
- This paved the way for the conceptual development of the educational reform.
- A Concept Paper was developed in 2006, and brought into consolidation by experts, professionals, and stakeholders, including national, regional, district, community and school levels.
- The Concept Paper was approved in 2007, outlining a plan that builds on the achievements of the EFA, operating within the EFA National Plan of Action, the Three Year Interim Plan, and the Millennium Development Goals.
- The SSRP is a long-term strategic plan dedicated to achieving the goals and objectives of Basic and Secondary education for all children in Nepal.
- The program comprises of key strategic interventions and the estimated financial resources required to implement these strategies (Ministry of Education 2009).



## Policy Reform:

### Key aims of the School Sector Reform Program (SSRP) (2009-2015)

- Achieving 94% Net Intake Rate at grade one and 66% survival rate to grade eight.
- Achieving Net Enrolment Rate (NER) of: Primary 99% and Basic 85%.
- 19,500 new classrooms meeting minimum standards constructed.
- 13,000 schools/classrooms refurbished meeting minimum standards.
- 100 new schools established meeting the requirements of students with disabilities.
- 500 Village Development Committees (VDCs)/ Municipalities implementing Compulsory Basic Education (CBE).
- Needy students receiving scholarships.
- 175,000 students with disabilities have received scholarships.
- 300 schools equipped with library and laboratory facilities.
- 7,000 schools' external environment improved to meet Minimum Enabling Conditions (MECs).
- 625 traditional schools upgraded to meet MECs.
- 95 learning facilitation materials produced in different languages.
- Multilingual Education implemented in 7,500 schools.
- 1,500 Schools rewarded for improvement in performance.
- 10,400 Basic Schools where SMCs hired Head teacher on a contractual basis.
- Multi-grade teaching implemented in 750 schools.
- About 150,000 students receive basic education through alternative provisions per annum.



## Policy Reform:

### Results of the BPEP & EFA

- The Basic & Primary Education Program (BPEP) and the Education For All programs ended in 2009.
- Both were successful in Nepal to some degree as they have facilitated the progression of education and brought forth significant achievements in terms of gender equality, enrolment, and provisions of Early Childhood Development (ECD) (Bajracharya & Shrestha 2010).
- As of 2010 Nepal had NER (Net Enrolment Rate) of about 92% bringing it nearer to achieving the EFA goal of universal access to primary school (Bajracharya & Shrestha 2010).
- Since 2010, enrolment has increased in Secondary Education, although enrolment in Private schools is still a more popular notion than in government or community schools.
- However, there are still many obstacles to be overcome before education in Nepal is truly universal and maintained to an acceptable international standard for all children in all social classes, religious and ethnic groups, and genders.



### iii) External Influences





## External Influences: NGOs & International Aid

- Some schools have such scant resources that they rely heavily on NGOs and donors for infrastructure development such as classrooms, toilets and water supplies (Vaux *et al.* 2006).
- Having *“a connection with donor agencies, and with the rhetoric and practices associated with them, has itself emerged as a marker of prestige and a source of legitimacy for the actions of a diverse array of groups within Nepal”* (Caddell 2005: 8).
- However, NGOs and donors can choose their own area of operation, which means that one school may receive the necessary resources while another just as ‘needy’ school, may not (Vaux *et al.* 2006).
- Though governmental reform has played a hand in changing the education system in Nepal, without the help of the global community, the education system would not have made such great progress.
- Indeed, Kankali Secondary School, the focus of QRi Consulting’s report (QRi Consulting 2014), is such an example, benefiting from donations to help fund and support their students’ education and to maintain and improve their facilities and staff.



## External Influences: NGOs & International Aid

- One of the unintended consequences of the dominance of international aid as an 'industry' in Nepal, is that employers, including government and many NGOs, demand English as a necessary qualification.
- Private schools are perceived to meet this need whilst government schools appear to be being left behind.
- The result is a two-tier system, representing a deep social divide.
- The SMCs in some government schools and most of those that are fully decentralised (Community Schools) have introduced English as a language of instruction.
- But the vast majority of government schools teach in Nepali while practically all private schools teach in English to some degree.
- EFA debates tend to circle around the issue of minority languages, whereas the really divisive issue is between Nepali and English (Vaux *et al.* 2006).



## **iv) Administrative Reform**





# Administrative Reform:

## Decentralisation

- The education system in Nepal is now built around a decentralised model, extending “*greater decision making powers to subnational bodies and communities*” (Caddell 2006: 466), and consisting of three main levels (QRi Consulting 2014):
  1. **Central Level:** Managed by the Ministry of Education & Sport (MoES), which is responsible for overall development, planning, monitoring, and evaluation; and the Department of Education (DoE) which has full administrative & financial authority, and is responsible for implementing & monitoring educational programs
  2. **Regional Level:** Managed by Regional Education Directorates (REDs), which is responsible for coordinating, monitoring & Supervising school level learning & teaching, and regional planning
  3. **District Level:** Managed by District Education Officers (DEO), who are responsible for planning & implementing educational development, and supervising & monitoring teaching/learning processes.



# Administrative Reform:

## Decentralisation

- Within the District Level (level 3), and working in conjunction with the DEO, School Management Committees (SMCs) and Head Teachers take on responsibility for school management.
- This is a very beneficial system as it eliminates corruption and helps equalise the distribution of education to all children.
- However, one potential downside of community involvement is that teachers' jobs are no longer secure as SMCs hold the right to dismiss underperforming teachers, which has increased teachers' resistance to decentralisation.
- This has also lead to the rise of politicised teachers unions, which help protect teachers from dismissal.



# Administrative Reform:

## Government and Community Schools

- The blurred lines between Private and Government schools are mirrored in Government 'Public Schools' and emerging so called 'Community Schools'
  - many schools in Nepal run with some government support but have some teachers supported by the community or the tuition fees paid for
- School Management Committees (SMCs), in theory, are in charge of:
  - managing the schools
  - raising the funds to help develop their facilities
  - helping with the development of the teachers (including employment)
  - dealing with issues about access with regards to minority groups, girls, and Dalits,
  - policy direction (in terms of curriculum, school calendar, quality & performance targets)
- The Ministry of Education now has two classifications for Community Schools (Parajuli & Das 2013):
  1. **Aided** – receive regular government grants
  2. **Unaided** – financed with support from community, donations, and the schools own resources

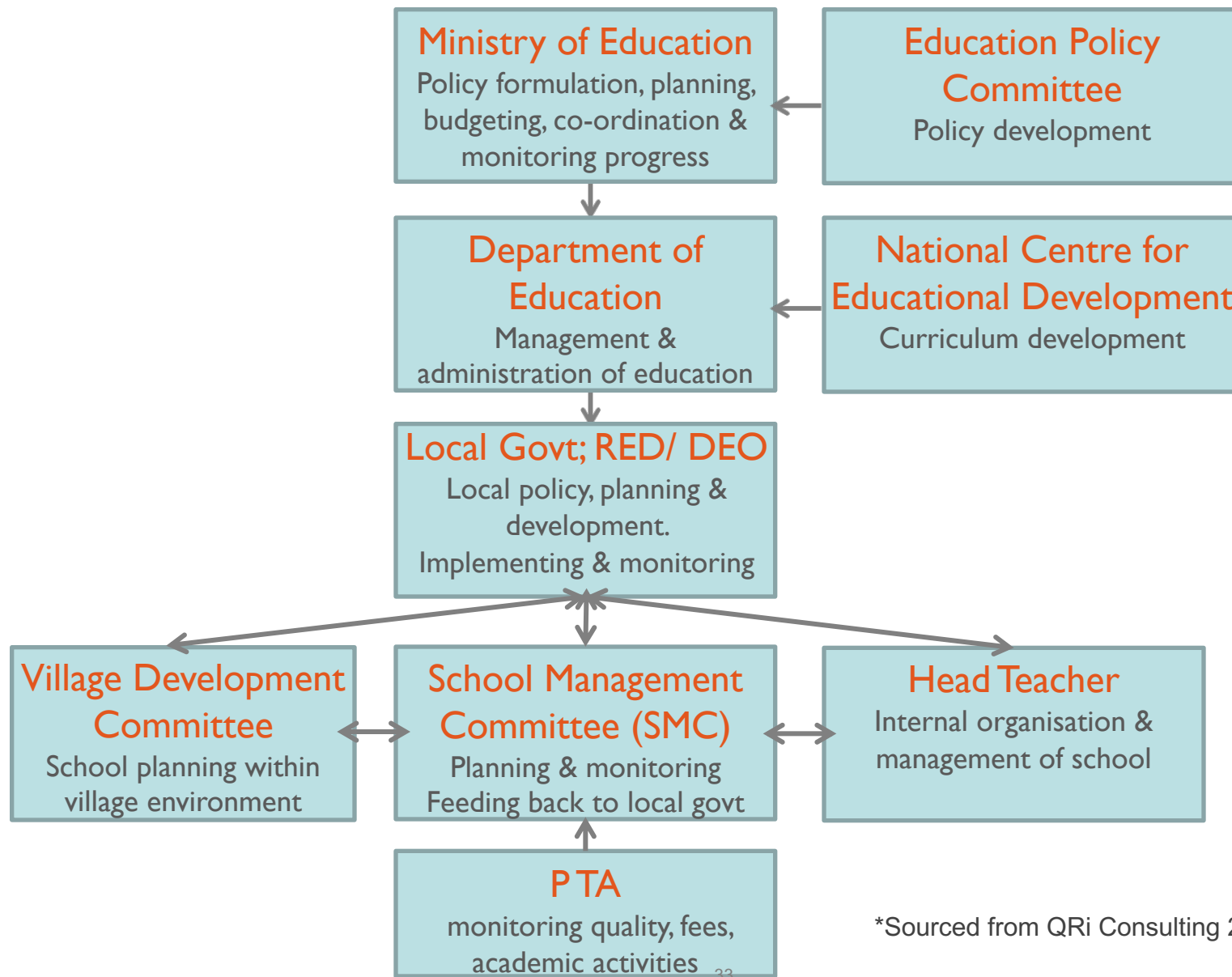


## Administrative Reform: Community Schools

- Having a secondary school is a symbol of prosperity within a community in Nepal; communities are working hard to put together and run secondary schools (Mathema & Bista 2005).
- Communities now have more control over how their students are taught, helping to eliminate some of the problems that were causing high drop out rates in Public schools under centralised control. For example, as communities can now exert control over the employment of teachers, schools can, in theory, have a better balance of male/female teachers, or teachers that teach in a particular local dialect.
- Increased enrolment in Primary Schools is also increasing the demand for Secondary Schools and there is a much better representation of girls and minority groups, such as Dalits.
- However, this has led to overcrowding in classrooms and an imbalance in the spread of teachers across districts, with the more central schools having up to one hundred students in a class, whereas in schools slightly more out-of-the-way it is common to have only ten (Vaux *et al.* 2006).



# Structure of Public Education Management for Community Managed Schools



\*Sourced from QRI Consulting 2014



## **v) Private vs. Public Schools**





# Private vs. Public Schools:

## Private Schools

- With political and economic liberalisation private schooling expanded dramatically, and by the mid-1990s the ratios for public to private schools at secondary level were almost equal (Caddell 2006).
- Divisions between the private and public sectors are not clear-cut:
  - Some private schools run outreach programmes for the poor.
  - Some public schools have two tiers of tuition within the same school, charging children who choose to take private tuition (basically English-medium classes\*) (Caddell 2006).
- The expanded public school system meant that education was now available to all, but this also meant that new ways of differentiating achievement were sought, as simply attending school (private or public) no longer ensured status or employment.
- This meant that the prestige of the school attended 'became increasingly significant as a marker of social standing and differentiation' (Caddell 2006: 468).

\*classes taught in English



# Private vs. Public Schools:

## Private Schools

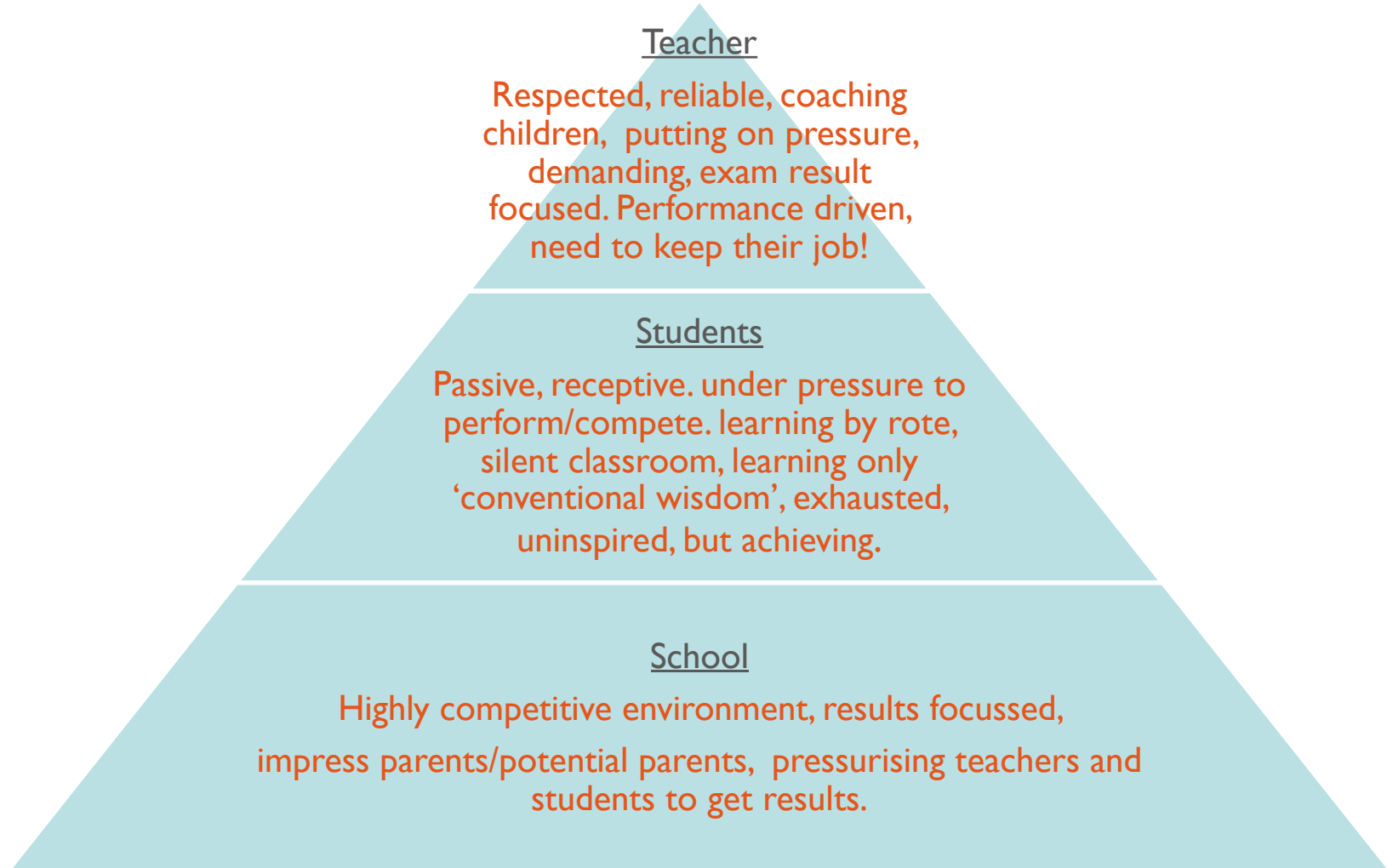
- Private schooling (whether at ‘elite’ or ‘budget’ schools) became the best way for parents to mediate the risk of an uncertain ‘unknowable’ future (Caddell 2006, 2007b).
- By offering ‘English-medium instruction’ Private schools were able to tap into the aspirations parents have for their children in an economically and politically liberalised society.

*“English is considered to connect students to a wider international project, offering a greater potential for mobility than Nepali-medium government schools”* (Caddell 2006:468)

- If a private school offers a higher level of English tuition, its fees will be higher, thus differentiating between Private schools, and creating a more nuanced hierarchy in the education system of Nepal between Private schools, and between Public and Private schools.



# Private Secondary School Model





# Public Secondary School Model

## Teacher

Authoritarian, static class, lecturing children. Stuck in outdated modes of rote teaching. Sometimes using corporal punishment. Secure job, often employed on tenure.

## Student

Learning by rote, silent classroom, suppressed student, passive, submissive children, feeling mentally confined; inertia, bored or frightened.

## Government/Community

Traditionally centralised decision making and funding , Nepali language for all, one size fits all model, no flexibility in teaching materials.

But now changing to Community run schools with local stakeholders; increased local decision making in the running of these new Community Schools.



## **4. Recent Steps towards the Development of Community Schools in Nepal**





## i) Overview





## Overview

- There are conflicting ideals of diversity and identity, trying to be enforced by an idea of uniformity that actually increases the inequalities experienced by the ethnic, religious, and linguistic minorities.
- Social mobility is a shared aspiration of parents for their children, and is something that is regarded as only possible through an English-medium education and/or education in Nepali, preferably at a private school.
- ‘Mother-tongue’ education\*, although hoped to decrease the divisions between localities and minorities, actually increases divisions due to the belief that social mobility and development is only possible through English or Nepali education.
- Private Schooling is held in much higher regard than public education, mostly due to the English-medium tuition and the associated social benefits of learning in English.

\*there are over 90 spoken languages/dialects in Nepal



## Overview

- Private Schools tap into parents aspirations for their children's development and future, creating a new 'caste-structure' of the affluent and poorer communities.
- There is a great divide in SLC pass rates between Private and Public schools, and therefore, between rich and poor, enforcing the social divide.
- Politics has a great influence on schooling and what children are taught. Political conflict, especially during the Civil war (1996-2006), led to schools becoming politically affiliated and different visions of Nepali citizenship, creating greater conflict between Private and Public schools, and increasing the pressure on the government to step-up and improve the Public school system.
- Enrolment and drop-out rates have been a cause of concern in the past. However, within the last 6-8 years, enrolment has greatly increased, especially of girls, Dalits, and ethnic/religious minorities. Drop-out rates have decreased, although they remain higher among public schools.



## Overview

- Schools, especially Public schools and Community Schools, still do not have optimum child-friendly environments, a driving factor in SLC failure and drop-outs.
- NGOs, charities and international aid are still vital in providing schools, communities and individuals with the resources required for an education.
- Community schools have gone a long way in increasing community involvement with the education system, allowing a more integrated 'local' education that is more relevant to the community, and also allowing communities to exert control over under-performing teachers.
- The BPEP and EFA initiatives, which have now come to an end in Nepal, have experienced success, especially in increasing the number of minority groups that now have access to education.
- However, there is still a long way to go before a 'quality' education is provided to all children in Nepal, without discrimination or inequalities.



## **ii) Issues of Diversity, Identity, Uniformity & Social Mobility**





# Diversity, Identity, Uniformity & Social Mobility

- There is a very paradoxical relationship in Nepal with regards to diversity, identity, uniformity and social mobility.
- The education system, designed by the government, promotes “*Unity amidst diversity*” (Caddell 2005), but in practice the school system itself is often the cause of inequality, fuelling ‘division amidst diversity’.
- This vision of unity amidst diversity, is a very specific vision of cultural diversity within Nepal – multi-ethnic, -religious and -lingual diversities are acknowledged, and ‘unity’ is brought forth through ‘universal’ attendance of schools, wearing the same uniforms, learning the same syllabus etc.
- But there is little interest in understanding and addressing inequalities.
- This selective acknowledgement depoliticises difference, and side-lines inequality “*through a focus on dress, facial features and customs*” (Caddell 2005:14).



# Diversity, Identity, Uniformity & Social Mobility

- The construction of schools as a national institution present in all towns/localities creates a relationship with students and local communities, and the State beyond the 'local', and *“shifts allegiance and emotional affiliation to a broader entity”* (Caddell 2005:12).
- This allows for that 'particular vision of cultural diversity' to be created by masking the social divisions. The schools themselves become symbols of the Nation State as they are usually large, well established buildings, held in high esteem by the local communities as they represent the possibility of social mobility.
- This means that people regard attending school as a means of transcending cultural differences.



# Diversity, Identity, Uniformity & Social Mobility

- However, participating in schooling does not offer a straightforward link with *“increased development or inclusion in processes of nation-building”* (Caddell 2005: 20).
- For example, in the semi-urban area of Balambu in the Kathmandu Valley, the local government school was very highly regarded by the locals. But when immigrants entered the town to work and started sending their children there, the locals stopped sending their children to that school and instead sent them to local Private Schools.
- This just indicates that although school is promoted and often regarded as a means of social mobility and unity, in practice, schools can fuel social divides.



# Diversity, Identity, Uniformity & Social Mobility

- Visions of ‘Nepaliness’ are of urban, educated, Hindu (predominantly high-caste) citizens, a very specific and exclusive representation of the actual diversity that exists in Nepal (E.g. there are 92 living languages in Nepal, but attitudes towards students that do not speak or understand Nepali or English are extremely negative).
- Attempts to create uniformity in schools, ironically, creates greater diversity.
- For example, the use of uniforms, designed to make everyone alike, taking caste, social status and religion out of the picture, actually enforces hierarchies – Private schools have different uniforms to government schools (and each other), highlighting the social divide by increasing the visibility of which students are from affluent families and which are not.



# Diversity, Identity, Uniformity & Social Mobility

- The materials that many schools have are generally provided externally, i.e. by foreign governments, NGOs, and charities.
- This connects schools with “*something ‘other’ than ‘the local’ and ‘traditional practices’*” (Caddell 2005: 11); meaning that relationships with schools are highly desirable as they are connected to the international community and, therefore, offer financial benefits and opportunities for social mobility.
- This desire to have a strong relationship with schools (especially Private schools) is reflected in parents aspirations for their children.
- Getting a job in a ‘project’ with a donor agency, is seen as one of the best destinations for a child in Nepal after leaving school as they are exposed to the international community and, therefore, social mobility.
- But this is only seen as a realistic option if the children are taught English



## Diversity, Identity, Uniformity & Social Mobility

- Despite the 1990 Constitution that allowed ‘mother-tongue’ education, Nepali remains the main language of schooling, and English is the most desired language by parents.
- Indeed, some parents do not see the point of learning in their mother-tongue because it makes it more difficult for their children to converse outside of their locality, and limits their ability to progress.
- Many parents express that they would send their children to Private schools to be taught in English but do not, only because of financial constraints (Caddell 2005).
- Education in the ‘Mother-tongue’ is often equated with the *“backwardness”* of the community (Caddell 2005).
- This is further compounded by a) the lack of minority teachers who would be able to teach in mother-tongues, and be able to relate to the students from similar backgrounds b) minority teachers (e.g. Dalits and Janajatis) still experience discrimination in the workplace, often being forced to sit separately from other ethnic/religious groups.



# Diversity, Identity, Uniformity & Social Mobility

- This represents a major problem in the Nepali Education system, as, if education is not provided in local dialects, schools are excluding that community, and it has been cited as a cause of low enrolment rates among minorities.

*“The relationship between mother-tongue and Nepali language thus reinforces the supremacy of a national affiliation over the local and has become a significant marker of potential mobility, education and ‘development’”*

(Caddell 2005: 16)



### **iii) Enrolment & Drop-out Rates**





# Current Age/Grade/Education Level Structure

Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Education Level	Primary					Lower Secondary			Secondary		Higher Secondary		Higher Education (University)				
Normal Age	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21

\* Data from [http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/archive/Countries/WDE/2006/ASIA\\_and\\_the\\_PACIFIC/Nepal/Nepal.htm](http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/archive/Countries/WDE/2006/ASIA_and_the_PACIFIC/Nepal/Nepal.htm)



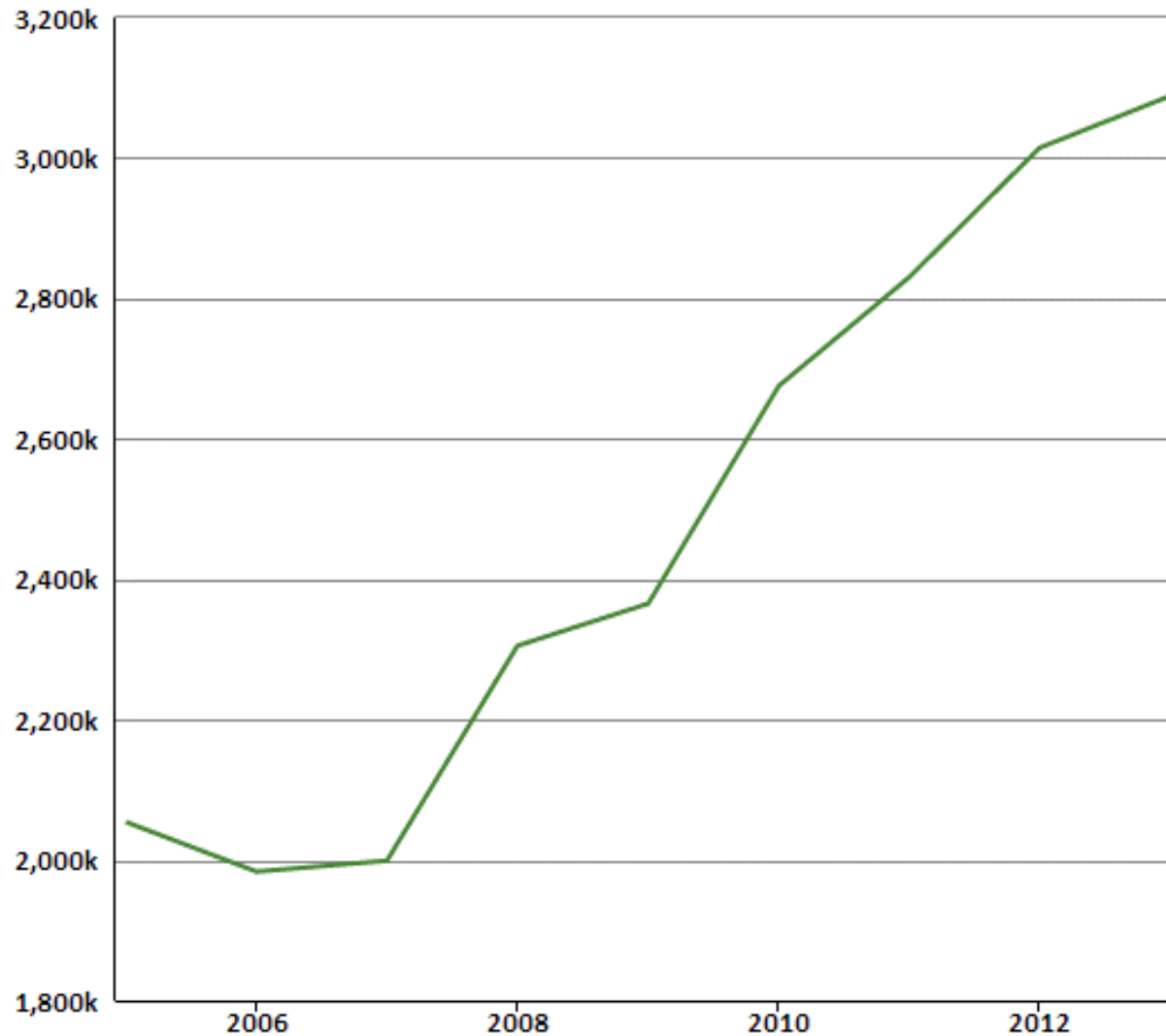
# Enrolment & Drop-Out Rates:

## Enrolment

- Enrolment rates at primary level is actually quite high (around 95% in 2013).
- The Education For All (EFA) Program has increased enrolment to schools in most communities.
- Prior to 2006, enrolment rates in Nepal's Secondary School system were dramatically low, although by 2005 the numbers of girls, Dalits, ethnic & linguistic minorities, and children from poor households were increasing.
- Since 2006, total enrolment rates have dramatically increased (see Slide 54).
- Entry rates into secondary education have increased for both males and females, with a higher ratio of females entering lower secondary education than males (see Slide 55).

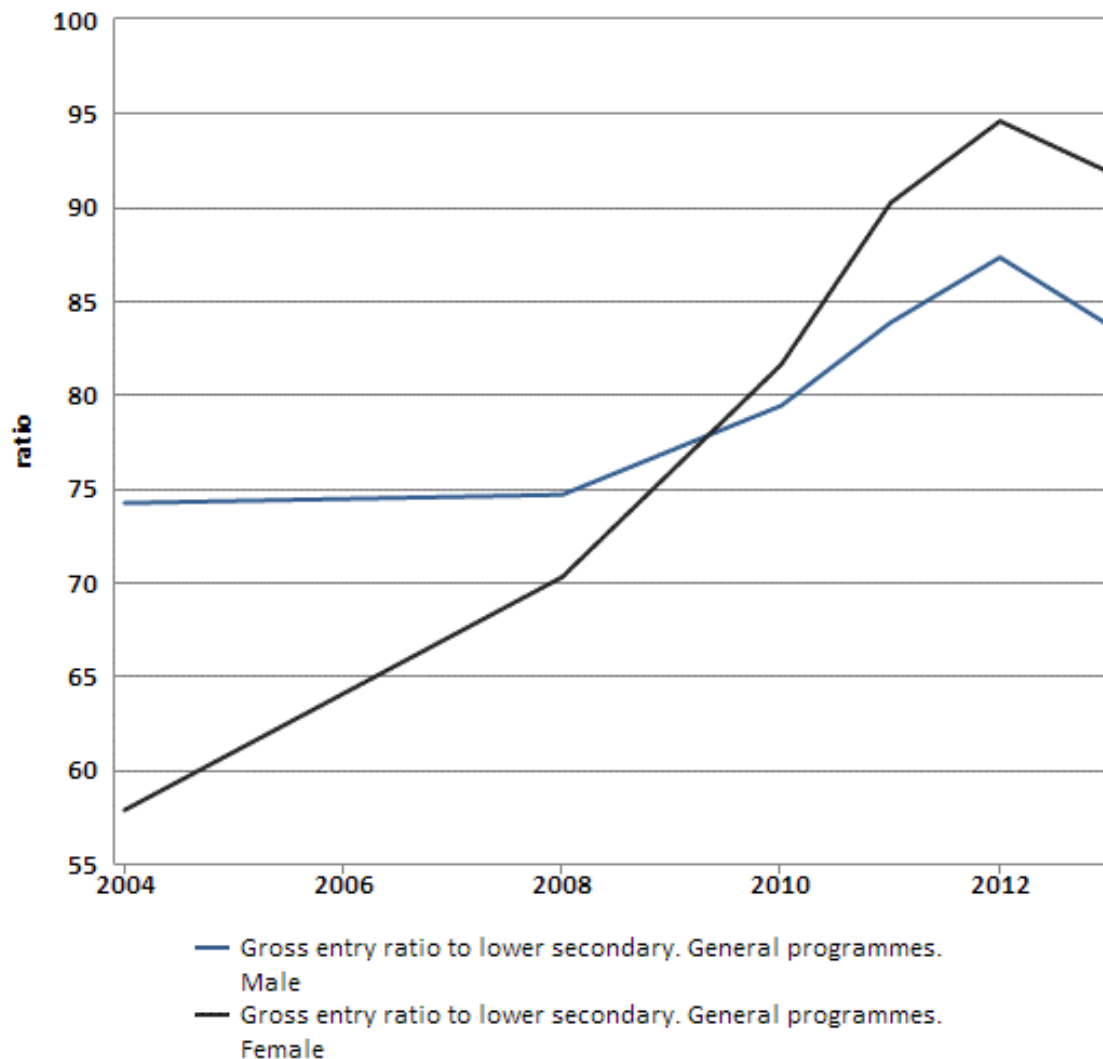


## Total enrolment in Secondary Education (public & private) in Nepal. (Education Statistics, World Bank, June 2014)





# Gross Entry Ratio to Lower Secondary School Male vs. Female 2004-2012 (Education Statistics, World Bank, June 2014)





# Enrolment & Drop-Out Rates:

## Drop-Out Rates

- Drop-out rates are still very high at Secondary level, especially among children from disadvantaged communities.
- Approximately half of all children leave education all together after Primary School. An overwhelming number of these are from disadvantaged communities, girls, and Dalits
- In some cases, quality of education is so poor that children are barely literate despite finishing attending
- The high drop out rate can be put down to a number of factors including:
  - Early marriage (girls)
  - Migration
  - Labour
  - High school fees
  - Inappropriate environments



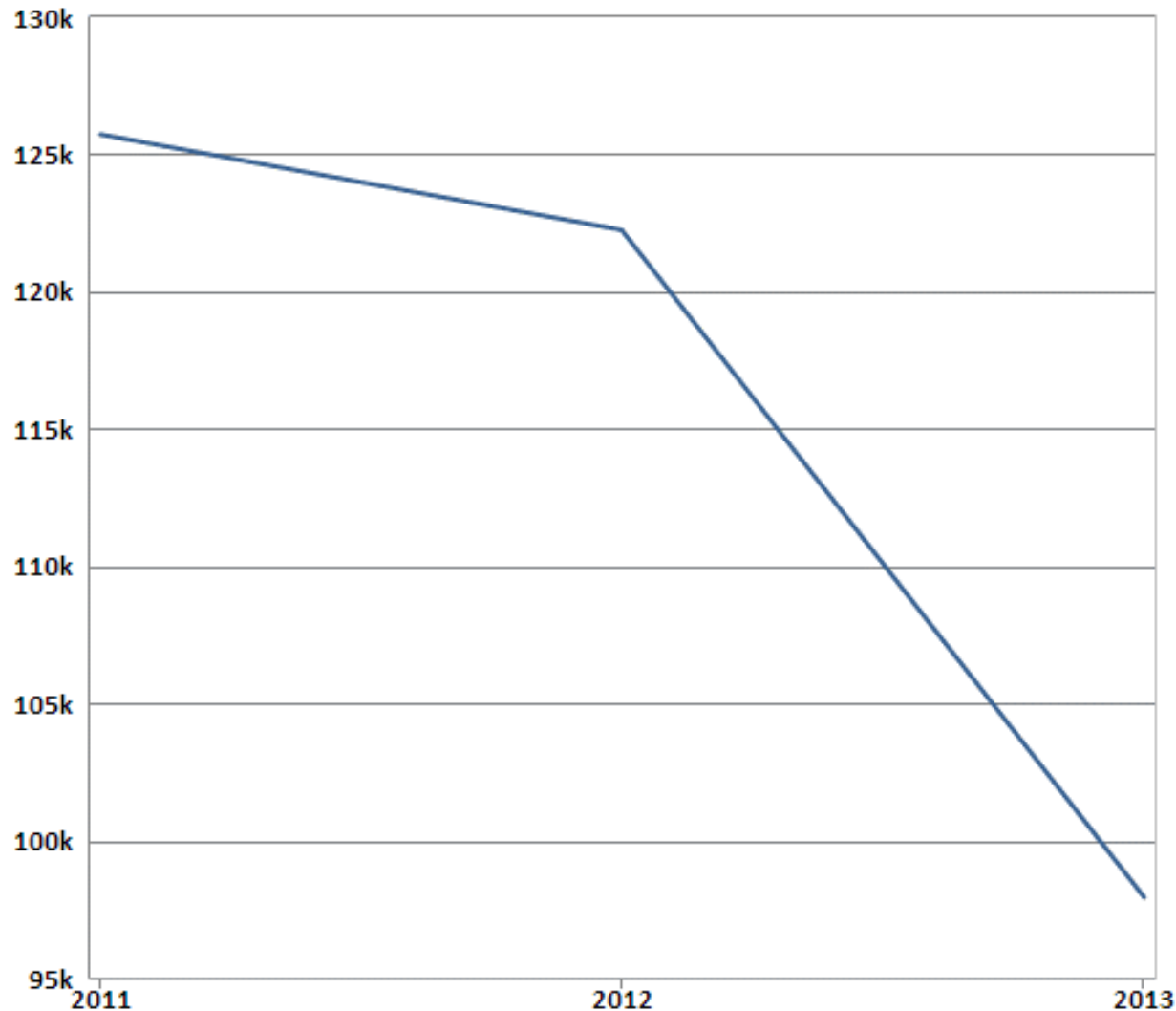
# Enrolment & Drop-Out Rates:

## Drop-Out Rates

- The World Bank reported in 2014 that the overall number of children out of school has dramatically fallen between 2011-2013 (see slide 58), and the number of children that have to repeat a (secondary) level has fallen consistently from 2004-2012 (see slide 59).
- However, a study by the Department of Education (DOE) and Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development (CERID) reports high drop-out rates in Primary Education, meaning that a small proportion of children actually reach Secondary education (see slides 60 & 61) (2013 Formative Research Project for School Sector Reform Program (SSRP)).
- It is important to note that the sample size of this study is small, taken from only 5 sample districts and is taken to be representative of schools in Nepal.

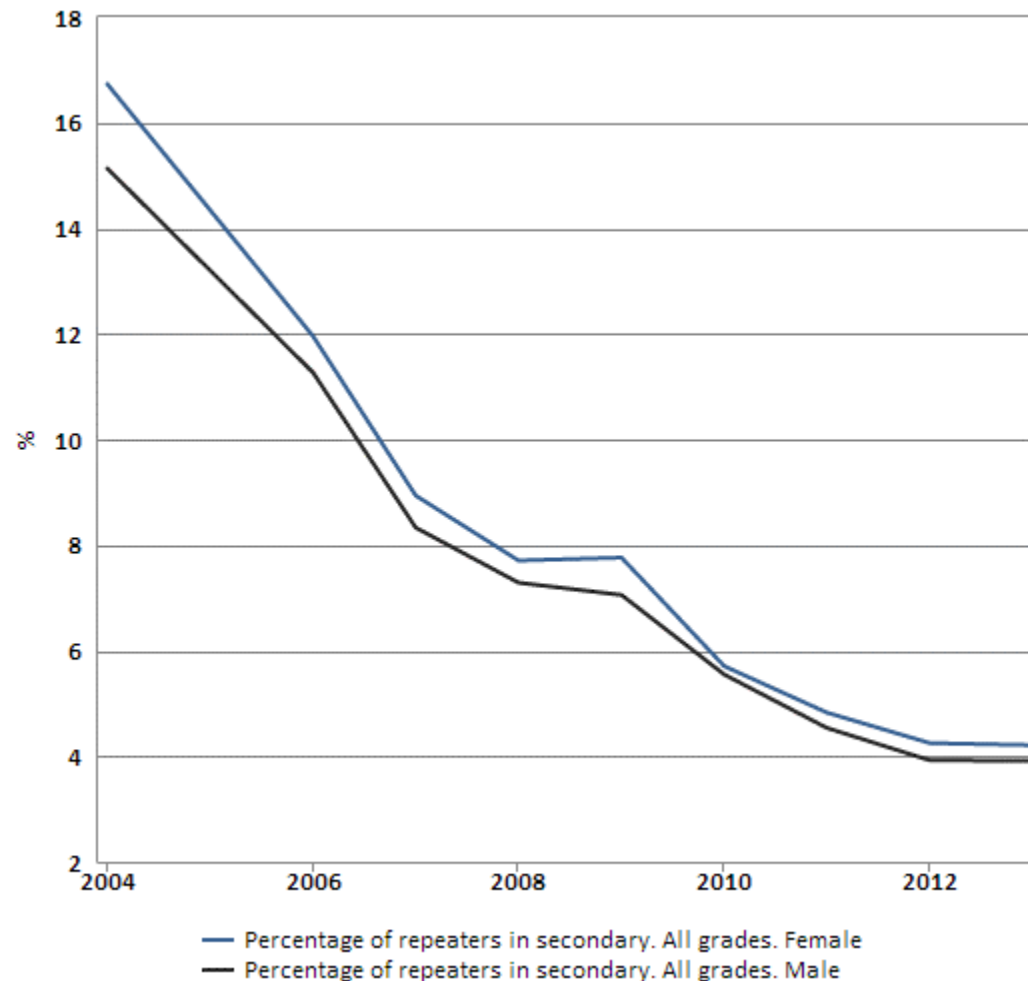


## Total Out-of-School Children of Lower Secondary School Age in Nepal 2011-2013 (Education Statistics, World Bank, June 2014)





## Percentage of Repeaters in Secondary Level Male vs. Female (Education Statistics, World Bank, June 2014)





## Percentage Flow of 2002 Cohort from Grade 1 to Grade 8

Year	Grade							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2009								12.8
2008							17.2	
2007						20.4		
2006					26.8			
2005				30.4				
2004			37.6					
2003		64.0						
2002	100							

*\*Data taken from 2013 Formative Research Project for School Sector Reform Program (SSRP): Longitudinal Study on System Indicators (An analysis of Progress from the year 2002 to 2012)*



## Percentage Flow of 2004 Cohort from Grade 1 to Grade 8

Year	Grade							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2012								13.6
2010							17.6	
2009						23.6		
2008					25.8			
2007				31.5				
2006			40.3					
2005		53.3						
2004	100							

*\*Data taken from 2013 Formative Research Project for School Sector Reform Program (SSRP): Longitudinal Study on System Indicators (An analysis of Progress from the year 2002 to 2012)*



## iv) Private vs. Public Schools





## Public vs. Private Schooling

- There has been a debate about whether formal education should be a government responsibility or opened up to market forces (Caddell 2007b).
- This is something that is compounded by the fact that many government officials that can afford it, will send their own children to private schools, creating an apathetic air around the Public sector from a government standpoint (Caddell 2007b).
- Due to the lower pass rates in the SLC examinations in Public Schools in general, a new caste structure is emerging. Private schooling has widened the gap between the “*haves and have-nots*” (Mathema & Bista 2005: 10).

*“It is an irony that education believed to be an ‘equalizer’ has been a major divider of the Nepali Society”*

(Mathema & Bista 2005: 9-10).

- To protect their business and profits, the private sector projects educational quality and the provision of ‘social good’ as a marketing tool and to counter government demands for tax payments (Caddell 2006).



## Public vs. Private Schooling

- The private sector plays up to the ‘failings’ of the Government, *“maintaining a sense of antagonism”* about the state sector to increase private enrolment by engaging with the *“philanthropic rhetoric providing a social service in relation to a dysfunctional state alternative”* (Caddell 2006; Caddell 2007b: 22).
- Private schools tap into the parents concerns about an *“unknowable future”*, promising that their children can become doctors and engineers.
- This has made it difficult for a meaningful partnership between the Government and Private schools to be built.
- However, there is a large gap between student/parental aspirations and expectations to what is actually being met by schools.
- This is something that the government and schools alike need to learn from and adapt to; understanding the diversity of interests and aspirations of *“learners, parents and private school proprietors – and the choices they make in relation to the broader educational and political context”* (Caddell 2006: 477).



## **v) Unhealthy Competition**





## Unhealthy Competition

- Schools in Nepal engage in “*unhealthy competition*” (Sapkota 2011) in an effort to attract students and funding, in turn, earning prestige amongst the community and thus attracting more students and funding.
- Schools, especially Private, but also Public Schools that can afford it, will advertise in newspapers, billboards, television and radio (Sapkota 2011; Poudel 2011).
- Schools that teach English (even to a poor level) highlight it in order to entice parents into sending their children there.
- All claim that they are offering ‘quality’ education for an affordable or reasonable price (Poudel 2011).
- They promise good SLC results and claim that that their students will go on to become ‘doctors’ or ‘engineers’. However, there has been much criticism of Private Schools “*training*” their students via ‘rote learning’ to pass at the expense of other practical skills and knowledge (QRi Consulting 2014; Sapkota 2011).



## Unhealthy Competition

- However, the competition between schools goes beyond SLC results. Schools can choose their names, and many tap into perceptions of British and America education by choosing names such as boarding school, and affiliating with famous names such as NASA, Cambridge, Chelsea and so on.
  - For those in-the-know, the term ‘Public school’ is used as the English would use it, i.e. meaning Private education, as is the term ‘Boarding school’, even though it is only a day school.
  - It is a way to distinguish themselves from other schools in the area and to present themselves as ‘Western’ and aspirational. There appear to be no rules limiting or guiding the naming of private schools
- Private Schools, and the well-off Public and Community Schools, buy school buses as another way of distinguishing themselves. These buses will have the schools name on them, making them extremely visible to the community.
- Overall, this makes it very hard for the schools that do not have the funds to advertise and promote themselves to attract students/parents, but also community support, something that is vital for the success of a school.



# Unhealthy Competition:

## The SLC Examinations

- Parajuli, of the Maoist 'All Nepal National Independent Students Union' (ANNISU) notes, *"In the current context one can see 'unequal education' being provided, yet 'equal competition' in the form of the SLC [School Leaving Certificate] exams"* (Parajuli 2000 Quoted in Caddell 2007b: 13).
- The SLC examinations provide the only easily available measure of success (or failure) of schools (Mathema & Bista 2005).
- SLCs are important as they open the door to higher education and employment.
- Unfortunately, the natural tendency is to compare Private and Public SLC results, highlighting the inequality between the two sectors.
- However, even within the private sector, SLC pass rates were disappointingly low prior to 2005, resulting in *"many unsuccessful children taking their lives in despair..... Many others give up on their studies and either leave the country for employment or join rebel (Maoist) forces"* (Mathema & Bista 2005; 9).



# Unhealthy Competition:

## The SLC Examinations

- In the past, failure was simply brushed off as inevitable due to the 'high standards' required by the SLCs to gain a pass, and was, therefore, ignored.
- There is still a tendency for Government officials, and even teachers, to send their own children to private schools, leaving the public schools with girls, Dalits & poor children, resulting in the low pass rates of SLCs in the public sector being ignored.
- Despite private schools having higher pass rates in the SLCs, accusations that teachers coach their students to pass at the expense of actual learning has dampened their achievements (Mathema & Bista 2005; Sapkota 2011).



# Unhealthy Competition:

## School Facilities

- The lack of appropriate child-friendly environments has been a major contributing factor to the high (although decreasing) drop-out rates, and the divide between Public/Community and Private Schools.
- Due to a lack of funding from the Government, much of the money needed to build and refurbish the proper facilities is spent on teachers salaries (which are up to 3x the national average).
- This has led to a distinct lack of child-friendly environments, especially in poorer schools.
- However, the School Sector Reform Program (SSRP), EFA, and BPEP, have all had a positive impact on raising funds and helping schools and communities to build the appropriate facilities.
- These most commonly constitute proper toilet facilities, libraries, science labs, and classrooms.



## vi) Community Schools





# Community Schools

- The purpose of implementing a change from Government Managed Schools to Community Managed Schools (CMS) was to promote decentralisation of the education system due to the ineffectiveness of the original system.
- The aim was to develop a sense of ownership among parents, stakeholders, and organisations and to involve them in school improvement efforts to enhance the *quality* of education.
- Moving towards community management initiated:
  - the policy for local participation in management and operation of educational institutes
  - the transfer of management from government to parents, stakeholders, and communities
- However, perhaps one of the most important changes enabled by decentralisation of the education system is the establishment of school transparency and the enhanced accountability of school authorities.



## Community Schools

- Despite the positive reception, lump sum grants and relief grants were major factors in encouraging change.
- There was a general fear that the government was relinquishing itself from responsibility and the community would bear the financial burden
- The government's aim was to change Community Managed Schools (CMS) into autonomous schools, but a lack of "*capacity and rigidity in teacher recruitment practices*" meant that CMS can be heavily reliant on the government (Upadhyaya *et al.* 2009: ix).
- Teachers resisted the policy changes in several ways with three fundamental reasons - institutional, psychological and political - for their resistance.
- In theory, as School Management Committees have more power in the teacher recruitment process, teachers jobs are less secure. This has increased teacher's resistance to decentralisation but also encouraged teachers to preform better.
- Communities now have the ability to design local curriculum based on local needs and some schools have even developed their own code of conduct.



# Community Schools:

## School Management Committees

- Community schools are under the management of the School Management Committees (SMCs)
- They were founded on the basis that community management of schools would provide the primary means of improving the quality of education across Nepal through enhancing participation, quality, efficiency, and accountability (The World Bank 2010).
- The role of the SMCs is to:
  - Strengthen scholarship distribution and monitoring mechanisms
  - Report to parents and local government
  - Recruit teachers
  - Grant support for head-teachers
  - Construct new classrooms, special schools, libraries, external environments appropriate for children
  - Support scholarships for the disabled, girls, disadvantaged/poor, and children from minority groups
  - Have a role in the financial and social audits of the school



# Community Schools

- Despite the transition from government to community managed schools being regarded positively, enrolment in the Private sector has increased (Government of Nepal 2012)
- This is thought to be possibly due to poor perceptions of quality at community schools and the differences in managerial and teaching/learning situations between Private and Community Schools.
- SMCs also raise money at community level which tends to go towards the physical upkeep and improvement of the school buildings, furniture and playground, etc.
- Schools with strong SMCs that are active in fund raising have managed to turn underperforming schools around by funding the building of libraries, science labs, computer labs, etc.
- Community schools can charge school fees for the children of the families that can afford it. This goes to maintaining the school facilities or towards the scholarships of the children who cannot afford to go to school



# Community Schools:

## Review of Performance

- Despite the various reforms and government programs designed to enable Community Managed Schools and to enhance quality education throughout the nation to rival the private sector, the majority of Community Schools are underperforming compared to Private Schools.
- A review of the performance of Community Schools in 2013 found that 72% of students from Community Schools failed their SLC exams, compared to the 86% pass rate of Private Schools (Parajuli & Das 2013).
- To magnify the implications of this, the World Bank in 2013 estimated only 15% of students in Nepal were in Private education, which means that the majority of students in Nepal failed their SLC examinations.
- The low success rates of some of the schools have wide-ranging causes, many are not new. Problems include:
  - Physical and structural issues
  - A lack of textbooks
  - Some communities do not have a school/the distance is too far
  - Teachers lack specialisation and appropriate training
  - Out-dated curriculum
  - Language barriers



# Community Schools:

## Review of Performance

- However, one new cause of disruption to the Community Schools educational process is the discourse between SMCs and teachers.
- Teachers no longer have as much job security as SMCs play a role in the recruitment and promotion of teachers.
- To combat this teachers have become affiliated with politicised teachers unions, which affect teaching and learning activities and outcomes (Parajuli & Das 2013; Upadhyaya *et al.* 2009).



# Teachers

- The All Nepal National Teachers Organisation, and other teacher's unions, are politically strong:

*“Teachers have strongly resisted the move giving SMC the responsibility of hiring and firing of the teachers, stating seemingly genuine causes, that it's a part of the process of the government to take its hands off the management of public schools, although some activists claim that teachers do not like being supervised so closely”*

(Bhattarai 2007 :12).

- Some teachers even have feudalistic reactions: how can educated teachers be controlled by SMCs that are full of illiterate members?  
(Bhattarai 2007 ).
- Despite their negative reactions to decentralisation and the movement towards Community Managed Schools, in many respects, teachers unions have made a positive impact on the education system in Nepal.
- Teachers' unions are stronger and have increased their impact on education policy through unity, as governments are made to listen to their voices and examine their demands.



# Teachers

- Teachers' have demanded:
  - stopping the use of temporary teachers, and eradicating differences in working conditions and salaries.
  - improving professional security, including the elimination of threats and intimidation.
  - better management of educational institutions and improved selection procedures.
  - increased use of non-teaching staff to support the work of schools.
  - increasing the number of women teachers.
  - improving professional development.
  - consideration of the fact that some teachers are working in conflict areas and are affected by conflict.
- All of these are positive changes, that have the potential to better the environment for teachers and students alike.

\*Sourced from Education International 2012 [http://www.ei-ie.org/en/news/news\\_details/2384](http://www.ei-ie.org/en/news/news_details/2384)



## 5. Summary & Conclusions





## Summary

- Governmental educational reform and international initiatives, such as the BPEP and EFA respectively, have nudged the Nepali school system in the positive direction, giving them the support and direction needed to make change happen.
- As demonstrated, enrolment rates are increasing, and drop-out rates are decreasing, meaning that in total, a larger number of children are in education.
- However, these figures still show that a high number of children are out of school, a number that increases with age. The majority of these are still girls and minority groups (including minority mother-tongue children).
- Private schooling has traditionally been, and remains to be, the most respected form of education as tuition is in Nepali and English.



## Summary

- New laws requiring schools to teach in mother-tongue if requested by the community/parents/students, although a popular concept, has had little effect on schooling as English and Nepali are still regarded as the most desirable languages, and discrimination still exists towards mother-tongues.
- The decentralisation of the school administrative system, leading to the development of Community Schools, was designed to help provide equal and quality education to all by increasing the responsibility of the community, but also to make the school system more transparent.
- The SLC examinations still unofficially represents the measure of the quality of a School, with pass rates remaining high in Private Schools and low in many Community and Government schools.



## Summary

- Many of the problems faced in Community Schools are not new. These centre around a lack of appropriate funds resulting in a lack of appropriate 'child-friendly' environments.
- Further, the tension between teachers and the SMCs are proving to be a barrier to the success of community schools as teachers appear to feel undervalued and unappreciated due to the empowerment of the SMCs.
- Although the idea of Community Managed Schools is popular as communities can create local curriculums that are relevant to their community, there is a level of distrust towards the government as some believe the government is relinquishing their responsibilities.
- This has led to many Community Schools becoming dependent on the government and NGOs for grants and teaching materials.



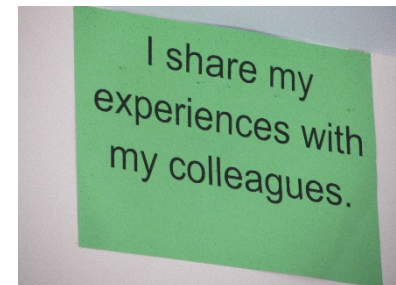
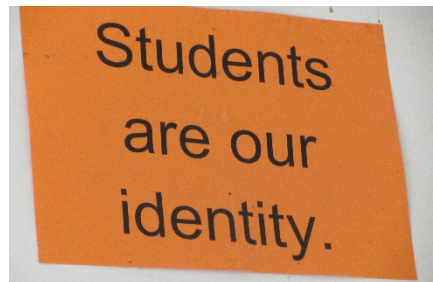
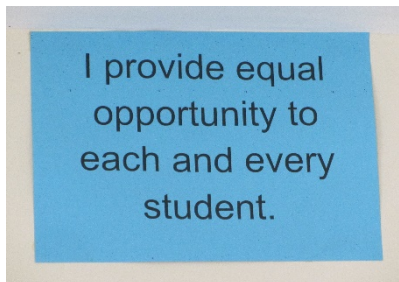
## Conclusions

- Overall, Nepal has made great progress in reforming its education system, especially if one reminds themselves of the position they were in 65 years ago.
- They are getting much closer to their original goal of providing a universal education to children in Nepal, especially to previously ignored groups, such as girls and Dalits.
- The decentralisation of the education system and the creation of Community Schools is an important factor in providing quality education to all.
- In the areas where the Community School system works, such as in Kankali Secondary School in Kathmandu Valley, it works extremely well.
- However, it seems that for a school to truly be a Community School, it needs to engage with both the community and teachers, so that the school becomes a centre of shared learning.
- But also to be of benefit to the community, teachers, and students, which can be achieved via strong leadership.



## Conclusions

- Teacher morale is extremely important, as they can be the biggest hindrance to, or driving force of, the success of a community school.
- Schools that engage and involve the teachers with the design of policies, curriculum, codes of conduct, and listen to their requests re: fair salaries, safe working environments, eliminating discrimination, access to training and development, etc. will perform better than schools that do not.
- Indeed, teacher motivation and involvement in the life of the school appears to be vital in order for them to feel part of the Community.



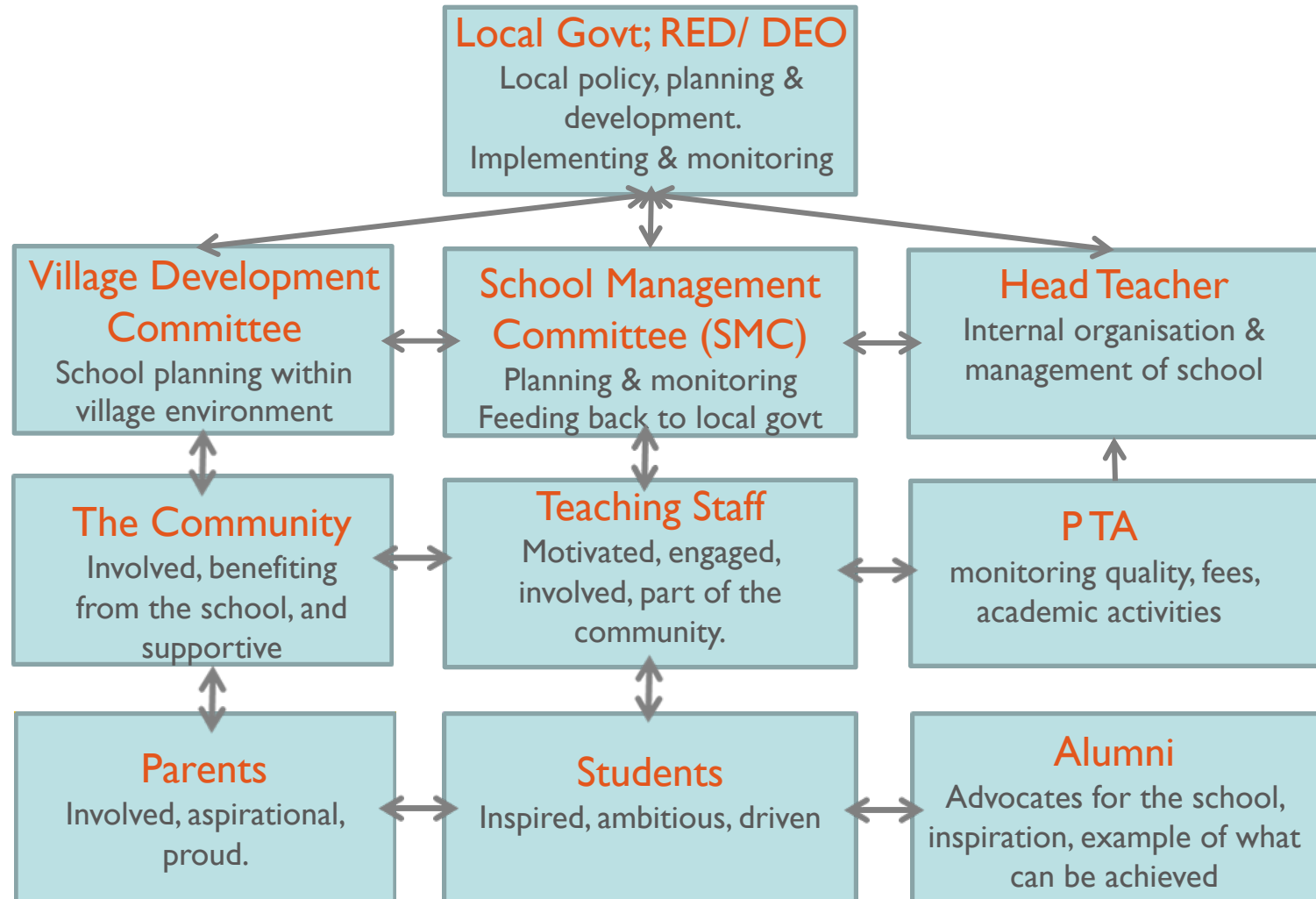


## Involving All Parties

- As far as we can judge, to be a successful community school, all parties over and above the formal management structure, need to be involved and engaged:
  - The Community as a whole
  - Parents of students, and potential students
  - Alumni
  - Teachers
  - As well as the students themselves



# The Ideal Structure of Community Managed Schools





## 6) References





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