

# **REPORT**

**ON THE**

## **Utilisation of Government subsidies by Primary Schools in the Western Area**



**One of the Schools visited in the Eastern Part**

**Done by:**

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(WABEAN)**

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**OCTOBER, 2006**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The WABEAN Team would like to express its gratitude to the various Donors including ActionAid Sierra Leone, ActionAid Western Area Development Area (WADA) and the Common Wealth education Fund for providing funds for the Survey. Special thanks also go to the Consultant of the Survey Review team. The invaluable work of the Consultant Himself is greatly appreciated. Appreciation is also extended to PETS, Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) and DACO

WABEAN would also like to thank all the Field Enumerators, Supervisors, respondents, Head of Schools and Community respondents for their support to the work of the Consultant and Team. The WABEAN Team also wishes to express their appreciation to the Staff of Action Aid and other Organisations that supported the work for their immense cooperation.

Finally, all remaining errors and omissions in this report should be attributed to WABEAN and not any of the persons listed above. It is our fervent hope that this report showcases the level of improving service delivery for all.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

BECE- Basic Education Certificate Examination

DDR- Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration

GDP – Gross Domestic product

JSS- Junior Secondary School

NEMP- National Education Master Plan

NGOs- Non Governmental Organisations

% - Percentage

PCU- Programme Coordinating Unit

PETS- Public Expenditure Tracking System

PRSP- Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper

SSS- Senior Secondary school

UN- United Nations

US\$- United States Dollar

WABEAN- Western Area Budget Education and Advocacy Network

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **Introduction**

Sierra Leone educational sector is characterized with a plethora of problems. The government is putting efforts in addressing these problems and has promulgated series of policies. Programmes geared towards achieving the policy objectives are been designed and implemented. One such programme is Basic Education for All by 2015, to achieve the Millennium Development Goal 3.

These activities are complimented by other agencies, in promoting and reducing poverty. This is done with the provision of Subsidies by Government and Development Partners to ease the burden on parents, who cannot afford to cater for their children especially the girl child.

Government in 2002/2003 introduced the Subsidy system by providing funds to respective primary schools in the country to assist in the running of these schools. These subsidies are in the form of physical cash for the purchase of basic school materials. These funds are not suppose to be used for staff salaries as the government is taking care of that responsibility.

There are evidences that these funds provided to schools are not properly utilized. A tracking system was introduced known as PETS. But this system is implemented after these resources have been disbursed and utilized by the schools. Moreover, there is substantial delay in the production of the report that meaningful decision making is untimely. Furthermore, the system could not take care of the utilisation of these funds.

WABEAN, a civil society organisation in its thirst to see that, there is transparency and accountability in the utilisation of these scarce resources, approached Donors such as ActionAid International Sierra Leone, Common Wealth Education Fund to undertake an assessment of the utilisation of these funds in all the schools in the Eastern part of the Western Area.

The objectives of the Survey were to find out whether the subsidies provided by government were utilized for the intended purposes and are used judiciously.

The survey targeted 111 schools in the eastern part of the Western Area. Participatory data collection methods were used and involved 15 enumerators, who collected the data. Training was conducted for two days for the field enumerators before data collection on the use of the methods. Simple data analysis was done using percentages, charts and figures in the interpretation of the results.

### **Major Findings**

#### ***Verification of schools***

A total of 111 primary schools were identified in the eastern part of the Western Area. These schools were categorized into the following: Public Schools (Government owned), Mission Schools (Government Assisted Schools) and Community Schools. There are 21 Public Schools, 86 Mission Schools and 4 Community Schools identified.

#### ***School Capacities***

In this analysis, the following facilities were considered: Classrooms, Blackboard, Toilets, Water facilities and the like.

- A total of 848 classrooms were found in these schools, giving an average number of classroom as 7.6 with an average pupil per classroom of 78 pupils
- A total of 774 Blackboard were found in 848 Classrooms depicting a shortfall in the distribution of blackboards by 76
- There are 93 schools out of the 111 primary schools with toilet facilities, whilst there are only 35 schools with water supply facilities.

### ***School Enrollment***

There is a total enrollment of about 66,465 pupils found in the 111 schools, depicting an average of enrollment of 599 pupils per school. This ranges from 625 pupils in the Mission Schools to 250 pupils in the Community Schools.

Of this enrollment, 50.5% are boys, whilst 49.5% are girls. The most prominent enrollment ratio occurs in the community schools where the girls' enrollment is greater than the boys. The highest enrollment by class is indicated in class 3, whilst the lowest is indicated in class 6.

### ***School Subsidies***

From 2002/03 to 2005/06, government allocated the sum of Le 2,842, 705, 746 to all the schools surveyed with 2002/03 taking the highest and 2005/06 the lowest. Of this amount, the highest went to Mission Schools, since it has a greater number of schools. The pattern of disbursement showed that, the highest amount of subsidies was done in the first term.

### ***Relationship between Enrollment and Subsidies***

Taking the most recent year of 2005/06, the relationship between the enrollment and disbursement shows that there is no definite pattern or formula. If there is a formula, then it is not applicable to some schools. This is depicted below:

- There is an enrollment of 66,465 pupils and the total amount disbursed as subsidies was Le 135, 750,363. the average disbursement per school is therefore Le 1,268,690 per school
- The average disbursement per pupil was Le 2,073 slightly above the stipulated amount of Le 2,000 per pupil, making a difference of Le 73.1 per pupil or Le 4,800,000 for the total 66,465 pupils.
- In the case of public schools the average disbursement per pupil is less than Le 2,000 i.e. Le 1,680.6 pupil. This implies an underpayment of Le 3,731,869.6 subsidies to these schools.
- As for the Mission schools, there is a surplus average per pupil by Le 159.01 or Le 8,551,716.81 for these schools.
- Taking the two categories together, there was an underpayment by Le 4,819,847 to the entire schools
- As there is no set rules and regulations, the management of the school subsidies appears to be used in other areas other than those intended.

### ***Lapses in the management of subsidies***

Based on the above analysis, there are series of lapses or shortfalls in the management of subsidies, among these are:

- Disbursement delays
- Management
- Record keeping

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings and observations, the following are recommended:

1. in the face of the weaknesses in the record keeping by schools, it is imperative that refresher raining programmes be organised for all schools before any future disbursement to the schools are made
2. in was observed that the monitoring and supervision by the ministry of education is ineffective, therefore a more robust monitoring and supervision mechanism be put in place to track the utilisation of government subsidies
3. in any future undertaken to construct schools, adequate provision must be made to meet the standard dimensional requirement of schools which comprise classrooms, staff rooms, blackboards and the like. In addition to the above, basic facilities be fitting an educational institution should be put in place, such as water supply, toilet facilities, communications and electricity supply
4. It was observed during the survey that school subsidies were used in other expenditures where they were not intended for. In the light of that, the government should stipulate or strengthen the existing guidelines for the utilisation of school subsidies. It will also minimize leakages that occur in the use of these subsidies
5. After the disbursement of the first tranche in the first term, an audit exercise should be carried out before subsequent disbursement is made. This is to ensure that schools adhere to the basic accounting principles underlying the utilisation of school subsidies. It will also minimize leakages that occur in the use of these subsidies.
6. The current procurement policy of government should be sensitized to all the schools including primary schools
7. The Local councils should publish both in the electronic and print media actual transfers of resources (in cash or kind) to all service delivery facilities or units
8. To ensure accountability and transparency, beneficiary primary schools should post on their notice boards the value of resources received from the central government and /or Local Councils and maintain proper records of all resources received from other sources such as UN and NGOs
9. Civil Society Organisations should be enhanced in building the capacities of members through sensitization and training workshops to increase their knowledge and awareness of the roles and responsibilities in the monitoring of school subsidy implementation in their respective communities

10. School subsidies should be increased and set of workable formula be applied to all schools with regards to the allocation per pupil. School subsidies should be allocated based on the enrollment of the school

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

Sierra Leone's population of about 5.0 Million people was seriously affected by a debilitating combination of war and poverty. Its GDP per capita and its Human Development Index ranking second from rare makes it one of the poorest countries in the World. After a decade of war, 80 percent of the population is living on less than US\$ 1 a day and the situation becomes worse with an increase in both number of poor and the intensity of poverty.

In 2002, the average income level was only able to cover about 50 percent of minimum household food requirement. The extreme poor are concentrated in rural areas and many spend virtually all their income on food alone. Such intense poverty levels have severely affected education and other social indicators: life expectancy is estimated at 34.3 years, maternal mortality is also very high and is three times higher than the average in Sub-Saharan Africa, and under five Child mortality is also estimated at 316/1,000 and infant mortality rate 182/1,000 and HIV infection rate for adults ages 15-49 years is 1.4%.

Since, Sierra Leone with the UN and Donors' support has gradually been able to implement Peace Process leading to the Disarmament, Demolition and Reintegration of approximately 45,000 combatants. The peace is still tenuous in spite of the successful implementation of the DDR Programme. The greatest current threats to peace is youthful despair caused by a lack of educational and employment opportunities, the nation's youths are looking for a peace dividend in the form of expended opportunities to learn and to work.

Sierra Leone is renowned for its excellence in education. It was therefore natural and expected that the Government of Sierra Leone has been quick to recognize the critical importance of education in the rehabilitation of communities' infrastructure including Schools, Health Centers Facilities and other infrastructure. In addition, the Government after rehabilitation of Schools has embarked on a free Education System by paying subsidies to schools for children to basic education. This is the context in which the Western Area Budget Education and Advocacy Network (WABEAN), a civil society organisation wanting the success of this initiative by the Government and its development partners to see the implement ability of this process.

The Ministry of education is one of the largest social sectors in the country. The government spends on the average more than one billion Leones towards the Education Ministry. More than fifty percent of this sum goes towards the recurrent expenditure of schools, which is partly due to the free primary education system introduced in 1998. However, the Joe Lappia Report (2002) on public perception on corruption, couple with numerous media publications has placed the ministry of education in to lime light and a cause for concern for stakeholders. According to the Teachers Census( 2002) it was estimated that between September and December, 2002 the sum of Le 403,258,105 was paid to Teachers that were not verified for one reason or the other.

Realizing the need for judicious utilization of scarce financial resources towards maintaining and rehabilitating the educational sector in a war –torn country, it became imperative that Civil Society Organisations be involved in the monitoring of the implementation of this process. It was based on this premise that the Western Area Budget Education and Advocacy Network became interested in conducting pilot survey in the Western Area to contribute meaningfully to the realization of Education for All in Sierra Leone.

## **1.2 Problem Analysis**

According to the 2004 population census, Sierra Leone has a population of 4,976,871 people. Of this population, the Western Area contributed 19% (947,122) of the total. Western urban comprising of the West, Central and Eastern parts comprise of 772,873 people, with the bulk of the population concentrated in the eastern part of the Western Area. Being the most populated area implies that resources should be allocated in terms of social services such as education, health and Sanitation. It is imperative therefore that under normal situation this area which has the fastest growing population should be given necessary support that will improve the livelihood and hence contribute to the poverty alleviation. It is expected that this area being the most populated in the Western Area and where the incident of poverty is more prevalent be given priority in terms of basic educational and health facilities. It is believed that government interventions in terms of subsidies is substantial to this area, as there are estimated 100 or more Primary Schools targeted, hence the selection of this part of the Western Area.

## **1.3 Objectives of the Project:**

The overall goal of the project is tracking the effective utilisation of the school subsidies provided by the Government to Primary Schools in the Eastern Part of the Western Urban of Sierra Leone and to draw lessons from it.

Specific objectives of the Project are:

- Find out whether the subsidies given to the Institutions are judiciously utilized
- Ensure that implementers of subsidies keep proper records on the utilisation of the funds
- Create a capacity building mechanism for the members of the Network to be fully involved in budget monitoring exercises

## **Expected Outputs:**

Production and submission of a comprehensive report to all stakeholders including the Government and the Donor. It is hoped that with the implementation of this survey, Implementers will appreciate the survey findings. These findings will be translated in to:

- Improving the system of subsidy utilisation thereby reducing the rate of misappropriation of subsidies
- Improved record keeping on the utilization of subsidies

## **1.4 Project Justification**

One of the most important steps in the reconstruction process in Sierra Leone is helping children getting back to school. Poverty, however, poses a serious and significant challenge in the eradication of poverty towards meeting the millennium Development Goals by 2015. Nearly over

60% of the population lives below the quantitative measurement of the poverty line, this makes it impossible for the poor people to afford education for their children, especially the girl child.

In spite of these challenges, development Partners and other Organisations are helping communities in Sierra Leone in making progress towards getting girls in School and maintaining them there. With strong community participation, well meaning Organisations are playing pivotal roles in identifying vulnerable girls who are legible for the support and equipping them with educational learning materials such as School Uniforms and Notebooks. In regions where many girls are not attending school and many girls drop out of school before graduation are offered incentives through their families to keep their girl children in school. These incentives include: free medical services and food distributions.

In addition to the above assistance offered by Philanthropists Organisations, the Government which has the constitutional mandate to offer social services( Education, Health, Food) etc. to its citizenry is also making efforts in ensuring that education is affordable and that the girl child is educated like the boy child. This is manifested by the gradual increase in the budgetary allocations to the education ministry for the previous years (i.e. 2002-2006).

One way of ensuring that this increase in the budgetary allocation reach the Schools and is utilized for the purpose, the Government through the Ministry of Finance introduced some measures to track the allocation and use of these resources. One instrument that has been in use for the past three years is the Public Expenditure System Framework (PETS).

The PETS track the flow of public funds and determine the extent to which resources actually reach the target groups. The survey examine the manner, quantity and timing of release of resources to different levels of government, particularly to the units responsible for the delivery of social services such health and education. PETS is implemented as part of larger Service Delivery and Facility Surveys which focus on the quality of service, characteristics of the facilities, their management, incentive structures etc. One of the limiting factors of the PETS is: some Government Agencies refusal or reluctant to give information on the books of account. Moreover, it is costly to undertake. It does seem that in Sierra Leone, based on the past PETS Surveys, that there was no capture on the effective utilisation of the funds provided by the Government and that the time lapse between the conduct of the survey and reporting is too long for any meaningful and corrective action to be implemented. This project which is situated in the Western Area and implemented as a pilot addresses the missing gap of government funds (Subsidies) provided to primary Schools in the Western Area. It is hoped that with the timely provision of the report and lessons learnt from the pilot survey, an extension will be made to the other regions for replication so as to provide the Government with an in depth analysis of the situation about School Subsidies.

### **1.5. Study Limitations**

The study was limited by lack of adequate funding. It was the intention of WABEAN to cover the entire Western Area, but due to limited funds, it was only confined to the Eastern part of Western Area. However, it is hoped that funding will be allocated to over not only the Western Area, but other parts of the country, especially the Rural Areas of the country, where the probability of subsidies not being utilized for the intended purposes are high.

## **2.0 EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN SIERRA LEONE**

### **2.1 Basic Education system**

The Basic Education System in Sierra Leone is comprised of six years of primary and three years of Junior Secondary School. A Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) is administered at the completion of JSS with five passes needed for entry into senior secondary School. Senior Secondary School (SSS) consist of three years of academic or vocational /technical education as preparation for the tertiary level.

The Schools in Sierra Leone are categorised as purely Government (169 primary, 12 secondary schools and 4 technical/vocational institutions), Government Assisted (2,676 Primary and 218 Secondary Schools, and 51 technical /vocational) or private (no Primary School, and 9 Secondary Schools and 106 Technical /Vocational Institutions). Pure Government Schools are run by District Education Councils or other Local Government Bodies. Government Assisted Schools are run by agencies or missions but Teachers are employed by the Government. In addition to support provided by agencies and/or Missions, Schools are increasingly receiving support from International Non Governmental Organisations. A significant number of the Schools are associated with the United Nations.

A key feature of the Sierra Leone Educational System is the partnership between different Religious Denominations and the Government in the delivery of Primary and Secondary Education. According to an agreement between the two entities, the government pays teacher salaries, shares the cost of facilities and maintenance, develops curricula and standards, provides teacher training, and administers examinations. Today, 85% of the schools are administered by the missions. In addition, more than 90% of the schools have been rehabilitated. This was done in collaboration with International and National NGOs.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology is responsible for managing the education sector. It has eight directorates in charge of; Planning, Education Programmes, Educational Services, Inspectorate, Resources Support Services, Personnel and Bursaries. The National commission for basic education provides advice and support while, a Programme Coordinating Unit (PCU) facilitates donor activities. In addition, there are regional offices of the Ministry that work to support the central directorates.

The Education Sector is characterised by strong Leadership at the Policy Level, but has weak capacity at the Programme, Administrative and Regional Levels. These constraints reflect a longstanding lack of financial resources and urban bias, and have worsened due to the effects of a decade civil war and destruction including records. With the demobilization of ex-combatants and peace been restored and consolidated, the country now faces intensification of the nation's longstanding challenges in the provision and management of massive educational needs and demands.

The focus of this project is the primary School Education system of the Basic Education Component in the Western Area. The Government has reinforced its commitments to Education for All goals by making the primary education a six –year cycle. Free education was also introduced for primary 1-6, which means no Government levied tuition fee and some provision of textbooks. This sub-sector is in a precarious state. Besides massive destruction large scale migration of school age children took place particularly to the Western Area. This contributed to gross overcrowding of primary schools, resulting in classes containing as many as 40-60 pupils, which prompted the introduction of multiple-shift schooling both at the primary and secondary school level. Primary education enrolls a total of 70% of the School Pupils. The quality of the facilities has an important

impact on drop out. For example, the lack of toilets facilities, and the dearth of female teaching staff are a recognized disincentive for girls particularly around the age of puberty

## **2.2 Educational Policy**

The national Education Master Plan (NEMP, 1997-2006) was prepared with wide stakeholder participation and provides the current policy framework. It is based on the six major objectives of the Master plan which are to increase access to basic education, develop a broad based education system, improve the quality and relevance of education and expand and upgrade technical/vocational education; promote adult literacy and informal education etc.

In line with these objectives, the government instituted free primary education for classes 1-6, increased the number of text books provided to primary schools and launched new initiatives for in-service teacher training and school reconstruction and rehabilitation. This challenge is pursued in partnership with numerous local and international NGOs and Donors who provide input to the policy dialogue

## **2.2 Government Efforts in Promoting Education**

The government efforts in promoting education are contained in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, 2005, which stipulates the following: *“Human resource development is the bed rock for poverty reduction and sustainable development. Investment in education, health, safe water and sanitation, and housing contributes to both economic growth and improvement in the standard of living of poor people”*.

The basic assumptions of the PRSP include:

- Promotion of and expansion of access to basic education with a focus on the girl child
- Pursue the supply of quality teaching and learning materials to all schools at the basic level, especially in the rural areas
- Promote the expansion of the national feeding programme with the support of the Development Partners to provide incentives. Introducing an individual school gardening programme, introduction of nutrition education in schools and establishment of Chiefdom level Home Economics Centres
- Provision of financial support to all girls who get into Junior Secondary School in the Northern and Eastern Provinces where access for girls is comparatively low

## **3.0 SURVEY METHOD**

### **3.1 Sample Selection**

The Sample Selection is based on a Purposive Sampling Method. The Western Area is divided in to zones: namely; West 1, 2 and 3, Central 1&2, and East 1, 2, &3 each of these zones have primary schools. Since the eastern part( comprising of East1,2, and 3) has the highest number of Schools, subsequently with the highest volume of support and the comparative advantage of the Association in terms of coverage, the Eastern Schools were selected accordingly.

### **3.2 Research Tools used**

The assessment was carried out using various Participatory Assessment Tools. Before the commencement of the field work a two days training on the use of these tools was organised. The Enumerators were briefed on how to use these tools effectively. These tools include:

#### **3.2.1 Rapid Appraisal Methods:**

Rapid Appraisal Methods are quick, low cost ways to gather the views and feedback of respondents and the other stakeholders in order to respond to decision makers needs for information. Such methods adopted included, Key Informants Interviews, Focus Group Discussions, Community Group Interviews, physical assessment of facilities. Interview checklists were used.

#### **3.2.2 Semi-Structured and Structured interviews:**

This involves personal interviews with respondents to solicit quantitative information. Information from the Respondents forms part of this category. A questionnaire was administered to different respondents including the Head Teachers, Senior Teachers and other stakeholders.

Also semi –structured interviews were used to collect information from the different stakeholders – beneficiaries, including the Ward Committee members, Councillors

### **3.3 Data Collection:**

#### **3.3.1 Primary Data Collection:**

The Researchers (Enumerators) collected the data using a detailed questionnaire. Information was collected in all the primary Schools with the Head Teachers forming the bulk of the interviewees. Field observations on the physical presence of some facilities were also done.

#### **3.3.2 Secondary Data Collection:**

The author reviewed series of relevant School records to ascertain the upkeep of these records. Additional information was also obtained from Ministry of Education to cross check some of the information given by the teachers.

Relevant national documents including the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, Vision 2025, and Millennium Development Goals were also reviewed.

#### **3.3.3 Data Verification and Analysis:**

The data collected was thoroughly verified by using cross sectional analysis and a three pronged approach adopted i.e. Data collected from the field was cross checked with other stakeholders, and information obtained from secondary source was also verified with other stakeholders in the field. This was to enhance consistency, reliability and validity of data collected. The data collected was analysed using simple tables, percentages, Charts and Graphs. The findings are presented in Chapter 4 of the Report

## 4.0 Summary of Major Findings

### 4.1 Verification of the Existence of Primary Schools in the Survey Area

The assessment was done in all the Primary Schools in the Eastern part of the Western Area. Looking at the survey results, it revealed that a total of 111 Schools were verified to be in existence and received subsidies from the government. The number of Schools per category is shown in the table below.

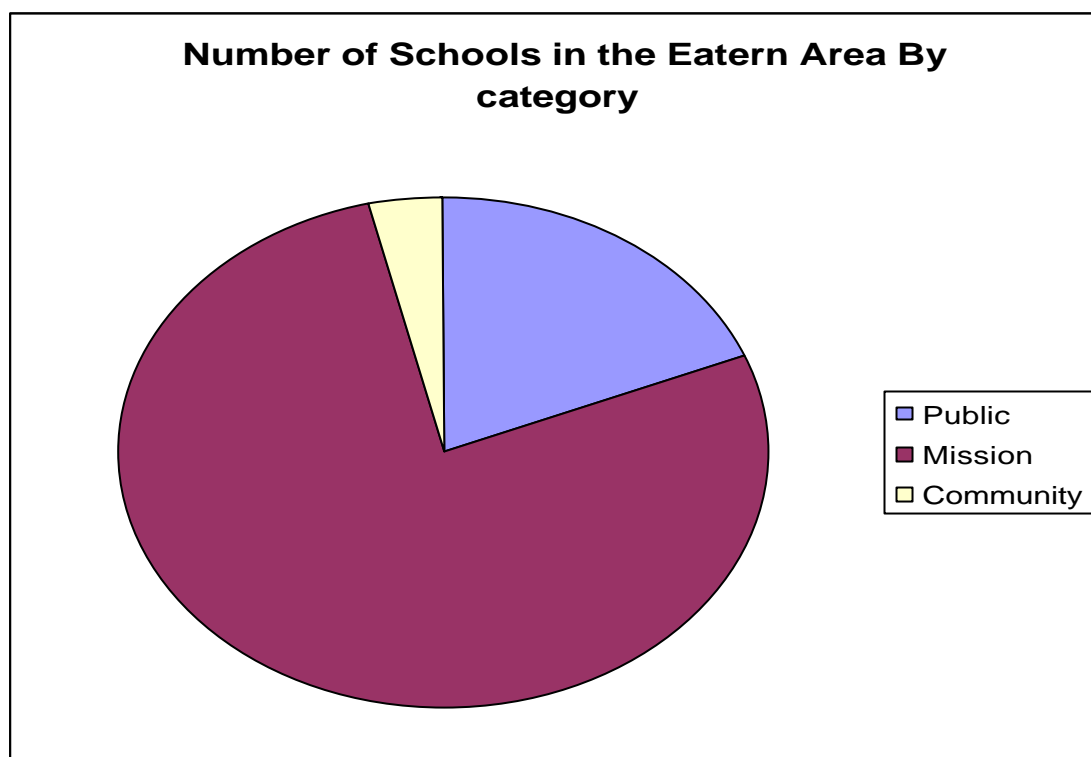
**Table 4.1 Number of schools verified by Category in the Eastern Part**

School Category	number of Schools	Cum. Total	Remarks
Public Schools	21	21	Government Owned
Mission	86	107	Government Assisted
Community	4	111	Not Government assisted

**Source: Survey results**

Analysis of the above table revealed that, over 70% of the Schools in the Eastern Part of the Western area are Mission Schools, whilst 19% of them are Public Schools owned by the Government and only about 4 % are community Schools. The high degree of concentration of Mission schools in this part may be borne from the fact that the missionaries during their early settlement came with the religion in the disguise of improving the educational level in the country. The table also revealed that the Government should put more emphasis on the regulatory, policy and supervisory role in the education sector rather than being an implementer. This clearly demonstrates that the declaration of the “Education for All” to provide quality basic education for all children ,youths and adults as was declared by the World Conference on Education in 1990 is gaining momentum in the Eastern Part of the Western Area of Sierra Leone.

It can also be deduced that, the involvement of the Private Sector in the education is a very critical determining factor, if we are to achieve the aim of the EFA. The pie Chart below shows the number of Schools by categories of School ownership.



## 4.2 Capacities of the Schools:

The capacities of the Schools have to do with the ability for the Schools to accommodate certain number of children. This could only be made possible if certain amenities are present in the schools. These include:

- Number of Classrooms in each of the Schools
- Number of Blackboards
- Toilet Facilities
- Water Facilities

The availability of these facilities serves as an incentive for the children to learn in a healthy atmosphere. Where some or all of them are inadequate, it has multiplier effect on the children's ability to absorb or comprehend what is been taught and even the teachers motivation will be dampened.

### 4.2.1 Number of Classrooms

Looking at the number of classrooms, there are a total of 848 classrooms, indicating an average of about 8 classrooms per school. Relating this to the enrolment of the Schools, reveals very interesting results as is detailed in table 4.2 below.

According to the Survey, there are currently a total of 66,465 pupils in all the 111 Schools, giving an average of 598 pupils per school. Further analysis also showed that, there is currently an average of 78 pupils per classroom. This average is far above the national average of 45-50 per classroom. This implies that the Children are learning in a congested atmosphere which has negative impacts on their level of performance. Furthermore, teachers are unable to instil discipline in the classrooms, which normally resulted in a chaotic situation whilst classes are in progress.

**Table 4.2: Number of Classrooms with corresponding enrolment by category of schools**

School Category	Number of Classrooms	Average No. of Class Rooms Per School	Total Enrolment	Pupils/Class room Ratio
Public	149	7.1	11684	78.4
Mission	672	7.8	53781	80
Community	27	6.8	1000	37
<b>Total</b>	<b>848</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>66465</b>	<b>78.4</b>

**Source: Survey Results**

From the above table, it reveals surprising and interesting findings. The community schools have the lowest pupil/classroom ratio, which implies that these schools have a more congenial atmosphere for pupils to learn effectively. Taking the national average of 50 pupils/ classroom ratio, based on the above figures, these schools should have a total of 1329 classrooms for effective teachings to take place. There is no doubt that some of these schools introduced a double shift system to absorb the excess. This figure is not inclusive of the Head Teachers and Staff Rooms.

#### **4.2.2 Number of BlackBoards**

As was discussed above, another indicator for effective teaching is the availability of learning and teaching materials such as Wall writing Boards. These are extremely necessary for the lower classes where the cognitive aspects of the child have to be built for senior primary education. The survey revealed that a total of 774 Pieces of Wall writing Boards are available, implying that some of the classrooms are even without writing boards. With the exception of the community schools, which have slightly more than one board, the other two categories do not have enough boards in the classroom. Out of a total of 821 classrooms found in the Public and Mission Schools, only about 745 Wall writing Boards are available, Leaving a shortfall of 76 Boards.

**Table 4.3: Comparison between the Number of Classrooms and Number of Wall Writing Boards**

School Category	No. of Classrooms	Number of Blackboards	Average no. of Boards per classroom	Shortfall
Public	149	118	0.79	31
Mission	672	627	0.93	45
Community	27	29	1.07	-

**Source: Survey Results**

Critically looking at table 4.3 above, it reveals that the specifications for the dimensions for a standard blackboard are either not respected or substandard. Taking the level of enrolment and the dimensions of the various blackboards, the effects are that majority of the pupils could not have easy access to the writings on the board, which impact on them during their private studies at home as a result of not taking down notes. This is especially true for the senior primary classes (Classes 5-6).

#### **4.2.3 Other Facilities in the Schools**

The survey revealed among other things the presence of basic facilities such as Toilets, Water Supply, and Electricity and Telephone systems. There are about 93 Toilets Facilities, 35 Water Supply Facilities, 4 schools with electricity supply and 1 school with Telephone Facility respectively as is depicted in Table 4.4 below.

**Table 4.4: The Number of other School Facilities by School Category.**

School Category	No. of Schools	No. of Toilets	No. of Water Wells	Electricity Supply	Telephones
Public	21	16	6	2	0
Mission	86	73	28	2	1
Community	4	4	1	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>

*Source: Survey Results*

Making an analysis by categories of Schools, the Community Schools seems to be providing basic amenities to their schools better than the other two categories (i.e. Public and Mission Schools). One can underscore the importance of Community Participation and Empowerment in service delivery of public goods and services. The Ministry of Education, science and Technology should take cognisance of the role of community participation in educational development. It shows that all schools have Toilets Facilities, whilst the Public and Mission Schools only have about 84% of the schools with Toilets Facilities. In the case of water supply system, all School Categories fall short with only 32% of the schools having such facilities.

### 4.3 School Enrolment

It is a tool use in the planning and programming of educational interventions for Schools in the Country. School enrolment is a major indicator in the determination of the quantum of resources to be allocated to Schools.

The survey revealed that of the 111 Schools visited, there is an enrolment of 66,465 Pupils, giving an average of 599 Pupils per School. Of the total enrolment, 51 %,( 33593) are boys whilst 49% are girls. The enrolment ratio of 1: 1 depicts the aspirations of the government desire for the girl child to be equally opportune to basic education.

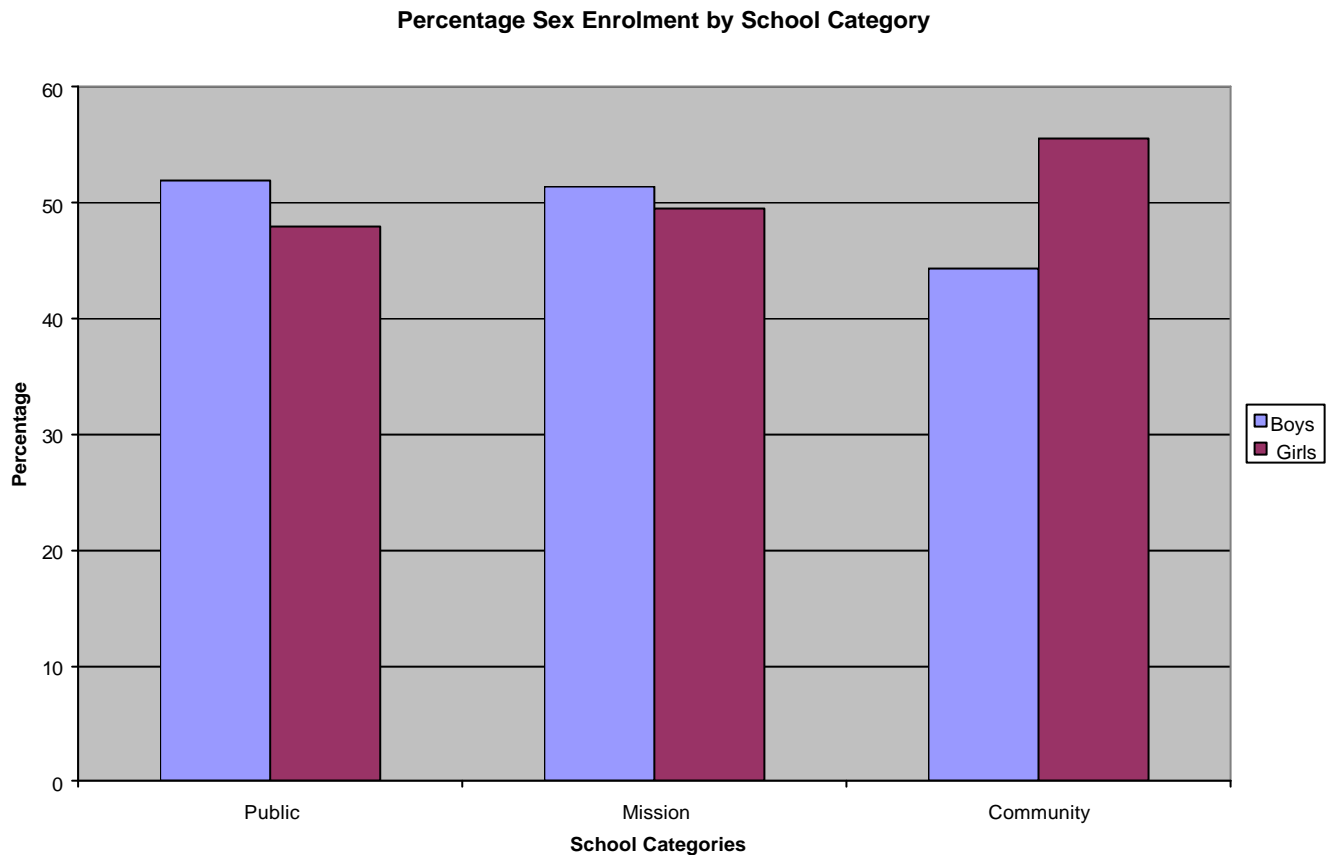
In terms of School Categories, the enrolment sex ratio is almost 1:1 in the Public and Mission Schools, whilst in the Community Schools, Girls enrolment accounted for 56% of the total enrolment. This is illustrated in Table 4.5 below.

**Table 4.5: Enrolment Status by School Categories**

School Category	No. of Schools	Total Enrolment	Average Enrolment Per School	Total No. of Boys	Total of Girls	% of Boys	% of Girls
Public	21	11684	556	6073	5611	52	48
Mission	86	53781	625	27076	26705	51.4	49.6
Community	4	1000	250	444	556	44.4	55.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>66,465</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>33,593</b>	<b>32872</b>	<b>50.5</b>	<b>49.5</b>

*Source: Survey Results and School Records*

From Table 4.5 above, it could be seen that, the highest average enrolment is the Mission Schools, whilst the lowest average is in the Community Schools with only 250 pupils. The wide variation between the Schools may be explained in terms of the resources available to cater for the excess pupils and the schools. The Mission Schools as we all know have an expanded resource base getting their funds from varied sources other than the Government. The sex enrolment ratio is further illustrated by the Composite Bar Chart shown below.



Further analysis of the results of the survey showed the distribution of the enrolment by class. It shows that there is almost an even distribution of the enrolment by classes. With the exception of class 6 which has a distribution of 13.8 % of the total school enrolment, all other classes' enrolment range from 16% to 18% ,Class 3 (18%), Classes 1 and 4 (17.5%), Class 5(17.1%) and Class 2 (16.1%). This is shown in Table 4.6 below.

**Table 4.6: The enrolment of Schools by Class and School Category**

School Category	Total Enrolment	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Class 5	Class 6
Public	11684	2148	1310	1870	2328	2124	1504
Mission	53781	9273	8785	9852	9168	9115	7587
Community	1000	203	189	268	154	98	88
<b>Total</b>	<b>66465</b>	<b>11624</b>	<b>10684</b>	<b>11990</b>	<b>11650</b>	<b>11337</b>	<b>9179</b>
% of the Total	<b>100</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>16.1</b>	<b>18.0</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>17.1</b>	<b>13.8</b>

**Source: Survey Results and School Records**

#### 4.4 School Subsidies

Government efforts in the pursuance of education for all are determined by its commitment and willingness to provide financial assistance to schools. One of the ways Government is doing this is through the provision of Subsidies. Subsidies are meant to cushion the burden of poor parents who cannot afford to cater for their children especially the girl child.

The Survey looked at the 2002/2003 to 2005/2006 financial years. From the results of the Survey, it reveals that the sum of Le 2,842,705,746 was given as subsidies to the 111 schools. The highest allocation was in 2002/2003 academic year with over 75% of the allocated Subsidies; whilst 2005/2006 is lowest with only about 5%. This is shown in Table 4.7 below.

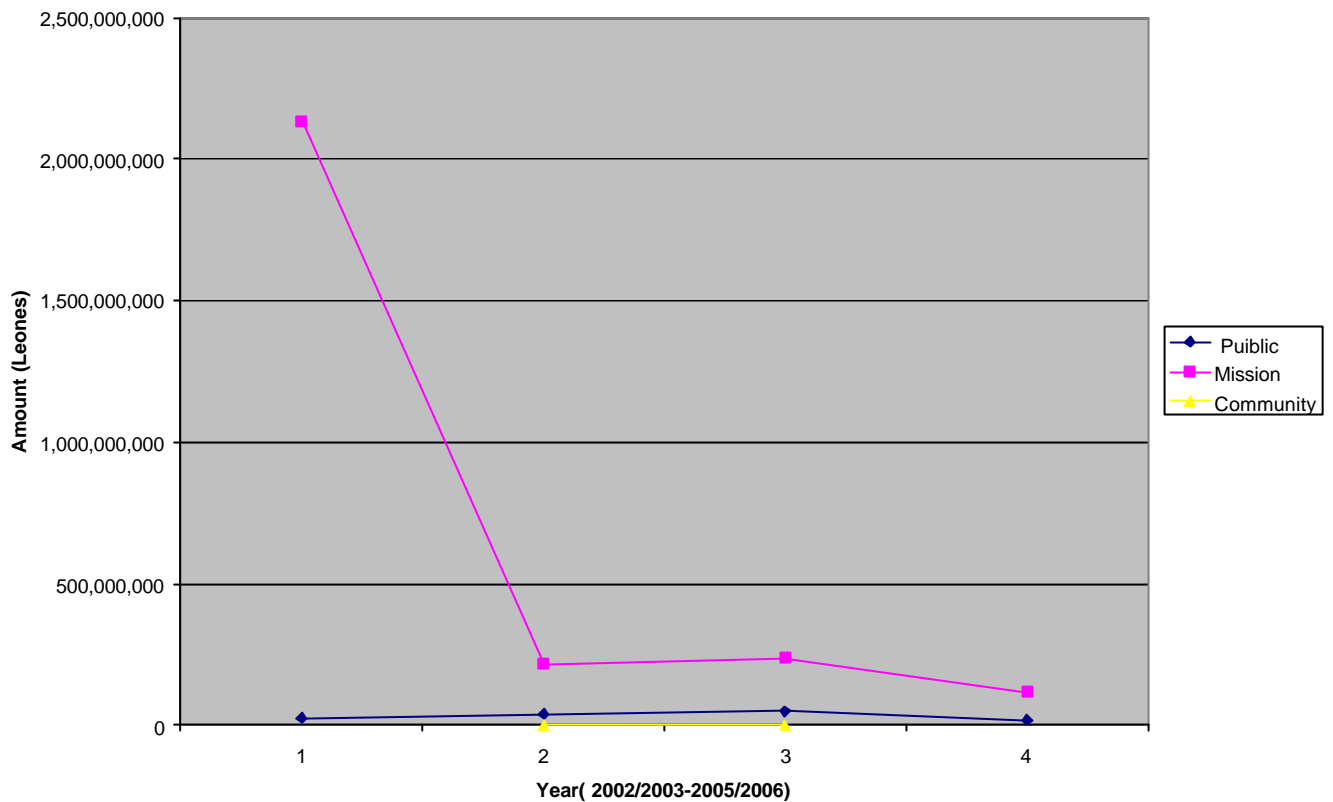
**Table 4.7: Amount of Subsidies allocated and Disbursed to Schools (2002/03-2005/06)**

School Category	Number of Schools	2002/2003	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006	Total Subsidies
Public	21	24,818,515	40,743,359	49,389,125	19,636,350	134,587,349
Mission	86	2,133,987,784	216,328,539	237,485,739	116,114,013	2,703,916,075
Community	4	-	2,224,200	2,224,200	-	4,448,400
<b>Total</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>2,158,806,299</b>	<b>259,296,098</b>	<b>289,296,064</b>	<b>135,750,363</b>	<b>2,842,705,746</b>

**Source: School Records and survey Results**

Analysing table 4.7 above reveals that there is a downward trend in the provision of subsidies in all Schools. In the case of the Community Schools, as at the time of the Survey, there has been no subsidy provision for the financial year 2005/06 to the 4 Schools. The downward trend depicts a very abnormal situation, contrary to the view that education is free for all. This trend is clearly illustrated in the figure below.

### Trend Analysis in the Disbursement of Subsidies



Taking individual year to year analysis, in 2002/2003, which was the first year of subsidies, an average amount of 19,448, 759.45 was disbursed per school, whilst in 2003/2004 average amount of 2,336,000 was allocated per school, in 2004/2005 an average of 2,604,496 was disbursed, whilst in 2005/2006 which is the lowest year of disbursement only average of Le.1, 268,694.98 was disbursed. This pattern of disbursement raises many unanswered questions as to how the subsidies are allocated. This brings the issues of school enrolment and other matching funds.

#### 4.4.1 Disbursement Pattern of School Subsidies

The disbursement pattern of the school subsidies is illustrated by the analysis in Table 4.8 below.

**Table 4.8: Disbursement Pattern Adopted by Government -2002/2003-2005/2006**

School Year	First Term	Second Term	Third Term	Total
2002/2003	1,052,758,853	1,041,959,893	64,093,553	2,158,812,299
2003/2004	87,773,966	85,128,066	86,143,188	259,045,220
2004/2005	89,854,688	104,915,688	94,327,488	289,097,864
2005/2006	128,809,613	4,899,550	2,041,200	135,750,363
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,359,197,120</b>	<b>1,836,903,197</b>	<b>246,599,429</b>	<b>2,842,705,746</b>

The highest level of disbursement of subsidies took place during the 2002/03 fiscal year with the first term of 2002/2003 accounting for 49% of the total disbursement for the three terms of that year. The second highest year is during 2004/2005 academic year with the second term accounting for Le 104,915,688 out of the total disbursement of Le 289,097,864 for that year. 2005/06 is the lowest period of disbursement with only Le. 135,750,363 with the bulk of the money been

disbursed during the first term of the year. Further analysis was also done by examining the disbursement levels of subsidies by School Categories for the respective Terms of the School Year as is presented in Table4.9 below.

**Table 4.9: Disbursement Pattern by School Terms and Categories**

School Category	Academic Year	First Term	Second Term	Third Term	Total
<b>Public (Government owned)</b>	2002/2003	8,194,225	2,160,265	9,464,025	19,818,515
	2003/2004	13,669,453	13,532,453	13,291,375	40,493,281
	2004/2005	15,615,375	16,482,375	17,291,375	49,389,125
	2005/2006	16,053,600	2,341,550	1,241,200	19,636,350
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>53,532,653</b>	<b>34,516,643</b>	<b>41,287,975</b>	<b>129,337,271</b>
<b>Mission (Government Assisted)</b>	2002/2003	1,044,564,628	1,034,799,628	54,623,528	2,133,987,784
	2003/2004	73,363,113	70,854,613	72,110,813	216,328,539
	2004/2005	73,498,313	87,692,313	76,295,113	237,485,739
	2005/2006	112,756,013	2,558,000	800,000	116,114,013
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>1,304,182,067</b>	<b>1,195,904,554</b>	<b>203,829,454</b>	<b>2,703,916,075</b>
<b>Community</b>	2002/2003	-	-	-	-
	2003/2004	741,400	741,400	741,400	2,224,200
	2004/2005	741,400	741,400	741,000	2,224,200
	2005/2006	-	-	-	-
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>1,482,800</b>	<b>1,482,800</b>	<b>1,482,800</b>	<b>4,448,400</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,359,197,520</b>	<b>1,231,903,997</b>	<b>246,600,229</b>	<b>2,842,705,746</b>

#### 4.4.2 Relationship between Subsidies and Enrolment

Taking the most recent enrolment of 2005/2006 and the corresponding subsidies, one could be able to discern a clear picture as to the pattern of subsidy disbursement. This is illustrated in the table below, followed by an analysis of the pattern.

**Table4.10: Relationship between the level of subsidy disbursement and the enrolment (2005/2006)**

School Category	No. of Schools	Amount Disbursed( 2005/2006)	Average Disbursed Per School (Le.)	Enrolment( 2005/2006)	Amount Per Pupil
Public	21	19,636,350	935,064.28	11684	1680.6
Mission	86	116,114,013	1,350,162.94	53781	2159.01
Community	4	0	0	1000	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>135,750,363</b>	<b>1,268.69</b>	<b>66,465</b>	<b>2,073.6</b>

The Table above depicts certain attributes of the disbursement pattern. It shows that, there is no set formula used in the disbursement of subsidies to schools. Looking at the overall average disbursement, it shows that an average of Le1, 268.69 subsidies was disbursed per school. The overall average disbursement per pupil is indicated Le 2,073 as against the target of Le. 2000 set by the Ministry of Education. There is a difference of about Le. 73.6 per pupil, amounting to a total

sum difference of Le.4, 818,224. The difference in the figures is attributed to the enrolment figures of the Public schools where the actual disbursement was lower than Le 2,000. In the case of the Community Schools, the survey results revealed that there was no disbursement made in the 2005/2006.

Looking at the individual school categories, the Public Schools received less than what was supposed to be the unit cost per pupil by Le.319.4 amounting to Le. 3,731,869.1. The total actual amount disbursed was Le.19, 636,350 instead of Le.23, 368,000 to be disbursed, leaving a gap as specified above.

In the case of Mission Schools, there is a surplus in the disbursement of subsidies, a total of Le. 116,114,013 were disbursed instead of Le. 107,562,000 were to be disbursed. This implies an excess of Le. 8,551,716.81 were actually disbursed.

Taking the difference between the two categories, i.e. the less Public school disbursement and the surplus Mission school disbursement, there is an overall surplus disbursement of Le 4,819,847.71 in all categories of schools.

#### **4.4.3 Management of Government Subsidies**

Disbursement of funds from the Government to the respective schools is very crucial. One of the most critical factors is the use to which these funds are being put to make positive impacts on the Children and the educational sector in general. Proper Management Structures should be put in place to avoid the tendency of funds not been misused. Therefore the existing of Institutional Structures in the various schools should be pursued. In addition, strong Monitoring Mechanisms involving the Communities is an appropriate approach to aid management and the Government.

Based on interviews conducted during the survey, it was revealed that the funds were utilised in varied forms as is shown in table 4.11 below. Although the amount used in each expenditure line was not included, it shows clearly the premium put on certain expenditure items by each category of school management.

**Table 4.11: Pattern of Subsidy Utilisation by School Categories**

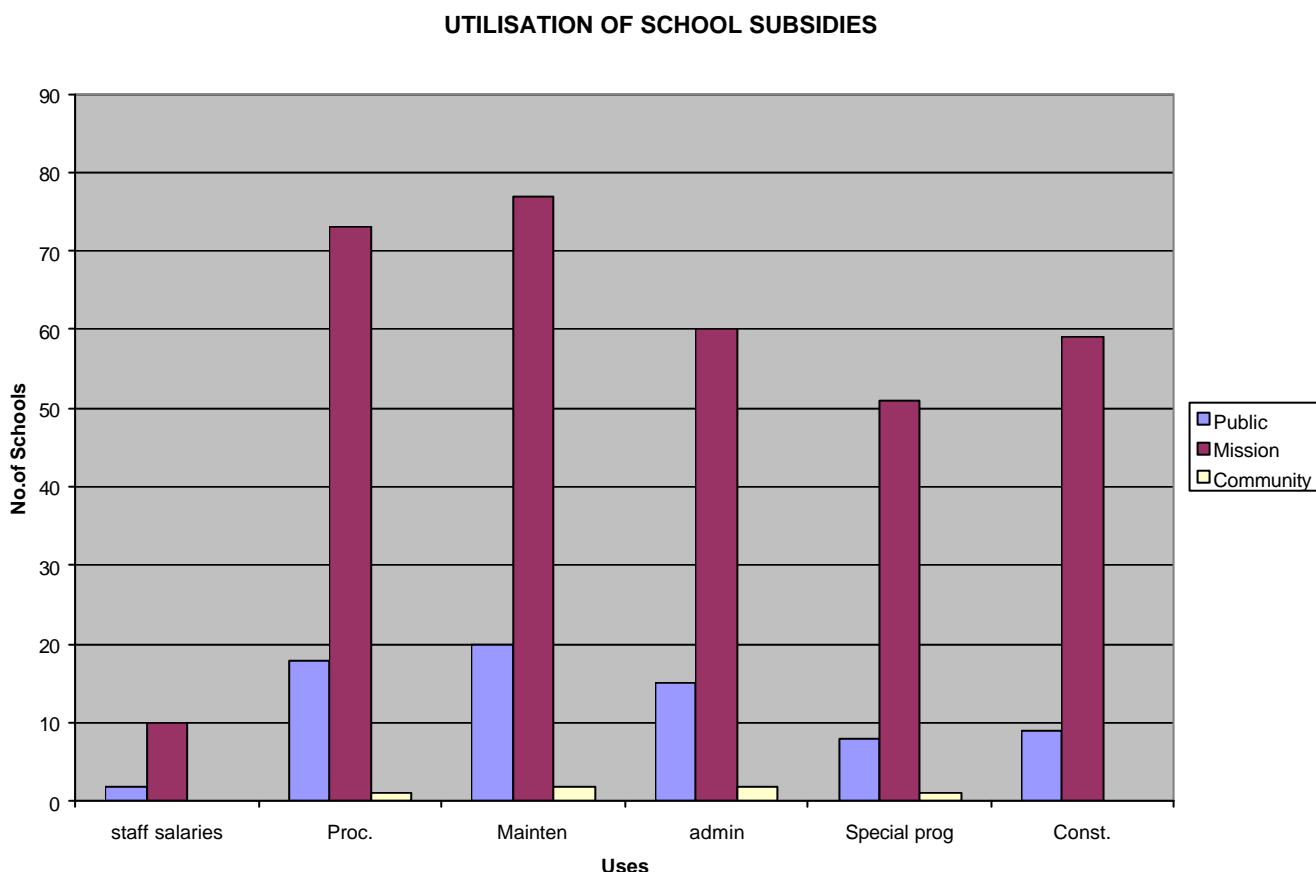
<b>School Category</b>	<b>Expenditure lines( No. of Schools)</b>					
	<b>Staff Salary</b>	<b>Procurement of Materials</b>	<b>Maintenance</b>	<b>Administration</b>	<b>Special Programmes</b>	<b>Construction</b>
Public	2	18	20	15	8	9
Mission	10	73	77	60	51	59
Community	0	1	2	2	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>68</b>

From Table 4.11, about 11% of the Schools reported using the subsidies for the payment of salaries, although that is not the aim of the subsidies. Government is paying salaries of all Government and Mission (Assisted Schools). The payment of staff salaries from the subsidies is more pronounced in the Mission Schools with 12% of the total Mission Schools.

In the case of the procurement of materials for the schools, 86% of the Public Schools reported using the subsidies on procurement, whilst 84% of the Mission Schools reported using for the same purpose.

In the maintenance and administration of the schools, the Public schools reported that 95% and 71 % used the subsidies on maintenance and administration, whilst the Mission Schools reported 90% and 70% using the subsidies on the same purpose. The use of subsidies in special programmes was also reported; Public Schools 38% and Mission Schools 59%. In the construction of new structures or Rehabilitation of structures, 43% of the Public Schools, whilst 69% of the Mission Schools reported using the Subsidies,

The above results showed that, there should be set guidelines stipulating the utilisation of funds by the schools. One way of affecting this is the establishment and strengthening of various Management Committees both at the school and Community level to ensure Transparency in the preparation, disbursement and approval for the use of subsidies. This is also shown in the Bar Chart below.



#### ***4.5 Lapses in the Management of Subsidies***

As discussed above, it can be seen that, there are some lapses or short comings in the disbursement patterns of school subsidies, major ones are discussed below:

- **Disbursement Delays:** These are traced from the budget preparation process to the disbursement of the funds to the respective school authorities. The Survey revealed that substantial delays occurred in the disbursement of school funds to the schools concerned. Over 80% of the Schools interviewed expressed concerns of significant delays in the

disbursement of school subsidies by Government, while only 7% reported of no delays in receiving their subsidies.

- **Management of Subsidies:** Based on the findings above, there is the evidence that subsidies are being used for other purposes rather than the intended purposes; this is more prominent in Mission Schools, where about 12 % of the Schools used the subsidies for the payment of Staff Salaries. According to Education System in Sierra Leone, there is an Agreement, which provides “a key feature of the Sierra Leone educational system is the partnership between different religious denominations and the government in the delivery of primary and secondary education. The agreement between the two entities, the government pays teacher salaries, shares the cost of facilities and maintenance, develops curricula and standards, provides teacher training, and administer examinations”. The system of subsidy management has to be strengthened by all stakeholders to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of administration.
- **Record Keeping:** In any management system, there has to be a sound management and information system that will guide management in taking developing plans and programmes for effective decision making. The survey revealed that, not all schools surveyed have a proper record keeping system, which might be the cause for the use of funds other than the intended purposes. According to the survey, about 14% of the schools do not have a proper record keeping system in place. Of this, the community and the Public Schools accounted for 2% each, while the Mission schools accounted for about 9 % of the total Schools. This is shown in the table below:

Looking at the individual total number of school categories, about 50% of the Community Schools are without record keeping systems, while the Mission Schools have about 13% and Public Schools with 9% of their individual Totals. This implies that there is the to introduce record keeping systems in these schools by either through refresher training programmes or identifying personnel from among the teachers to be designated the task of proper record keeping of all financial transactions.

#### 4.6 Other Sources of funding:

There are other sources that the schools derive funding from these are:

- Donations from Donors
- School Charges
- Fund Raising
- CTA Fees

Based on the findings of the survey, there is a total of about Le 851,000 derived from various sources by the different categories of schools as shown below:

**Table 4.12: Other Sources of Funds for Schools by Category**

School Categories	Sources of Funds			
	Donations	School Charges	Fund Raising	CTA Fees
Public	200,000	-	-	-
Mission	-	-	2,200	21,100
Community	-	175,000	150,000	502,500

<b>Total</b>	<b>200,000</b>	<b>175,000</b>	<b>152,200</b>	<b>523,600</b>
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As can be seen from the above table, the community schools are more proactive in the sourcing of school funds from other agencies. This is understood since their resource bases are very fragile and do not have (in most cases guaranteed source) have to make an open door policy to cater for funds. This is why they accounted for over 90% of these funds.

Although the Ministry of education is encouraging a free education policy which is no extra charges are to be levied, but looking at the amount of subsidy and other barriers in the acquisition of school subsidies, there is the tendency that school authorities in order not to be solvency sort other ways of resource mobilisation. This is more the need for the Ministry of Education to put in place an adoptable strategy for school subsidy management both at the Ministry level and school authority level.

#### **4.7 School Management:**

In order to put the Schools in a better place for effective management and hence reduce the inefficiencies in the running of these schools, certain structures should be in motion. One or several ways of doing this is the establishment and/or strengthening of the existing committees already in place. These committees will not only serve as a check and balance system, but will also be as an advisory body to the various School Headmasters/Teachers. The Survey revealed that a number of committees in one form or the other do exist in almost all of the Schools. These committees are identified as follows:

- School Management Committees( SMC)
- Community –Teacher Associations
- Staff Associations

The table below shows the number and types of Committees identified in the Schools

**Table 4.13 Management Committees by Type**

<b>School Category</b>	<b>Management Committees( No. of Committees)</b>		
	<b>School Management</b>	<b>CTA</b>	<b>Staff Association</b>
Public	19	21	11
Mission	74	79	57
Community	4	4	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>71</b>

An analysis of Table 4.13 reveals that not all of the schools have a Management Committee that should have served as an overall policy instrument on behalf of the school that will make recommendations to the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders about the improvement of the Schools. It shows about 94 % of all schools have CTA Committees, the highest non compliance is found in the Mission Schools (i.e. 5 out of the 86 Schools are without CTAs). In the case of School Management Committees, 87% of the Schools are with these structures, whilst 13% are without. The Highest prevalence of schools not having these structures is also found in the Mission Schools (12 out of the 86 Mission Schools are without). This is an indication that Mission Schools are not adherence to the Educational management of Schools. The absence of these committees is tantamount to the utilisation of funds elsewhere as there are no structures to direct the use of funds.

The functions of these Committees are very crucial for the smooth running of the schools. The SMC is basically a management committee that looks in to the day to day administration of the school, which should include an oversight role to see that funds allocated to the school are utilised

judiciously. At the same time this committees should endorse and approve any budget submitted to the Ministry of education for the release of funds including subsidies.

The CTA on the other hand is a policy advisory committee that discusses issues affecting the school management for onward transmission to the Ministry of Education through the School Management Committee. It is a dialogue forum between the School Management Staff Association and the Community at large. Issues affecting Child welfare, educational facilities including teachers' welfare also discussed in this Association. It forms part of the Participatory process, empowerment, ownership and transparency mechanisms as is articulated in the decentralisation process.

The compositions of these committees vary with a wide range of people participating. The survey revealed that several organisations comprising of the following are represented in one or all of the committees'. These are:

- Teachers
- Parent Representative
- Religious NGOs
- City Council
- Ward Representative
- Traditional Leaders
- Women Representatives

The level of representation in each of the categories of Schools is shown in the Table Below:

**Table 4.14: Level of Committee Members Representation by Category**

School Category	Member Participation( No. of schools)						
	Teachers	Parent Rep.	Religious Rep.	City Council	Ward Rep.	Traditional Rep.	Women Rep.
Public	16	18	8	4	2	15	10
Mission	67	11	54	14	17	57	56
Community	3	4	3	4	3	3	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>69</b>

A closer look at the table above shows that the participation of all of the Stakeholders stated above is very minimal especially parent, City council and Ward Committee representation. It shows that 86% of the total schools surveyed have teacher representation. This could mostly be in the Staff Associations. It also shows that 86 out of the 111 schools have Staff associations. In like manner, 33 out of the 111 schools have CTAs effectively functioning. The level of participation of Religious Leaders, Traditional and Women Representation indicated 65, 75 and 69 schools are effectively inviting these people to the meetings.

Based on the above analysis there is glaring evidence that School Management Committees are not properly functioning to create any meaningful impacts.