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# TRANSITION TO AND PARTICIPATION IN JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL

A RESEARCH REPORT PREPARED FOR DECENTRALIZED BASIC EDUCATION – 3

A BASIC EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT PROJECT SUPPORTED BY  
THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (USAID)

**ROBERT CANNON with RINA ARLIANTI**





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JAKARTA, INDONESIA

21 AUGUST 2009

## **COVER PHOTOGRAPH**

New Grade 7 students '*in transition*' from Grade 6  
at the beginning of the 2009 – 2010 school year  
SMPN4 Negara, Jembrana District, Bali  
Indonesia



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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
AIBEP	Australia – Indonesia Basic Education Project
BOS	Bantuan Operasional Sekolah (School Operational Fund)
CLCC	Creating Learning Communities for Children
DBE	Decentralized Basic Education
DBEP	Decentralized Basic Education Project
Dinas Pendidikan	Education Office of Local Government (District Level)
Dewan Pendidikan	Education Board
Gol	Government of Indonesia
JSE/JSS	Junior Secondary Education/School(s)
MBE	Managing Basic Education
MI	Madrasah Ibtidayah (Islamic Primary School)
MoNE	Ministry of National Education
MTs	Madrasah Tsanawiyah (Islamic Junior Secondary School)
NFE	Non Formal Education
NGO	Non Government Organisation
PAKEM	Pembelajaran Aktif, Kreatif, Efektif dan Menyenangkan (Learning that is Active, Creative, Effective and Enjoyable)
SBM	School Based Management (in Bahasa Indonesia, MBS – Managemen Berbasis Sekolah)
SD	Sekolah Dasar (Primary School)
SMP	Sekolah Menengah Pertama (Junior Secondary School)
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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Jenny Cannon undertook the task of entering and re-analysing the DBE3 student consultation data using the NVivo software described in the report. Without her important work the study would be so much poorer and the young people's perspective on transition and participation much less clear.

Any errors or omissions are regrettable but, of course, as with the whole report, the responsibility of the Lead Consultant and main author, Robert Cannon.

## **DISCLAIMER**

The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.





## **PREAMBLE**

*From: The New York Times*

16 July 2009

(The following is a direct quotation from an address to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, America's largest civil rights organization as reported in The New York Times.)

*"President Obama delivered a fiery sermon to black (sic) America on Thursday night, warning black parents that they must accept their own responsibilities by 'putting away the Xbox and putting our kids to bed at a reasonable hour' and telling black children that growing up poor is no reason to get bad grades.*

*'No one has written your destiny for you,' he said, directing his remarks to 'all the other Barack Obamas out there' who might one day grow up to be President. 'Your destiny is in your hands, and don't you forget that. That's what we have to teach all of our children!*

*No excuses! No excuses!"*

This study fully supports this Presidential exhortation to young people to seize their destinies and to take responsibility.

This study has demonstrated that many of today's students in Indonesia are doing just this – they are involved, thoughtful and constructive participants in their own education. They are most impressive examples of the outcomes of recent changes in the quality of Indonesian basic education.

Equally, the study will demonstrate why systemic attention to fighting incompetence, ignorance, neglect and the abuse of young people by adults entrusted with their care is urgently required. This attention must be a co-requisite to fully support children who are taking seriously their responsibility to build those destinies and a better future for Indonesia.

Anything less than such attention will contribute to a continuation of poor patterns of participation and retention in basic education where these patterns continue to exist.



## ABSTRACT

With increasing levels of participation in basic education, attention is now being given to the quality of the educational experience for children and to questions of retention and transition to the next levels of education. This study supports the Indonesian government's commitment to increase access to, and participation in, basic education.

The focus of the study is to develop a stronger basis for understanding what works in getting children into schools and ensuring that they stay and participate effectively so as to complete a full basic education. The study develops this understanding through an analysis of the complex concepts and processes of participation in education, a review of the literature on transition and participation, a re-consideration of available Indonesian data, and the outcomes of fieldwork undertaken in July 2009.

To minimize the risks of low participation and early school leaving, the lessons from the study clearly indicate that piecemeal approaches are unlikely to be successful and that 'whole-school' and 'whole-of-schooling' thinking is necessary. What works in encouraging students to engage and stay within the education system is fundamentally having access to good schools and good teachers. A focus on improved teaching is demonstrably successful and significantly improves the learning environment for students as well as their test scores and continuing participation in school.

Evidence from Indonesia shows clear strategies in the ways to effectively move schools and their teachers towards better standards in learning and teaching and in school management. Foremost among the strategies is a 'whole-school' approach that develops all the teachers, together with their communities, across a broad range of school development issues.

The 'whole-of-schooling' concept recognises that transition and participation begins in the move from home to early childhood education and concludes with entry to the work force. Whole-of-schooling is an inclusive concept that recognises the needs of all children; particularly those with special needs who are too often forgotten and may not participate at all in education.

There is ample evidence in the study to show how participation and transition can be made to work more effectively. In addition to having access to good schools and good teachers, some key findings include:

- The necessity for Districts to collect accurate data about education to inform better standards of planning, particularly the planning of school places to accommodate rising numbers of children participating and staying in the education system.
- A 'whole-of-schooling approach' that recognises the many transitions that occur throughout school life; the importance of enrolling children in school at the correct age; supporting progress through the grades; reducing or eliminating grade repetition, and addressing barriers to participation including poverty.
- Empowering communities and parents so that they are aware of their rights and obligations and so they can participate in the democratic management of schools and appropriately support and encourage their own children's education.
- Identifying and addressing the neglect and abuse of young people.
- Empowering children to give them the life skills to manage their school participation, transitions and the risks they will inevitably encounter in life.

The good practice case study of Jembrana in Bali demonstrates the power of whole school and whole of schooling approaches built on a foundation of local leadership, good policy, and commitment supported at school level through careful monitoring and management.



# 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 1.1 Context

This study is intended to support the government's commitment to increase access to, and participation in, basic education, and in particular junior secondary education. The purpose of this study is to:

- Examine the reasons why students fail to transition to, or otherwise participate in, Junior Secondary Education
- Identify and evaluate initiatives being implemented to encourage transition to, and participation in, Junior Secondary Schools (JSS)
- Make recommendations for future project inputs that might encourage JSS participation.

Data for the past four years suggests that Indonesia has achieved high and sustained rates of primary school completion, both nationally and at the Provincial level. The Ministry set a JSS enrolment target of 75% for 2009. This rate was achieved in 2007/2008 when 75.58% of students completing primary school made the transition to JSS. Having achieved the target, it is nevertheless recognised that 24% of students who completed primary school in that year did not make the transition to JSS. Smooth progression through school is not experienced by significant numbers of children in Indonesia and this is a continuing concern to the Gol and its development partners. Children's education may be characterised by disruptive school transfers, grade repetition and early leaving.

The feedback from students consulted in the fieldwork for this study and the literature on the transition to secondary school suggests that academic and social problems in JSS are linked to the major changes that occur in students' lives and their difficult family circumstances associated with poverty. In addition, children experience major changes in relation to school size, the number of different teachers and the arrangement of learning and teaching into subject-focused classes. The move from primary school to JSS also involves a transition between two radically different cultures of schooling.

Parents can play an important role in supporting successful transitions for their children but student consultations clearly point out that many parents lack the 'agency' – the knowledge, skills and commitment – to help their children in constructive ways.

***Recommendation 1:*** Future project inputs should focus on assisting in the development and implementation of strategies that empower parents, guardians and communities. This is to enable them to provide the necessary support and encouragement to children to complete their education. Essential components of this empowerment process should be developing transparent understanding of their rights and obligations and also: (a) children with special needs and educational facilities for them, (b) the threats to children of abuse, violence and sexual exploitation in their community and in schools, (c) resources to assist communities and parents to manage these issues.

***Recommendation 2:*** The basic training and the professional development of teachers should include the development of knowledge and skills that require and support student participation in basic education and to assist students in the complex processes of making transitions from one level of school to the next.

## 1.2 Risk

'At risk' is an important concept applied to students in situations at school where the probability of them failing to participate or to leave early is judged to be unacceptably high. On the evidence available, risk is particularly high at the point of transition from Grade 6 to Grade 7. Indicators of students 'at risk' include those in the following groups:

- Poverty
- Community
- Family
- School
- Peer group
- Student factors including especially student health.

**Recommendation 3:** *Future project inputs should assist Districts and schools to develop and to implement risk identification and risk management strategies to minimize early school leaving.*

## 1.3 Grade Repetition

At current rates of 3% of students repeating a grade, nearly 800,000 basic education students each year are repeating and being placed at risk. Grade repetition is a procedure that is now generally discredited and overseas and Indonesian studies suggest that grade repetition is one of the most powerful predictors of early school leaving.

**Recommendation 4:** *Because of grade repetition's apparent impact on early leaving, the differential nature of grade repetition on boys and girls, and its economic costs, grade repetition is a matter that requires closer evaluation and policy development. Based on this work, the Ministries should be assisted to disseminate good practice in the implementation of guidelines for a grade repetition policy.*

## 1.4 Complexity

Student participation in school and transition involves a number of complex events. Any one of the events presents a potential barrier. The barrier to JSS entry from primary school is one of these. Any way of reducing or eliminating these barriers would help young people. Re-consideration of the educational need for the administrative barrier between primary school and JSS is one that warrants attention.

**Recommendation 5:** *Future project inputs should assist the Ministries in a thorough re-consideration of the educational benefits and costs from the present administrative/structural barrier between primary school and JSS.*

## 1.5 Literature

Poverty is a pervasive issue in school participation in Indonesia. A World Bank study found that past policies in funding primary schooling is pro-poor and increased spending on JSS will also benefit the poor in terms of increasing access for them. Any improvement in the quality of schooling will also be pro-poor.

The Bank's recommendations for action are:

On the demand side, the government should consider a conditional cash transfer (CCT) program to address early school leaving.

- On the supply side, the government could consider addressing the shortage of secondary schools.
- Focus on improving learning quality and investing in in-class teaching materials.

**Recommendation 6:** *(a) As part of routine monitoring and evaluation of change in schools and Districts, future projects should include high quality impact studies designed to better understand and to strengthen the kinds of strategies recommended by the World Bank (above). (b) To complement the economic research in education commissioned by the World Bank, the donor community should consider supporting high quality educational research as a further foundation necessary to develop educational quality in Indonesia.*

Factors relating to low rates of basic education participation and completion are:

- Problems associated with late entrance to school which, with irregular attendance, means an older age at graduation and a greater chance of early school leaving.
- Children entering school at an appropriate age with normal progression will usually complete at least 6 years of basic education.
- The prevalence of over-age children in primary school is more characteristic of the poor than better-off students.
- Educational failure in primary school is mainly a problem of the poor and any support that will attract and keep children in primary school will be highly pro poor.

However, increasing participation in JSS must be achieved in a planned way, based on accurate data, so as to avoid the difficulty of insufficient places for transition students.

**Recommendation 7:** *Development assistance to the education sector needs to support coordinated initiatives to continually improve the quality of data collection and management and to use data effectively to plan and manage the allocation of resources to respond to changing demands for schools and places for children in them.*

Research strongly supports the view that non-completion of school places children at risk in later life through not possessing sufficient life-skills and qualifications to participate effectively in family, social and working life. Apart from the personal costs of non-completion of schooling, there are also clear, long-term costs to society. Indonesian society has a long-term economic interest in ensuring that children complete a full program of formal education.

The literature is quite clear on one key phenomenon that is easily overlooked: overwhelmingly young people really do want to succeed at school and life. Unfortunately, there are many factors that can block students' progress towards their goals in life. Factors such as disruptions to family life, illness, poverty and geographical location are often thought to be the main blocking sources, but research has very clearly identified that major failings of schools themselves is blocking the aspirations of many students.

Fieldwork with students in Indonesian schools reveals similar failings in schools and point to them as one of the main barriers to school completion. The most critical factor influencing early school leaving is an alienating school culture that consists of:

- A non-stimulating environment unconnected to the world outside school
- Lack of support for children in difficulty
- Negative student-teacher relationships supported by rules that disallow students from expressing themselves as responsible members of the school community.

**Recommendation 8:** *Future project inputs should continue to provide assistance to young people through Districts and schools to develop the necessary life skills to manage the challenges and risks in their lives. Strategies to achieve this should build on the good work already completed by DBE3.*

Identifying reliable predictors of early school leaving is an essential prerequisite to the development of effective responses to prevent the problem and, where it exists, to manage it. Research indicates that poor academic achievement is a strong predictor of early school leaving. Prevention efforts should focus on increasing the academic success of children at risk of early leaving by virtue of these factors (that is, school, family, peers and community).

A wide range of different programs to assist students at risk of early leaving has been implemented. The characteristics of successful programs should include the following:

- Strategies should be comprehensive rather than category-specific.
- Strategies should take a risk-focused approach to interrupt negative development patterns and strengthen positive social patterns.
- Early identification, prevention and intervention are vital.

Other technical work strongly supports strategies that include a holistic definition of risk in meeting students' needs and the avoidance of individualistic and fragmented approaches that may produce unintended, negative consequences for individual students.

## **1.6 Young People's Experience**

Young people are the only ones who directly experience the circumstances of school on a day-by-day basis that shapes their educational lives and their decisions about their level of engagement with schooling. For students experiencing transition, the data collection process used permitted an analysis of the more general themes affecting this experience. The themes are:

- The Community
- Parents, family and home
- Personal health
- Personal identity issues
- Poverty
- School, teachers, learning and teaching.

Transition students perceive their environment to be 'riskier' and having more issues, obstacles and barriers to negotiate in their lives. This riskier environment may be one explanation for the greater numbers of students who fail to make the transition from Grade 6 in primary school across the 'boundary line' to Grade 7 in JSS.

Like the participation students consulted, the transition students were critical of teachers for their approach and manner, teaching skills and an ever-present fear of punishment for being late or for not having completed homework. Their perceptions of the poor quality of schools and teaching in them can also be seen as a further risk to young people at school.

A sense of fearfulness stands out from the analysis of what students have to say about participation in JSS and about transition – a consistent concern in their young lives based on fear from within the communities in which they live and in the schools they attend. The fear is based largely on violence, punishment and humiliation. At school, fear is the very



antithesis of an environment that is necessary for effective learning. Parents and teachers were noticeably ignorant of the wide range of factors in the school environment itself that have an impact on students and on their learning. Their 'silence' on the themes identified by all student groups, such as too many rules, suggests that change in schools will be difficult when teachers are so remote from the needs of their students.

NFE students identified a larger number of different issues that had influenced their experience of transition than any other student groups. This outcome suggests that this group of young people experienced such an accumulating load of obstacles and issues that they ultimately gave up and left the formal education sector.

There is no clear 'trigger' for the decision to leave apart from the pervasive impact of poverty and the large number of concerns they have with the quality of their schools. A clue among the themes that has importance to this group in addressing their concerns is '*School: teachers should be more like a friend, personal approach*'. This theme is consistent with a theme that emerged in research: how one or two negative teacher relationships can destroy school life but how just one positive teacher relationship can help a student remain at school and go on to succeed in life.

The simple answer to the main question posed for the study – 'why do students fail to transition to or otherwise participate in JSS?' can be constructed as follows: 'poverty combined with dysfunctional communities, dysfunctional families and dysfunctional schools that threaten, abuse and disable young people to the point where they decide that the most appropriate choice in all their complex circumstances is to leave school'.

## **1.7 Interferences**

Interferences are major barriers to participation imposed on young people primarily by those entrusted with their care or through neglect. Two major themes of interference emerge that warrant closer attention. These themes are the:

- Participation in schools by children with special needs, and the
- Abuse of children in school.

Broad policy settings are in place but children with physical, emotional, mental and intellectual challenges have been largely neglected in development.

***Recommendation 9:*** *Within a more general approach to addressing questions of access, transition and participation in education, there must also be a focus in future projects on addressing and mainstreaming the needs of children with physical, emotional, mental and intellectual challenges.*

The study team noted that violence, abuse and exploitation of children in Indonesia are under-reported. The study team posed these questions:

- First, 'Are these fears indicators of a deeper malaise in schools and society related to child abuse?'
- Second, 'does the theme in the data: 'Family and home environment difficult' mask patterns of abuse?'
- Third, does abuse contribute to low participation and early school leaving?

The team concluded that there is a serious malaise. In relation to the second question, 'Does the theme 'Family and home environment difficult' mask patterns of abuse?' the answer is almost certainly 'yes' as data reveals that most abusers that are known to children.

The extent to which child abuse leads to early school leaving, school behaviour issues and a failure to make the transition from primary to secondary education is unknown but it does have a powerful impact on the education of victims.

**Recommendation 10:** *Within a more general approach to addressing questions of access, transition and participation in education, there must also be a focus in future projects on addressing all forms child abuse in project areas. In particular, any activity in this area should establish strong working relationships with government organisations, NGO's and other groups, including UNICEF, who are working in the area and focus especially on school-based issues that are expected in the Child Protection Act. There is widespread ignorance of the Act and so it is recommended that both Gol and donors take responsibility to ensure the Act is more effectively socialized in schools and Districts.*

### **1.8 What Has Been Tried and What Works?**

Two of the questions to be answered by the study include:

- What initiatives have been tried to encourage transition to and participation in JSS?
- What has been the impact of these initiatives and how might they be improved?

In general, there are two very broad approaches to addressing participation and transition that have been tried: the improving practices approach and the systemic change approach.

Generally, the improving practice approach is 'incremental' in the sense that there is a focus on one set of activities, such as SBM, in a restricted area and for a limited time. Three development projects have produced data that indicates their work in schools has improved student participation. It is concluded that these indicators of improving practice in schools, practices that are mostly focused on better learning and teaching and school based management, are evidence of improving school quality following a project intervention. There is implicit evidence from the data available here that good quality schools are more likely to have good participation rates and good rates of transition from primary school to JSS. In other words, the improving practice approach appears to be effective.

There is evidence that good schools are good, in part, because of strengthening student engagement and participation in the life of the school. Equally, 'disengaged' students remain at risk of early leaving and ceasing to participate.

**Recommendation 10:** *Continuing attention to school quality improvement on a whole school basis is warranted as an effective strategy to increase participation and to reduce early school leaving. The approach should be implemented in ways that integrate the other recommendations in this report. Impact evaluations should be included as a routine means to both understand the development processes and to improve school participation and retention policies and practices.*

The systematic change approach is a policy-driven set of practices that work together to change or develop practices or systems across a wide area and that will achieve national objectives of compulsory basic education. Recent national systemic changes have been the introduction of the BOS, and before that, SBM.

A District example of a systematic change is the case of Kabupaten Jembrana in Bali where local policy is driving completion of 12 years of school education. The systemic change approach requires strong local leadership, strong institutions of education and the resources

to succeed. Currently available data was studied to determine if student participation rates differ from Provincial level and national level data. Jembrana grade repetition, dropout and transition to SMP figures demonstrate the District is performing better against these comparators, for both SD/MI and SMP/MTs.

***Recommendation 11:*** *An evaluation of the approach used in Jembrana should be commissioned at an early date to assess its relevance and effectiveness for other Districts. Claims that most other Districts have studied the approach should also be investigated to understand if, and how, this process of District-to-District dissemination has occurred and then to assess the quality of any disseminated practices.*

## **1.9 Conclusions**

To minimize the risks of low participation and early school leaving, the lessons from the study indicate clearly that piecemeal approaches are unlikely to be successful and that whole-school and whole-of-schooling thinking is necessary. What works in encouraging students to engage and stay within the education system is fundamentally having access to good schools and good teachers.

Recent evidence from Indonesia shows very clear patterns in the ways to effectively move schools and their teachers towards better quality standards in both learning and teaching and in school management. Foremost among the strategies is a ‘whole-school’ approach that develops all the teachers, together with their communities, across a broad range of school development issues. A focus on improved teaching and employing active learning approaches is demonstrably successful and significantly improves the learning environment for students (and their test scores).

Students frequently observe that their teachers are angry, unkind, absent, boring, and lazy. Students note that one critically important feature of good teaching is missing: there is *no feedback given on completed work*.<sup>1</sup> Worse, the data obtained from NGOs and the media indicates that students suffer considerable abuse from teachers including physical violence and rape. Good teaching and high professional standards should be demanded, from people who are carefully selected for teaching, educated and trained, professionally developed and managed, and properly paid.

The whole-of-schooling concept recognises that transition and participation begins in the move from home to early childhood education and concludes with entry to the work force from whatever level of education the student departs. Whole-of-schooling is also an inclusive concept that recognises the needs of all children; particularly those with special needs who are far too often forgotten and so do not participate at all in education.

There is ample, detailed evidence in the study to show how participation and transition can be made to work more effectively. In addition to having access to good schools and good teachers, some key findings include:

- The necessity for Districts to collect accurate data about education to inform better standards of planning, particularly the planning of school places to accommodate rising numbers of children participating and staying in the education system.
- A ‘whole-of-schooling approach’ that recognises the many transitions that occur

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<sup>1</sup> In a report that draws on over 500,000 studies of the influences on student achievement, feedback stands out as the single most powerful influence. See: John Hattie, *Teachers make a difference: what is the research evidence?* Melbourne, Australian Council of Educational Research, October, 2003. Available: [www.acer.edu.au/workshops/documents/Teachers\\_Make\\_a\\_Difference\\_Hattie.pdf](http://www.acer.edu.au/workshops/documents/Teachers_Make_a_Difference_Hattie.pdf)

throughout school life, the importance of enrolling children at the correct age, supporting progress through the grades, addressing the grade repetition issue, and removing unnecessary barriers to participation.

- Empowering communities and parents so that they are aware of their rights and obligations and so they can participate in the democratic management of schools and appropriately support and encourage their own children.
- Empowering children to give them the life skills to manage their school participation, and transitions and the risks they will inevitably encounter in life.

Finally, the good practice case study of Jembrana in Bali demonstrates the power of whole school and whole of schooling approaches built on a foundation of policy, and a strong commitment to educational plans supported effectively at school and student level through careful monitoring and management.

## **2 BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 The Context**

This study is intended to help support the Indonesian government's commitment to increase access to, and participation in, basic education, and in particular junior secondary education (JSE). The overall focus of the study is to develop a stronger basis for understanding what works in getting children into schools and ensuring that they stay and participate effectively so as to complete a full basic education. It develops this understanding through an analysis of the complex concepts and processes of participation in education, a review of the literature on transition and participation, and a consideration of the outcomes of fieldwork undertaken in July 2009.

With increasing participation in education, attention rightly is beginning to be given to the quality of the educational experience and to questions of retention and transition to the next levels of education. In the context of the government's concern to ensure all children complete basic education, the transition from primary to JSS is of central importance.

USAID supports the Government of Indonesia's (GoI) policies of at least maintaining the participation rate for students in primary schools of and expanding the junior high school net participation rate. Within the framework of full implementation of nine years basic education, GoI is strengthening its support to basic education where geographical, economic and social obstacles are faced. USAID notes that the GoI is committed to assist those who have left school early and those primary school graduates who do not make the transition to JSS. The Government also undertakes to apply strategies to improve the demand for education, particularly for those children who face the obstacles mentioned here. Through the work of the USAID project, Decentralized Basic Education – 3, USAID is actively supporting the achievement of the Government's policies and testing significant innovations.

The Decentralized Basic Education – 3 (DBE3) program has been working since 2006 to provide assistance to those who have completed primary school but not entered junior secondary school, and to those who are in junior secondary school but are at risk of early school leaving. DBE3 has explored reasons for non-completion of basic education and has been implementing programs to address the issues it has identified. The answers to the questions below are intended to help further the development of the work of DBE3 and other possible future donor programs on the issue of transition and participation.

### **2.2 Purpose and Scope of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to

- Examine the reasons why students fail to transition to or otherwise participate in Junior Secondary Education.
- Identify and evaluate initiatives being implemented to encourage transition to and participation in JSS.
- Make recommendations for future project inputs that might encourage JSS participation.

It was intended that the study should be based on available existing data but also include in-depth studies in a number of districts:

- Some of the 111 districts, which MONE has identified for priority attention where, in 2008, the participation rates in JSS were below 80% and where initiatives are taking place to encourage participation in JSS
- Some of the DBE districts where participation rates are low and/or initiatives are being implemented to encourage transition to and participation in JSS
- Other districts where examples of innovation are known to exist such as Kabupaten Gorontalo and Jemberana.

### **2.3 Methodology**

The study recognized that DBE3 research has taken place on this issue and that some findings were summarized in the DBE3 study *A Study of Junior Secondary Education in Indonesia, A Review of the Implementation of Nine Years Universal Basic Education* (Weston, September 2008). An earlier set of very significant DBE3 reports was also produced in 2007, the *Youth Consultations Report on Causes of Drop-out*, which contains much relevant information and which provided essential data for re-analysis in this study.

This present study can only reiterate the methodological challenge expressed in another key document produced by DBE3 titled *What is Being Done at the National Level to Ensure all Young People in Indonesia are Able to Complete basic Education?* (Power and Yufiarti, 2006, 3):

This paper was written under difficult circumstances where data and literature was lacking or difficult to access ... therefore this paper introduces only what was found out by the authors in the limited time frame.

The *Youth Consultations Reports* from Java, Sulawesi and North Sumatra are an innovative achievement in the very limited field of work on transition and participation that has been completed in Indonesia. The Reports focus on those most directly involved – the students themselves – and they do so in a way that captures what they say about their own experience and their varied personal situations rather than have young people respond to externally pre-determined and structured research questions. The approach used in this work is known as ‘voiced research’ and, with the limited time and resources available, was also used with groups of students in the present study in North Sumatra to explore issues around the process of transition from primary to junior secondary school (JSS).

The present study began with a literature review and then proceeded to undertake a conceptual analysis of a complex field of work. Some published studies are clearly focused on ‘transition’ between levels of education whereas others take a more general approach to overall ‘participation’ and so matters of transition tend to be lost in this broader concern. As transition is a major focus for the present study, because of a perceived sharp drop in participation between Grade 6 and Grade 7, this process of clarification proved to be central to the field work, particularly that undertaken in schools in North Sumatra where transition became the major focus. As noted above, a ‘voiced research’ approach was used, modified to reflect time and resources constraints.

Fieldwork included the gathering and analysis of data and public documents, visits to schools, small group discussions with students, principals, teachers and parents, and meetings with District, Provincial and Central Government officials.

As difficulties in obtaining the necessary data and information were faced and an

appreciation of the potential scale and complexity of the study emerged in relation to limitations faced with school holidays and the time and human resources necessary to achieve the stated purposes, it became imperative to modify the proposed methodology to adjust to the emerging realities and possibilities. Moreover, these difficulties influenced a decision to focus primarily on formal schooling and what works to get students into formal schools and not about junior secondary education as a whole. "Education" does include other pathways such as non-formal education and open schools as well.

In the time available for the study, fieldwork could only be undertaken in two locations, first in one of the two nominated innovative Districts, Jembrana in Bali, and second, in one of the Provinces where DBE3 has been working, North Sumatra. In addition, access to the District level data was delayed through bureaucratic formalities and so the review of District level data for all of Indonesia is not included in this Report.

### **2.3.1 Research approaches**

The literature review shows that several different research approaches have been followed to describe and explain phenomena associated with early school leaving, transition and participation. These different approaches include the:

- Economic studies approach by the World Bank (2006) study of poverty and education in Indonesia.
- The 'best practice' approach used in an Australian study of students at risk of early leaving (Commonwealth Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, 2001: 5).
- Quantitative survey research, illustrated by the Lawson (2008) study of transition.
- Theoretical modelling of the kind used on US data by Abbott (2000).
- Secondary data analysis of existing data sets of the kind undertaken by Suryadarma, Suryahadi and Sumarto (2006) and by Gardiner et al. (2003) in their study of poverty in NTB.
- 'Voiced' Research of which the study of early school leaving by Smyth et al (2000) is an exemplary example. The DBE3 student consultations are, to a large extent, based on this approach as well.
- Project evaluation reports such as those of DBEP, UNICEF, MBE and DBE3.

Overall, it can be shown that each approach has distinctive benefits for understanding the general domain but that the 'voiced research' approach is the only one to yield a perspective on issues as experienced by those most directly involved – the young people themselves.

The present study followed the general structure suggested in the following diagram (after Smyth et al., 2000, 23) and attempted to work in the 'Reconnaissance Phase', recognising that even here, resources only permitted the beginnings of work on in-depth research planning plus some general reporting. This report therefore draws on the outcomes of a wide range of research approaches to the field of participation and transition.

An Ideal Research Strategy

<b>Mapping the Field:</b> <b>'Reconnaissance Phase'</b>	<b>In Depth Research:</b> <b>'Active Phase'</b>	<b>Checking Back / Follow-up:</b> <b>'Reactive Phase'</b>
Literature location and review	Testing plans and instruments	Following up the gaps
Comprehending the issues; defining and studying the context	Data gathering	Seeking clarification
Establishing possibilities for in-depth research	Data analysis	Further fieldwork, data collection and analysis
Making contacts, identifying stakeholders, building trust	Testing hypotheses, making links	Reviewing with key stakeholders; presentations
Visits, discussions, observations, recording, questioning, reading	Writing up drafts for understanding	Write up and conclude
Developing plans and instruments	Preparation for follow-up	Publish results

Source: Based on the work of Smyth et al., 2000, 23.

**2.3.2 Student consultation data**

The student consultation data from each participating Province gathered by DBE3 in 2006 was re-analysed. The data was electronically indexed and 'thematized' using NVivo 8 software (QSR International; available: <http://www.qsrinternational.com>). NVivo 8 is a powerful analytical tool for organizing qualitative data, shaping, and making sense of the data. The focus is on exploring issues, identifying themes, understanding phenomena and answering questions – not on producing numbers.

By using NVivo with the DBE3 student consultation data, it was possible to make sense of this data quickly and easily across documents. The original text of the documents was coded to develop a comprehensive index of the data that was then analysed for emerging themes. The index enabled themes to be tracked across transcripts and provided multi-dimensional and multi-layered views of the original text. For example, it was possible to produce many views of the data. There were four base data elements: region, location – rural or urban, school type and gender. The fifth and most important element was the voices of the young people and what they were saying about school participation and this element is presented in this report. All of these elements were accessible via the index system in a variety of combinations, allowing strong and weak themes to emerge against the data.

The tables in this report present the voices of young people, first in terms of what they said about participation and early school leaving (or dropout), secondly, what they said about transition from primary school to junior secondary school, and finally, what they said about strategies for preventing early leaving.



### 3 BASIC EDUCATION IN INDONESIA

Basic education comprises primary schools (years 1-6) and junior secondary schools (years 7-9). Both state schools and private schools make up the sector and both are included in this study. Two ministries are responsible for managing the basic education sub sector, with 82 percent of schools under the Ministry of National Education (primary and junior secondary schools, abbreviated SD and SMP) and 18 percent under the Ministry of Religious Affairs (religious primary and junior secondary schools, MI and MTs). The majority of religious schools are private schools supported by a range of religious institutions and foundations.

Comparatively, Indonesia performs poorly on educational quality indicators with respect to its close regional neighbours. In 2003, Indonesia ranked 34 out of 45 countries in the Trends in International Mathematics Science Study (TIMSS). In the 2003 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) examination, Indonesia ranked last out of 40 countries in both mathematics and language (Arze del Granado, et al., 2007, 26). It is not surprising, therefore, that government planning attention has been directed at improving the quality and relevance of education at all levels. This attention is not wholly directed at the more obvious correlates of quality such as teachers, curriculum and learning methods, but also to questions of access and participation by students in schools. The evidence indicates that quality improvements in education reflected by improvements in academic achievement also lead to improvements in school participation.

The Government of Indonesia (Gol) has introduced significant reforms in the education sector, which have created a policy environment that has led to important change and improvement (MoNE, 2005, 46). Decentralization delegated responsibility for basic education to District governments, and complementary laws and regulations to strengthen District and school level management and governance and improve service delivery have been introduced.

The Gol introduced School Based Management (SBM) in 2002 and involved school staff, parents and communities in the participative, democratic management of schools in order to make them more accountable and responsive for education service delivery. Overall, the available evidence suggests that the impact of SBM has been positive (source). Although by no means conclusive, the consistency of the evidence for SBM demonstrates the relevance of this management approach to Indonesian schools.

The increasing role of parents and communities in both school management and in classrooms is a potential source of further support for addressing questions of access, participation and transition as it has a demonstrable two-way effect – parents are able to contribute in constructive ways to their schools and, at the same time, better community understanding of their rights and obligations develops. This understanding is of critical importance to families struggling with the complexities of poverty-related issues in their lives.

Other major changes have included substantial improvements in school funding through the introduction of 'school operational funding' (known as Bantuan Operasional Sekolah or by its Indonesian acronym, BOS). The BOS supports educational expenditure in ways that enhances local ownership and empowers local school management. Conclusive evidence is not available, but reports from schools and students indicate that the BOS has had a positive impact on school participation. Finally, the passing of the Teachers' Law requiring all teachers to be qualified to S1 standard has supported the aim of having a better-qualified teaching workforce and improved quality of learning and teaching, itself a significant factor in student retention in schools.

In other words, the important elements of the basic architecture for improving participation and transition are already in place – attention to school quality, District and school based management and governance, and funding support for educational participation.

Unquestionably much more needs to be achieved by focusing on and strengthening these elements as well as by addressing other issues indicated by research on transition and participation and to be identified in this study. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that the basic architecture for continuing school development is now in place and the GoI has made commendable achievements in educational improvement in the past decade.

### 3.1 Student Completion of Primary School

Data for the past four years confirms that Indonesia has achieved high and sustained rates of primary school completion, both nationally and at the Provincial level (Table 1).

The official data sets (Available: <http://www.depdiknas.go.id/>) show that five Provinces recorded less than 95% primary school completion but reported rates are nevertheless high – Sumatra Barat (94.7%), Jambi (93.7%), Bengkulu (92.7%), Kalimantan Selatan (94.4%) and Nusa Tenggara Timur (94.3%).

The highest primary school completion rates were recorded in DKI Jakarta (99%), Jawa Barat (98.2%) and Sulawesi Tenggara (98.1%).

Table 1: Trends in Primary School Completion Rates for Selected Provinces<sup>2</sup>

Location	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Jawa Timur	98.44	98.39	96.04	96.99
Sumatera Utara	96.48	96.72	97.47	95.99
Kalimantan Tengah	91.09	90.36	96.43	96.42
Gorontalo	88.62	88.53	95.41	95.45
Bali	99.15	97.81	97.32	97.58
<b>Indonesia</b>	<b>97.41</b>	<b>95.05</b>	<b>96.81</b>	<b>96.86</b>

Source: Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, *Statistic of National Education*. Available: <http://www.depdiknas.go.id/>

<sup>2</sup> Full data sets for each Province are available at: <http://www.depdiknas.go.id/> The Provinces presented in the tables here include one ‘indicative’ Province from each of the five main Province groups used by the Ministry of National Education in their data presentations. The indicative Provinces include North Sumatra and Bali where the fieldwork for the study was undertaken.

### 3.2 Student Transition and Participation in JSS

Having achieved high and sustained rates of primary school completion, what happens at the next level of education, Junior Secondary School (JSS)? The Ministry set a JSS enrolment target of 75% for 2009 in its National Strategic Plan (MoNE, 2005, 47). This rate was achieved in 2007/2008 when 75.58% of students completing primary school made the transition to JSS.

Having achieved the target, it is nevertheless recognised that 24% of students who completed primary school in that year did not make the transition to JSS. Expressed in a different way, that is a 'loss' of 927,610 of those students completing primary school and not completing junior secondary school.<sup>3</sup>

Why these students did not make the transition and continue to participate in basic education is a primary focus of this study. The trends in transition rates in recent years are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Trends in Transition Rates to JSS by primary school Graduates

Location	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Jawa Timur	75.77	77.31	84.79	74.23
Sumatera Utara	74.60	89.66	88.58	85.06
Kalimantan Tengah	60.10	65.30	72.90	58.04
Gorontalo	57.42	95.63	86.07	84.90
Bali	92.34	98.75	109.58	99.43
<b>Indonesia</b>	<b>71.40</b>	<b>79.73</b>	<b>81.97</b>	<b>75.58</b>

Source: Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, *Statistic of National Education*. Available: <http://www.depdiknas.go.id/>

It is difficult to have confidence in the data as presented here. Although the national trend in participation shows a small overall improvement in the time period, and in fact achieves the Strategic Plan target of 75%, the 6% decline from almost 82% participation in 2006/2007 to nearly 76% in 2007/2008 is of concern. Whether this change is an educational issue or unreliable data is not clear, but unreliable data is almost certainly the issue.

An even larger change in the transition rate between years is shown for North Sumatra of 15% from 2004/2005 to 2005/2006 and for Gorontalo, the change is 39%. What requires

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<sup>3</sup> This figure is only about schools and it does not mean that this 24% did not continue with their *education* but that they did not continue in school. Some of them may have continued with their Junior Secondary Education through other means. This illustrates another weakness with the data.

investigation is these sharp changes as well as in overall drop in transition from primary school to JSS in the years 2006/2007 to 2007/2008 at the national level. This drop is reflected in the data for most Provinces. Finally, the 2006/2007 data for Bali reveals a further difficulty in interpreting the data where transfer rate is greater than 100%. Other Provinces have even higher rates than this with Papua achieving 114.11% in 2007/2008. Possible explanations for this phenomenon, apart from data collection and reliability, such as confusing Grade 7 repeating students with those transitioning from primary school, may include migrations into an area, or large numbers of former students returning to education.

Similarly, the published data reveals large changes in dropout rates between years and between Provinces. Table 3 shows variations between years within Provinces – for example Jakarta – and between Provinces – for example between Jawa Timur and Gorontalo. Provinces with large populations appear to have comparatively stable rates and Jawa Timur illustrates this phenomenon.

Table 3: Trends in Dropout Rates from JSS by Province

Location	2003/04 – 04/05	2004/05 – 05/06	2005/06 - 06/07	2006/07 – 07/08
Jawa Timur	1.98	1.49	2.01	2.28
Sumatera Utara	3.04	2.94	3.23	4.85
Kalimantan Tengah	8.07	1.20	2.70	10.70
Gorontalo	7.50	1.74	7.28	18.28
Bali	4.71	0.81	2.64	5.98
<b>Indonesia</b>	<b>2.83</b>	<b>1.97</b>	<b>2.88</b>	<b>3.94</b>

Source: Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, *Statistic of National Education*. Available: <http://www.depdiknas.go.id/>

Whereas the National and Sumatera Utara rates are comparatively ‘stable’ over time, the rate for Bali shows large changes by a factor of about 6 between 2003/04 and 2004/05 and 7 between 2004/05 and 2006/07. For Gorontalo this factor is more than 10. These large year-by-year changes cast doubt on the accuracy of the published data.

The study began to examine patterns of participation and dropout in District level data that was provided by the *Pusat Statistik Pendidikan, Depdiknas* (Department of Education Centre for Educational Statistics) but abandoned the task for reasons illustrated in Table 4 and the following observations of that data:

First, it is highly improbable that there were no dropouts *at all* in any of the Districts listed with zero dropouts shown in Table 4. The improbability is emphasised when Jakarta Selatan with 108 dropouts is compared with each other city area in Jakarta with zero, even though Jakarta Timur is very much larger and still records zero dropouts. The same observation is true for the ‘zero’ Districts in Jawa Barat and Jawa Tengah. Perhaps zero has been confused with a ‘nil return’ or ‘not available’ as Weston’s explanation (see below) suggests.

Second, that Sumedang reports a dropout rate more than three times the rate of Sukabumi nearby in the same Provinces raises the question 'why?' Perhaps the answer is cultural, perhaps it is data quality, or maybe it is something else – migration or employment. Local culture may be important. For example, advice about the high dropout rate in Kota Sawah Lunto in West Sumatra suggests it may not be from any educational failure or difficulty but from 'success'; here, it seems, education is so highly valued, people leave to seek better educational opportunities elsewhere. In any case, the analysis was abandoned due to the complexity of this cultural analysis and the dubious quality of the available data. It was concluded that it was pointless to attempt to identify Districts with specific participation and early leaving characteristics on the basis of unreliable data.

Table 4: Dropout Data from SMP, Sample Districts, 2007/2008

Province	District / City	No Students	No of Dropouts	Percentage of Dropouts
DKI Jakarta	Kab. Kepulauan Seribu	1,402	0	0.0%
DKI Jakarta	Kota Jakarta Pusat	30,894	0	0.0%
DKI Jakarta	Kota Jakarta Utara	35,159	0	0.0%
DKI Jakarta	Kota Jakarta Barat	40,456	0	0.0%
DKI Jakarta	Kota Jakarta Selatan	57,798	108	0.2%
DKI Jakarta	Kota Jakarta Timur	82,712	0	0.0%
Jawa Barat	Bekasi	57,558	0	0 %
Jawa Tengah	Cilacap	76,970	0	0 %
Jawa Tengah	Kudus	22,931	0	0 %
Jawa Barat	Kab. Bogor	50,007	363	0.7%
Jawa Barat	Kab. Sukabumi	38,199	137	0.4%
Jawa Barat	Kab. Sumedang	35,954	480	1.3%
Bengkulu	Seluma	4,966	514	10.35%
Sulawesi Tenggara	Bombana	2,347	233	9.93%
Sumatera Barat	Kota Sawah Lunto	3,183	204	6.41%

Source: *Pusat Statistik Pendidikan, Depdiknas* (Department of Education Centre for Educational Statistics), July 2009.

These concerns with data quality are consistent with those expressed in the Weston study:

However, there are doubts about the quality and accuracy of the data. Since the decentralization of the management of primary and secondary education to districts the central government has, by its own admission, experienced problems in collecting data from the Districts. Only just over 50% of data from junior secondary schools for the past school year 2007-8, which should have been collected in August 2007 appears to have been recorded with MONE. Recent experience working with Districts also shows that much of the data they have and are presumably meant to be reporting to MoNE is out of date or even not available. The situation is even worse for MoRA schools... (Weston, 2008).

Data based policy decisions become exceedingly difficult in this environment as decision makers are left to make informed guesses about the real situation. Worse, it is impossible to monitor accurately the progress on achieving policy goals and to make informed judgements about necessary adjustments to both policy and practice. To address the challenges presented to policy makers, the study was informed that the Directorates are now operating their own data management systems in order to address the shortcomings of the central data collections.

This situation with poor data is not helped by the apparent confidence with which some studies in Indonesia present their statistical analyses and conclusions, and without any reference to the dubious nature of the basic data they are working with.

Decision makers have to work with what this study calls 'rough data'. This acknowledges the widespread and continuing difficulties in obtaining timely and accurate data in a decentralized environment and accepts that data, often incomplete and subjective, from multiple sources will be necessary to inform decisions. In much the same way, the present study has had to rely on a similar approach to reach its own conclusions.

### **3.3 Transition and Participation: International Obligations**

In the domain of transition and participation in basic education, Indonesia has made several formal commitments to the international community as well as to its own citizens through various policies and plans. One of these commitments is under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

#### ***3.3.1 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*<sup>4</sup>**

The Convention was ratified by Indonesia, 5 Sep 1990. Article 28 of the Convention is reproduced in full below as it contains several references to issues of importance in this study (these references are shown in italics):

- States Parties recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and *on the basis of equal opportunity*, they shall, in particular:
  - (a) Make primary education compulsory and available free to all;
  - (b) Encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education, *make them available and accessible to every child, and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and*

<sup>4</sup>

Source: <http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/k2crc.htm> Accessed: 10 June 2009.

*offering financial assistance in case of need;*

(c) Make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means;

(d) *Make educational and vocational information and guidance available and accessible to all children;*

(e) Take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of dropout rates.

- States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention.
- States Parties shall promote and encourage international cooperation in matters relating to education, in particular with a view to contributing to the elimination of ignorance and illiteracy throughout the world and facilitating access to scientific and technical knowledge and modern teaching methods. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

Ratification of the Convention carries with it the requirement to report to the UN on implementation.

### **3.3.2 Education for All**

Education for All (EFA) is a commitment to provide quality basic education.<sup>5</sup> The EFA movement was launched at the World Conference on Education for All in 1990. Ten years later, with many countries far from having reached the goals, the international community met again in Senegal, and re-affirmed their commitment to achieving Education for All by the year 2015. The international community identified six key education goals that aim to meet the learning needs of all children, youth and adults by 2015. The six goals are shown below and all are relevant in their own way to the purposes of school participation and retention:

- Goal 1: Expand early childhood care and education
- Goal 2: Provide free and compulsory primary education for all
- Goal 3: Promote learning and life skills for young people and adults
- Goal 4: Increase adult literacy by 50 per cent
- Goal 5: Achieve gender parity by 2005, gender equality by 2015
- Goal 6: Improve the quality of education.

The EFA goals also contribute to the pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), especially goals on universal primary education and on gender equality by 2015.

### **3.3.3 The Millennium Development Goals**

The Millennium Development Goals<sup>6</sup> are goals that 192 United Nations member states have agreed to try to achieve by the year 2015. The United Nations Millennium Declaration, signed in September 2000, commits the states to achieving several goals, the most relevant to school participation and retention being:

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<sup>5</sup> Source: <http://portal.unesco.org> and follow the education theme to *Education for All*.

<sup>6</sup> Source: <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>

- Achieve universal primary education
- Ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling
- Increased enrolment must be accompanied by efforts to ensure that all children remain in school and receive a high-quality education
- Promote gender equality and empower women
- Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015.
- In cooperation with developing countries, develop decent, productive work for youth.

### **3.3.4 Implementing the International Obligations**

Together, these formal obligations could provide a checklist of issues that can form the basis of evaluating school and District progress towards achieving satisfactory transition and participation in basic education. Together, they also speak of quality in educational provision which is a factor linked to high participation and retention rates.

The Child-Friendly School framework was developed as a means of translating the Convention on the Rights of the Child into school management and classroom practice (UNICEF, 2006). The framework consists of five dimensions: inclusiveness; effectiveness (relevance and quality); health, safety and protection; gender-friendliness; and involvement of students, families and communities.

Ensuring that quality education is accessible to all is also fundamental to achieving all Millennium Development Goals for each goal is ultimately dependent upon the success of the education system. The Child-Friendly School framework provides a strong educational basis from which real progress towards the MDGs can be made.

## **3.4 Transition and Participation: National Obligations**

The Government of Indonesia (GoI) has made strategic policy commitments concerning access to education that provide the framework for consideration of transition and participation (Ministry of National Education, 2005). Commitments relevant to this study and to basic education specifically are set out in the national strategic plan for education, or *Renstra*, as follows (Ministry of National Education, 2005: 19):

- Eliminate cost barriers by providing operation aid to schools (BOS)
- Establish 'one roof basic school-junior high school' for isolated areas
- Expand access via the non-formal system, through non-government organisations and open junior high schools
- Integrate inclusive education for children with special needs
- Integrate 'global issues' such as gender, education for specific services, in conflict and border areas etc into programs
- Advocate and educate in communities concerning the importance of education, ensuring attendance and eliminating dropout
- Making use of technology for distance learning as an alternative facility in isolated regions, regions facing transportation obstacles or that are sparsely populated.



This study notes progress on some of these commitments, such as the implementation of the BOS and the establishment of one-roof schools, and observes that these are important and positive strategies that do assist in improving participation by addressing obstacles to participation especially by poor children and children in remote communities.

The study also notes that there is evidence of the continuing need for attention to advocacy commitment. Communities and parents demonstrate a very clear need to have their capacities strengthened to understand and support education.

### **3.5 The Child Protection Act, No 23, 2002**

This Act of Parliament is noted here for two reasons. First, as a record of the obligations of all educational personnel under the Law, and second, to draw attention to the Government's recognition of a grave moral crisis in its teaching workforce. This crisis is indicated by examples of direct breach of the Law and the stated moral values of the Ministry of National Education set out in the Strategic Plan (2005) by some school staff.

This moral crisis is clearly shown in the Act, Part 3: Education, Chapter 54, as follows:

Children in the school and vicinity of the school must be protected from violent actions by the teachers, school management or peers in said school or other educational institutions.

In case there is any ambiguity in reading this translation, the original Indonesian has been checked to ensure that the meaning is to protect children *from* actions *by* teachers, and by management and peers. It does not mean that teachers, management and peers are to protect the children (which raises the important question 'who will protect them?').

Consultations in the field suggest widespread ignorance of the Act. Therefore, both GoI and donors would appear to have a responsibility to ensure the Act is more effectively socialized.

These issues are discussed further in section 6.7.2.



## 4 ACCESS, TRANSITION AND PARTICIPATION IN BASIC EDUCATION

Young people make several significant educational transitions as they grow to become young adults. For some young people in Indonesia, the full sequence of educational transitions will be from home to early childhood education, then to primary, junior secondary, senior secondary and, for a few, higher education. It is relatively easy to locate research and practical strategies to help prepare young people for each of these transitions and then help them progress through the academic and social challenges that inevitably arise. One very straightforward strategy was identified in a poverty study in NTB and that was to ensure children commence school at the correct age – and not older – and then support them to make normal progress through each grade (Gardiner, et al, 2003, 28).

Smooth progression through school is not experienced by significant numbers of children in Indonesia and this is a continuing concern to the GoI and its development partners. Children's education may be characterised by disruptive school transfers, grade repetition and early leaving.

The feedback from students consulted in the fieldwork for this study and the literature on the transition to secondary school suggests that academic and social problems in JSS are linked to the major changes that occur in students' lives and their sometimes desperate family circumstances. In addition, children experience major changes in relation to school size, the number of different teachers, and the arrangement of learning and teaching into subject-focused classes. The move from primary school to JSS also involves a transition between two radically different cultures of schooling (Hargreaves, Earl and Ryan 1996; Cullingford 1999).

Parents can play an important role in supporting successful transitions for their children but student consultations clearly point out that many parents lack the 'agency' – the knowledge, skills and commitment – to help their children in constructive ways. Teachers, schools and District governments can work to address this challenge by involving parents in the work of the school and by providing appropriate information to them. Poor parents who question the value of education in relation to the costs involved and the need for children to help earn a family income, need to be assisted to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of the benefits of education. This is a matter that Districts and schools must continually address.

Ensuring that information is available for students and their parents about making the transition, about where they are going, what information is known about the location and what they are likely to experience there, is an important principle of transition and a need that is most clearly evident from the consultations with student, parents and teachers. Many schools and Districts already do this; all should do it on a routine basis. It is, after all, a very clearly stated commitment in the national Strategic Plan, which is to:

Advocate and educate in communities concerning the importance of education, ensuring attendance and eliminating dropout (Ministry of National Education, 2005: 19).

Finally, it is apparent that good practice in transition includes accurate information, thorough preparation and also someone from the primary school or JSS actually taking control of the whole process to ensure that children physically make the transition and are provided with all the necessary transition to JSS documentation.

## 4.1 Key Concepts in School Participation and Transition

Several significant educational concepts are used in discussions of participation and transition. It is important that these concepts are clarified at the outset.

### 4.1.1 Access

Access is a concept that means the potential to enrol in a school. However, the access concept is more complex than this and the relevance of this complexity to participation has been noted (UNICEF, 2007, 14). Drawing examples from the Strategic Plan (Ministry of National Education, 2005) and from the Education for All National Action Plan (Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, 2005) the following examples are included in UNICEF's list of access issues that are relevant to transition and participation because of the ways in which they may enhance or negatively limit participation and contribute to early school leaving.

Table 5: Educational Access Issues (UNICEF)

<b>Kinds of Access</b>	<b>Examples of Access Strategies to Strengthen Participation</b>
<b>In learning and teaching:</b>	Implement Packet A and B (non-formal access programs) for early leavers or returning students. Making curriculum and learning resources accessible; that is, both physically available and cognitively relevant for student needs.
<b>In District management and SBM:</b>	Manage strategies to reduce early leaving and repetition rates and increase completion and transfer rates in schools; focus on child protection issues. Management of absent children; managing the transition process. Eliminate gender disparity in school access and participation.
<b>In school physical features:</b>	Students with physical disabilities are able to move comfortably around the school over smooth pavements and ramps. School has clean, private toilet facilities to ensure all students, especially girls, are not excluded from the school by a lack of access to hygienic facilities.
<b>In community participation:</b>	Establish community study centres for Packet A & B. Enhancing student access to learning opportunities by engaging the support of parents and the community in classrooms. Improving community access to an understanding of education through their active participation in school committees and other educational activities.
<b>In District and school planning:</b>	Collect and manage accurate data to plan for adequate numbers of school places for students in transition. Development of inclusive education programs. Management plans to support the needs of disadvantaged children.
<b>In finance and budgeting:</b>	Improve planning and budgeting to focus on poor families and gender issues. Providing transportation access to poor, disadvantaged and remote children.

#### 4.1.2 *Transfer and transition*

Transfer and transition are two concepts often used interchangeably in the education literature (Sumner and Bradley, 1977). It is important, however, to recognise differences even though the ideas are closely related. Transfer is a broad concept that applies to any change of school. Transition generally applies to the routine progression between recognised levels of education, from primary school to JSS, for example.

Sumner and Bradley suggest two main groups of school transfers.

1. The first transfer group mostly comprises *migratory transfer* and usually affect individual children only. For example, transfers may occur in mobile families moving from a rural area to a city, or to children moving because of parent's work such as the children of military personnel. A distinctive characteristic of transfer is that it occurs between schools, both across levels of education (from primary to junior secondary), and within grades levels of education.
2. The second group of transfers affects whole groups, or cohorts, of children. These transfers, known as *transition*, take place at specific stages in school life, are predictable, and follow the national structure of education, that is, from pre-school to primary school to JSS, to senior secondary school and finally to higher education. A distinctive characteristic of transition is that it occurs across levels of education, that is, in the context of the present study, from primary school to JSS. It is not normally used to refer to grade progression; being promoted from one grade to the next grade.
3. To add to the complexity of these 'transfer' processes, it would be a mistake to assume that whole cohorts of students move naturally from a local SD to the local SMP. This is not the case as the study found. For example, in MTsN Binjai, North Sumatera, the new Grade 7 class had a large majority of new students from several SD. These new students had elected to enrol in this well-regarded religious school. They outnumbered students from the local MI by a very considerable margin. In other words, at the point of transition, there is a substantial sorting process going on with students and parents basing school choice on a variety of factors important to them at the time: religious education (as Grade 7 indicated in MTsN Binjai); or on complex mix of prestige, academic, financial and public/private school criteria as students reported at SD Tunas Pelita also in Binjai.

These cases demonstrate that while some students are in 'transition' others will be 'transfer' students and that the processes are both complex and idiosyncratic for the students involved. This study is explicitly about the transition from primary school to JSS as set out in the Terms of Reference. Nevertheless, the issue of transfer is extremely important both from the point of view of the individual children transferring and to educational organisations involved in the process of receiving these children.

In summary, therefore, *transfer* is unplanned, individual and can occur within or between levels of education. Transfer will occur for a variety of reasons ranging from an act of informed choice at the end of primary school, or the migration of a family from one place to another. Children in abusive situations often transfer, if they do not leave school completely. Using these definitions, it follows that not all children will experience transfer (as defined here) during their school years but all completing students will have experienced transition.

### **4.1.3 Participation**

Participation means that students are formally enrolled in school. However, this crude description does not take into account the quality of participation a student may have – their ‘engagement’ – with school. A student may be enrolled, but not actively participate at all.

This may be because they are not effectively participating because of truancy, or because of their school behaviour and the disciplinary procedures associated with that. More commonly, as students in this study have demonstrated, it is because of poor teaching methods and lack of learning resources. Consultations with students discussed in this study revealed frequent reference to this qualitative dimension of participation as being very important to them and a factor strongly related to participation and transfer (Table 11).

### **4.1.4 ‘At Risk’**

‘At risk’ is an important concept applied to students in situations at school where the probability of them failing to participate or to leave early is judged to be unacceptably high.

Indicators of students ‘at risk’ of failing to transition between levels of education and to participate effectively at school are listed below. These indicators have been identified in the published research (Arthur, et al., 2002; Catalano, Hawkins and Arthur, 1997; Commonwealth Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, 2001, Smyth, et al, 2000), from the DBE3 data re-analysis and from the fieldwork conducted for this study.

It is important to note here that both the re-analysis of the DBE3 student consultation data and the fieldwork on transition both identified the same main groups of risk factors as did the research. However, one difference between the published international research and local data is the stronger and more pervasive impact of poverty in Indonesia.

Indicators of students ‘at risk’ are:

- Poverty: poverty influences almost all the other indicators listed here.
- Community risk indicators: such as child abuse, ease of access to drugs, poverty, community disorganisation, violence, and conflict. Student consultations identify lack of community understanding, interest, and support for education as a risk factor.
- Family risk indicators: family history of problem behaviour, family breakdown, family conflict, poverty, child abuse, parental attitudes and behaviour. Fieldwork in North Sumatra identified ‘broken homes’ as a significant risk and parents and teachers attributed much of the blame for this on uncontrolled access to television that communicated undesirable family values.
- School risk indicators: anti-social behaviour, bullying, academic failure, attendance, student-teacher relationships including threatening, violent and abusive teachers, and peer relationships. School risk factors in the Indonesian studies emerged as a very significant and diverse range of issues, of which schools, teachers, and learning and quality of teaching issues are very significant.
- Peer group factors: peers who engage in problem behaviour, peer pressure.
- Student risk factors: students who are in danger of failing their formal examinations or not meeting expectations or their obligations in school, for whatever reason, can be described as ‘at-risk’ of leaving and not completing their formal schooling. Student grade repetition is one of the most powerful indicators of risk.
- Student health is a significant risk factor in Indonesia; one of these risks is being ‘exhausted’ because of difficult living arrangements and the need to work.

The low quality of much school academic achievement testing in Indonesia, places all

students at risk by generating unreliable and invalid data about student academic achievement. In other words, students who may actually be performing quite well may be failed by a notoriously unreliable and corrupt system of tests and public examinations.

#### 4.1.5 Dropout/early school leaving

'Dropout' is commonly used to describe a student's decision to leave school before completing a particular program or course of study, such as nine years of basic education. The term is used in Gol formal data presentations.

This definition may be convenient in the statistical sense but if we have a commitment to educational values it is imperative to remember that we are dealing here with young people's lives. Rather than use the term 'dropout', the alternative, 'early school leaving' is preferred as it communicates a sense of commitment to the view that all young people should stay at school in accordance with the government's plans to ensure completion of nine years of basic education (Smyth et al., 2000: 4; Ministry of National Education, 2005: 9).

Moreover, 'dropout' has serious negative issues in its use, "... the very term *dropout* implies that students exercise a clear, sudden choice to leave school without graduating, and yet a fair number of students are pushed out or simply fade out" (Kelly, 1993: 9). 'Early school leaving' more accurately reflects a longer process of separating from school that young people work through, whereas 'dropout' implies a sudden decision and act on the part of the student. This is generally not the case. If parents used terms such as 'push out' and 'fade out' they may become even more interested in what is going on in their child's school.

'Dropout' also communicates negative stereotypes of children that are best avoided if effective participation strategies are to be implemented. 'Dropout' suggests a stereotype where the child makes a clear choice, is incompetent, and a failure. The term can lead to life-long labelling of people with negative consequences for the rest of their lives.

Long-term, sustainable improvements to access, participation, transition and school completion are compromised unless concepts used are clarified, understood and used with care, particularly when the terms relate to children's lives for whom educators have a moral responsibility. Table 6 summarises the concepts discussed above as well as others.

Table 6: Concepts in Educational Access, Participation and Transition

Major Conceptual Category	Sub-categories	Commentary
Access	Enrollment	The formal and official state of being officially registered (enrolled) in a school.  In Indonesia, access to nine years of compulsory basic education means 'attracting' children to school in equitable ways that recognises the special needs of those never enrolled, early leavers, girls and boys, and special needs children (Ministry of National Education, 2005: 46).
	Within-school access	Access includes the above idea but also has a wider meaning in other countries. For example, in Britain, schools are required to produce a 'School Access Plan' addressing physical access for students with a disability, curriculum and information access.

Major Conceptual Category	Sub-categories	Commentary
<b>Participation</b>		
	Enrolment	See 'Access' above; the formal and official state of being officially registered (enrolled) in a school. However, enrolment alone does not necessarily signify active participation in the academic and non-academic life of the school.
	Engagement with school	The qualitative nature of participation; the extent of activity, commitment or 'engagement' in the academic and non-academic life of the school.
	Progression	Promotion from one grade to the next; normally based on academic criteria or on social criteria such as age.
	Retention	Remaining formally enrolled in school.
	Grade Repetition	When a student does not progress to the grade level with their cohort; usually determined on academic criteria or on social criteria such as age.
<b>Transfer and transition</b>		
	Routine transition between levels of school	Similar to progression but implies a change in level of school such as SD to SMP and SMP to SMA. Transition is a normal and predictable part of schooling occurring at specific grade levels.
	Transfer between schools	Transfer from one school to another at any time and at any grade level.
<b>Leaving</b>		Departure from formal education institutions.
	Early leaving (dropout)	Early leaving is preferred to dropout, a term with long-term negative implications for the student and which can hide equally important forms of departure such as a school 'pushing' students out and students whose participation in school life fades away over time.
	Completion or graduation	Completion is normally indicated by successfully passing formal school examinations. Usually determined on academic criteria or, in some cases, on social criteria such as age.



## 4.2 Grade Repetition

Grade repetition occurs when a student does not progress to the next grade level with their cohort. Progress, or promotion between grades, is usually determined on academic criteria or on social criteria such as age in the case of students in Sekolah Luar Biasa.

The concept of grade repetition is discussed here because of its central place in considering participation and early school leaving.

Table 7 shows the number of children repeating class in basic education schools. Assuming the data is reliable (and the variations discussed here suggest it may not be reliable), it reveals some major differences between Provinces. These differences reflect experience in other countries where the rate of repeating a class can vary widely from one location to another and without an obvious cause. To illustrate this, in SMP/MTs in Bali in 2007/2008 the repetition rate was one-sixth the national average whereas in SD/MI in Gorontalo in 2005/2006 the repetition rate was three times greater than the national average for SD/MI.

Table 7: Grade Repetition Rates\* in SD/MI and SMP/MTs

Location	2004 / 2005		2005 / 2006		2006 / 2007		2007 / 2008	
	SD/MI	SMP/MTs	SD/MI	SMP/MTs	SD/MI	SMP/MTs	SD/MI	SMP/MTs
Jawa Timur	4.04	0.35	3.81	0.24	3.62	0.31	2.84	0.25
Sumatera Utara	3.61	0.37	3.56	0.41	3.56	0.44	1.30	0.36
Kalimantan Tengah	5.47	0.88	4.01	1.00	4.82	0.59	3.84	0.78
Gorontalo	9.05	0.48	10.46	0.68	4.36	0.45	4.63	0.13
Bali	3.64	0.17	3.13	0.09	3.45	0.11	2.25	0.07
<b>Indonesia</b>	<b>5.40</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>3.95</b>	<b>0.47</b>	<b>3.81</b>	<b>0.53</b>	<b>2.98</b>	<b>0.42</b>
<b>Indonesia (No.)</b>	<b>1,171,814</b>	<b>37,925</b>	<b>1,026,275</b>	<b>35,613</b>	<b>991,179</b>	<b>42,538</b>	<b>782,325</b>	<b>35,830</b>

\* Repetition rate are calculated by repeaters in a certain academic year divided by pupils in previous academic year.

Source: Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, *Statistic of National Education*. Available: <http://www.depdiknas.go.id/>

The statistical differences shown in this limited data set suggest that, as in other national data sets, further investigation of such wide variations between Provinces is warranted, both of the quality of data quality supplied by schools and the of the educational or social reasons behind students repeating classes.

Grade repetition, based on educational attainments alone, is a procedure that is now generally discredited. For example, one recent US review makes the very clear statement that:

“...In a review of retention research spanning the last 100 years ... the results of research published during the past decade examining the efficacy of grade retention on academic achievement and socio-emotional adjustment are consistent with the converging evidence and conclusions of research from the remainder of the century that fail to demonstrate that grade retention provides greater benefits to students with academic or adjustment difficulties than does promotion to the next grade. Moreover, results of recent longitudinal retention research suggests that children who are retained are more likely to drop out ...” (emphasis added).

Significantly, this same review notes that:

“ ... a systematic review of seventeen studies examining dropping out of high school prior to graduation demonstrates that grade retention is one of the most powerful predictors of dropout status” (Jimerson, et al., 2002, 441).

Another American study finds that repeating a grade was associated with a substantial increase in the odds of early leaving. The study explores whether grade retention may influence school dropout because it makes students ‘over-age’ for grade. Students who ended sixth grade over-age experienced substantial disengagement during middle school; nearly one-quarter left early and those who remained had significant declines in attendance. The author suggests that the impact of being over-age for grade during adolescence may explain a large proportion of the higher rates of early school leaving among retained youths (Roderick, 1994). These conclusions from empirical research in the USA echo the findings of Gardiner et al. (2003, 28) who were working in poor kecamatan in NTB and who similarly find that being overage means a greater chance of early school leaving.

Fager and Richen, (1999) drew conclusions on grade repetition that are relevant to Indonesian schools:

- Grade repetition should not be used until other intervention efforts have proved ineffective
- Assistance should be provided as soon as a child is identified as being at risk of failure
- Parents must be involved in intervention efforts, repetition decisions, and any remediation
- Schools should make their promotion or retention decisions based on multiple forms of evidence and analysis.

The USAID Managing Basic Education project reviewed the matter of grade repetition in its 21 Districts in East and Central Java and reported two further matters of relevance (MBE, 2006, 106).

First:

- In SD/MI grade repetition occurred at about 1.8 the rate for boys as it does for girls (national data indicates a rate of 1.7 greater for boys in 2007/2008)
- In SMP/MTs grade repetition occurred at 3.8 the rate for boys (national data indicates a rate of 1.8 greater for boys in 2007/2008).

Second, there is a significant economic inefficiency in implementing grade repetition. At an annual operational cost for SD students at that time (2006) of Rp235,000 then the cost to the national education budget is in the order of USD90 million for SD students only for the past four years shown above in Table 7.

Because of grade repetition's apparent impact on early leaving, the differential nature of grade repetition on boys and girls, and its economic costs, grade repetition is a matter that suggests closer evaluation and policy development.

### **4.3 Complexity**

Table 8, below, summarizes the complexity of the events around student transition and participation in school.

It is acknowledged that the complexity may actually be greater than that shown here. Any one of the 'events' shown presents a potential barrier; an obstacle to the completion of basic education that has to be negotiated by young people. Where these young people and their parents lack the 'agency' to negotiate these barriers successfully because of poverty or ignorance, the risk of a failure to cross that barrier increases – the barrier to JSS entry is one of these barriers. Any way of reducing or eliminating these barriers would help young people. Re-consideration of the need for the administrative barrier between primary school and JSS is one barrier that warrants attention

Table 8: Analysis of the Range of Basic Education Participation and Transition 'Events'

Educational Situation	Range of Some Possible Events					
<b>SD/MI</b>	Transition from early Childhood Education or Home	Participation (may include transfer to another school)	Grade repetition	Completion / transition to JSS	Early Leaving	Completion / transition to SSS or work
<b>SMP/MTs</b>	Transition from primary school	Participation (may include transfer to another school)	Grade repetition		Early Leaving	Completion / transition to SSS or work
<b>Non Formal Education (NFE) (Paket A or B)</b>	Transition from primary school	Participation (may include transfer to another school)	Grade repetition	Completion / transfer / transition to formal education	Early Leaving	Completion / transition to Paket C / SSS or work
<b>Early Leavers (from SD/MI)</b>	-	Stay out of school OR Return to SD/MI/NFE participation	Transition to JSS	Grade repetition	Early Leaving	Completion / transition to Paket C / SSS or work
<b>Early Leavers (from SMP/MTs)</b>		Stay out of school OR Return to SMP/MTs/NFE participation		-	Early Leaving	Completion / transition to Paket C / SSS or work

## 5 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 5.1 Indonesian Research

A recent review of JSS in Indonesia addressed the matter of transition and participation and reported some of the available research (Weston, 2008). The study identified three key issues that are inhibiting the achievement of universal, quality basic education, especially in relation to JSS, each of which is linked to concerns with transition to and participation in JSS. The three factors reflect commitments made in the national strategic plan for education and are:

- Transition to and participation in JSS (reflecting the broader issue of access)
- The quality and relevance of JSS
- Management and governance in schools and at District level.

An important research study is that by Suryadarma, Suryahadi and Sumarto (2006) on the causes of low secondary school enrolment. The study notes that the highest incidence of early school leaving occurs at the point of transition between levels of education. Taking an economic approach, they find that, on the demand side: ‘... the factors that cause the non-continuation to junior secondary school among primary school graduates’ are:

- Poverty and the ability to pay for education
- Religion, where children from Muslim families have a significantly lower probability of continuing to JSS
- Employment opportunities have a higher probability of tempting students to leave school
- Gender, with girls having a significantly lower chance of continuing with their education.

On the supply side they find that building more schools increases children’s probability of continuing to JSS (Suryadarma, Suryahadi and Sumarto, 2006, 28).

Poverty, the first factor listed above, is a pervasive issue in school participation in Indonesia. A World Bank study sought to identify what works and what does not work in reducing poverty. The study noted some achievements in the education sector. For example, the study found that past policies in funding primary schooling is pro-poor since the poor have more children and benefit more from funding in basic education. Similarly, increased spending on junior secondary schooling will also benefit the poor in terms of increasing access for them. At the JSS level, however, far greater achievements have been made in terms of benefits to the poor. The study notes that, while the benefit of education expenditure is pro-poor at primary school level, the poor will benefit more from the expansion of JSS. They also note that improvement in the quality of schools will be pro-poor.

Indonesia’s past enrolment expansion closed the enrolment gap across income groups at the primary school level, but inequalities remain at the JSS level. Problems with access become significant at the JSS level. While access to primary schooling may still be a problem in remote areas, today for most of the poor in Indonesia the most pressing issue in terms of access to education concerns the transition to JSS.

Among the study’s key recommendations for pro-poor spending, is the need to strengthen efforts on the primary school to JSS transition. The study states: “The primary challenge to meeting Indonesia’s education targets is to reduce the dropout rate in the transition to secondary school – a problem that applies particularly to the poor” (World Bank, 2006, 135).

The Bank's recommendations for action are:

- On the demand side, the government should consider developing a targeted program, a conditional cash transfer (CCT) program, to address early school leaving.
- On the supply side, the government could consider addressing the shortage of secondary schools through the conversion of some primary schools to secondary schools, the construction of new schools, or both. In densely populated areas, it is suggested that more schools can be turned into double-shift schools at the primary school level, freeing up additional school facilities for use by the junior secondary school level.
- Focus on improving learning quality and investing in in-class teaching materials.

An early study of a government initiative to provide financial support to schools, the Bantuan Operasional Sekolah (BOS) or School Assistance Fund, was limited by the fact that the BOS had only been implemented in the year preceding the study (SMERU, 2005). Nevertheless, there were indications that the introduction of the BOS was contributing to improved attendance and motivation among the poor but whether it was having an impact on early school leaving could not be established. Implementation difficulties and weak socialisation led to schools and parents having a weak understanding of the BOS and its intention to support school participation.

Hardjono (2004) studied the influence of poverty on school dropouts in Bali and NTB. She found that one factor leading to high primary school completion rates among Balinese children is the culture of valuing education among the Balinese. By way of contrast, a comparatively lower valuing of education among parents causes the relatively higher proportion of children who do not finish primary school in Lombok. The Gardiner, Gardiner and Triaswati (2003) analysis records that in NTB, the Sasak in Lombok fail to recognise the value of education whereas the people of Dompu and Bima attach a far higher value to it.

However, these studies also show that non-continuation to JSS in both Bali and NTB is mostly caused by poverty, the inability to pay for transportation costs, and the inadequate capacity in the JSS to accommodate students.

Gardiner, Gardiner and Triaswati (2003) explore the issue of early school leaving in their detailed analysis of poverty in three poor kecamatan in NTB. Table 9, below, summarizes the major reasons for early leaving. They note that schools actually monitor and follow up very seriously school attendance, not so much to encourage completion, but to ensure the maintenance of enrolments in otherwise very small schools under threat of closure or merging. They further note "...the dropout data simply reinforce the extreme poverty situation ... Schools are in no state to reinforce quality education ... the greater concern is to simply keep their schools running" in these areas (p. 67).

Other factors relating to participation in these geographical areas are:

- Problems associated with late entrance to school, which with irregular attendance means an older age at graduation and a greater chance of early school leaving.
- Children entering school at an appropriate age with normal progression will usually complete at least 6 years of basic education.
- Data analysis demonstrates a clear link between school attendance and poverty.
- The prevalence of over-age children in primary school is more characteristic of the poor than better-off students.
- Whereas more than 70% of the richest quintile attend JSS, in rural NTB only 40% of the poorest quintile do so
- Educational failure in primary school is almost entirely a problem of the poor. Any support that will attract children into primary school and keep them there will be highly pro poor.

Increasing participation in JSS must be achieved in a planned way to avoid the difficulty of insufficient places for transition students. This challenge was observed in Jembrana, Bali, where it was necessary to manage a process of sorting students into the limited number of public school places and allocating excess students to private schools. This challenge is, of course, manageable in principle but often comes to grief during new school orientation programs where poor planning based on poor or non-existent data reveals its impact on the quality of education and ease of transition for numbers of affected students.

Table 9: Major Reasons for Early School Leaving, NTB, 2003\*

Reason	Number of Cases
<b>SD/MI</b>	
To assist parents	53
Parents poor	20
No uniform or school supplies	8
Moved/transmigrate	8
No support from parents	6
<b>SMP/MTs</b>	
Assist parents	11
Parents poor	11
Marriage	5

\* Kecamatan Praya Barat Daya, Jerowaru (Lombok) and Pekat (Sumbawa).

Source: Gardiner, Gardiner and Triaswati, 2003, 67.

### 5.1.1 Further research

One of the more irritating conclusions in reports and studies is the appeal 'for further research'. However, this appeal is being made here for the very special reason that there is so little high quality *educational* research in Indonesia at all. Future planning and development will be so much poorer unless this work is done. Much of the better quality research is focused on the economics of education and in this important work, there is little or no focus on educational concerns such as learning, teaching or the impact of culture on schooling, for example.

In addition, other research work has been highly dependent on the analysis of government data collections that have been shown to be unreliable (see Chapter 3). To complement the economic research in education commissioned by the World Bank, the donor community should consider supporting high quality educational research and research training as a further foundation necessary to develop future educational quality in Indonesia.

## **5.2 International Research**

The international research strongly supports the view that non-completion of school places children at risk in later life through not possessing sufficient life-skills and qualifications to participate effectively in family, social and working life (Mortimore and Mortimore, 1999, 5). Non-completion is an indicator of future problem behaviour and poor mental and physical health (Abbott, et al., 2000: 568). Apart from the personal costs of non-completion of schooling, there are also clear, long-term hidden costs to a society. Early school leaving may result in:

- Decreased health status
- Increased crime
- Increased social welfare costs arising from the above
- Taxation revenue losses to the state
- Reduced participation in community life and contribution to society as an informed citizen (Dusseldorp Skills Forum, 1999).

Indonesian society has a considerable, long-term economic interest in ensuring that children do complete a full program of formal education. The implications of early school leaving for individual students, for communities and for society as a whole should be part of continuing public awareness programs and the continuing professional development of the education workforce, a fact recognised in the Indonesian governments' strategic plan for education, 2005 – 2009. Nevertheless, the bold national and local commitments to improve access, participation, transition and school completion evident in Indonesia now, need to be tempered by asking some challenging questions.

The first question to ask is 'what is the value of getting and retaining children in poor quality schools that may actually damage children's experience of learning?' (Jones, 2008). The sensible 'vision' of enrolling and retaining all children in basic education has to be balanced by a consideration of what is actually going on in many schools. The fact is that some schools and some teachers create unbearable circumstances for children and a decision to leave school may be the very best decision for the child in the circumstances. This issue is partly addressed through government and development partners, such as USAID, working to improve the quality of schools through improvements to the learning and teaching environment, the employment, development and retention of high quality teachers, and improved school management.

Second, 'how do we find ways to make formal education relevant to the demands of society and labor markets without making education into a vocational training program'? (Van Dusen, 2008, 14). Even in a 'high growth, high potential' nation such as Indonesia, there is a disconnection between the education system and the job market that risks creating a 'crisis of educated unemployed youth'. Part of the answer to this second question lies in USAID's commitment to support life skills education through DBE3 but clearly more analysis and more preparation for the potential challenges and opportunities created by an expanding and better educated population of young people is indicated.

Recent Australian research clearly points to another factor in the debate. This other factor is the nature of the ways in which schools both recognise and 'respond adequately and productively' to the complexities of students' lives (Smyth, et al., 2000: 293). There is evidence that this recognition and response is occurring in many Indonesian schools through the support provided by trained guidance and counselling teachers, community involvement in educational and outreach activities and better selected and trained teachers. Equally, there is evidence from the fieldwork undertaken for this study and the DBE3 consultation process that much more needs to be done in this area.



The literature on the international experience is quite clear on one key phenomenon that is easily overlooked: overwhelmingly young people really do want to succeed at school and life. This phenomenon was very obvious in the consultations for this study held with Grade 6, 7 and 9 students about transition; these young people demonstrated a striking level of maturity and understanding of their circumstances and goals and had an ability to articulate these clearly and thoughtfully during the consultative process.

Unfortunately, there are many factors that can block students' progress towards their goals in life. One factor is to implicitly blame the students for the problems that fall to them over school participation, ignoring the often dramatic and negative impact of poverty, family attitudes and school characteristics. A sense of this 'blame' is reflected in this statement from a very important Indonesian study:

'The policy implications of our results point to, among other things, the need for refocusing government education spending and scholarship programs to *target those who go missing from the education system* after completing primary education' (Suryadarma, Suryahadi and Sumarto, ii, 2006).

Apart from 'target' being an unfortunate word to use<sup>7</sup> and 'go missing' suffers from similar blame-the-student issues as the term 'dropout', the evidence points away from single-focus (targeted) solutions towards those that recognise and act on the multiplicity of factors affecting early school leaving of which finance is only one, but nevertheless, an important one.

Factors such as disruptions to family life, illness, poverty and geographical location are often thought to be the main blocking sources, but research has very clearly identified that major failings of the education system and of schools themselves is blocking the aspirations of students (for example, Smyth, et al., 2000; Dwyer, et al., 1998). Fieldwork with students in Indonesian schools reveals similar failings in schools and point to them as one of the main barriers to school completion. In much the same way that Indonesian students report on their experiences (see section 6), the Dwyer study found that the most critical factor influencing early school leaving is an alienating school culture that consisted of:

- A non-stimulating environment unconnected to the world outside school
- Lack of support for children in difficulty
- Negative and sometimes abusive student-teacher relationships supported by rules that disallowed students from expressing themselves as responsible members of the school community.

Smyth, et al. (2000), report similar findings in an important South Australian study based on consultations and interviews with children. In summary, they found a mismatch between '...how schools help to construct the identities of young people, yet seem to be unable to respond adequately and productively to the complexities of their lives' (Smyth, et al, 2000, 293).

The major themes emerging from this research are listed below. The cross-cultural relevance of the Smyth, et al. (2000) findings to the student consultation data in Table 11 is very strong.

- Voice and identity: little opportunity to discuss and manage issues affecting student learning
- Peer relationships: the destructive impact of peer harassment and the positive impact of having a friend and belonging to a group

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<sup>7</sup> Target. Noun. A person, object or place selected as the aim of an attack; an objective or result towards which efforts are directed, select as an object of attention or attack.

- Student-teacher relationships: how negative relationships can destroy school life and how just one positive relationship with a teacher can help ensure retention
- Behaviour management policies: these can actively work to produce failure and school leaving through strategies such as suspension and punishment
- Curriculum: dull curriculum unrelated to life; lack of flexibility in school demands, assessment and in the pressures to produce work
- Alignment: how some school practices (policies, regulations, rules) can be poorly aligned or conflict with other school practices and intentions (such as those expressed in vision and mission statements)
- Relationships outside school: how family relationships impact on school life
- Poverty: how lack of financial resources can influence participation and leaving.

Experience in addressing low retention among indigenous Australian students may have more relevance for many remote Indonesian communities than the analysis of first world contexts. Once again, research reveals a web of tangled factors associated with retention but for indigenous students the following are most likely to have a strong association with low retention and participation: low socio-economic background, arrest, family and household structure (violence, poor conditions, crowding), parent's occupation and education, gender (girls have higher retention rates), remoteness, school type (higher retention in non-government schools), low school achievement, low attendance, low literacy and numeracy and factors associated with indigenous culture and history (Schwab, 1999).

Abbott and his colleagues in the US (2000) compared the adequacy of five theories to predict early leaving from high school before Grade 10. Each theory hypothesises a unique set of influences likely to influence the decision to drop out. The five theories are:

**Academic mediation theory:** poor academic achievement has consistently been one of the strongest predictors of dropping out of high school. Children who develop a commitment to succeed and feel attached to their school are more successful academically and less likely to leave early. It is important, therefore, to understand the relationship between school bonding and leaving.

**General Deviance Theory:** a relationship between deviance and early school leaving has been consistently reported in the literature. Delinquent behaviour has been shown to be associated with low academic orientation.

**Deviant Affiliation Theory:** peers have a strong influence on student development and early leavers tend to have more deviant friends who also have the potential to drop out. Bonding to antisocial peers should therefore be an indicator of early leaving.

**Poor Family Socialisation Theory:** families provide the foundations for later life and for academic achievement. The most prominent impact of family on academic achievement is parental academic attainment and parent expectation of their children's academic success. Other family factors that influence success are parent divorce, family stress, parental control and behavior.

**Structural Strains Theory:** studies have indicated factors such as gender, socioeconomic status, and ethnicity may have an influence on dropout.

Results of Abbott's investigation indicate that poor academic achievement is the strongest predictor of early school leaving. However, when each of the other theories was considered separately, they all directly increased the likelihood of leaving. These authors conclude that a comprehensive model of social development that considers multiple influences such as family, school, community, and peers would best explain early school leaving. This

conclusion is in general agreement with the findings from the other studies cited here and in alignment with the Indonesian student consultations research reported here.

Other studies have focussed on the matter of transition itself within the broader issue of school participation. As noted in the terms of reference for the present study, there is a concern with the pattern of early school leaving at the point of transition between primary school and JSS. Can the research literature help to explain this?

A consideration of transition needs to begin with the home to kindergarten transition. Studies have shown that successful adjustment of children in preschool is critical in determining their future success in school (Ladd and Price, 1987). Issues relating to early school adjustment have contributed to many problems faced by the child as well as by the family and school (Ladd, 1990) Friendship is central among these. These studies alert us to two significant factors to consider in transition support strategies. First, the implementation of a 'whole-of-schooling' approach that recognises the importance of transitions from home to school and ending with school to higher education or work. Second, the critical importance of friendship; a factor specifically presented by Indonesian students consulted in this study (see Table 11).

The study by Lawson et al (2008) provides a recent overview of work in the primary to secondary transition and this points to a range of complex and interacting factors that have an impact on the nature of transition itself but which do not give a picture of why students may actually leave school at that point, largely because in the countries studied laws and regulations are firmly enforced to ensure school attendance and that students do not leave. It is concluded, therefore, that answers to this question must be found within Indonesia. The experience in Jembrana, Bali, demonstrates the operation of this regulatory factor and its enforcement in Indonesia.

Each of these studies does make clear the importance of understanding friendship, the relationship between students and their schools and the importance of the student-teacher relationship, a matter stressed in the Indonesian consultations as well.

One paper looked at transition from the perspective of students with a disability and is appropriately titled *Just make friends, that is the important thing!* (McMaugh and Debus, 1999). The Lawson study itself finds that friendship is a critical factor in making a successful transition. They state:

“Friendship can also be seen as playing a role in the sense that students have about the high school as a place to which they belong, that they find welcoming.” (Lawson, et al, 2008, 11).

In addition, this study finds that bullying is an on-going concern and also that students experience low levels of success in coping with school work and homework, all factors reported by Indonesian students. Part of the reason for this lack of success is that students do not generally have good strategies for learning. Friendship is a major issue of personal identity related to participation and transition, once again reflected in the Indonesian student consultation data in Table 11.

In 1999, the Australian Department of Education and Youth Affairs commissioned a study of best practice and innovation in working with students at risk of early leaving. Best practices and innovations were identified through a literature review, Internet search and contact with state departments of education, universities, youth organisations and religious organisations. Site visits were made. The nineteen examples of best practices were in the following four categories:

- Systemic changes: (at the highest level) policy changes, program funding and practice development (at regional level) partnerships between schools, community organisations and government

- Community oriented approaches: linkages between schools and community
- Community organisations coming to schools to provide services
- Partnerships within communities to bring about community changes
- Schools and communities creating new options for young people
- School organisational changes: most schools have gone through significant organisational change and most have reached out to their communities for help
- Student focused interventions: these focus on two categories – curriculum developments and individual support strategies (Commonwealth Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, 2001: 5).

The main conclusion reached in this study was that all interventions were successful and that "...in every case, when probed, the response from educators was that the quality of the relationships with students and the individual focus on students had made the difference" (Commonwealth Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, 2001: 78).

### 5.2.1 Research on 'what works'

Before concluding this review section, it is important to ask 'is there any evidence in the literature on 'what works' in school participation?' A recent publication of the Education Policy and Data Centre, a partnership involving USAID, directly addresses this question by analyzing the experience of 18 countries projected to make the most significant progress in secondary education. Indonesia is not one of the eighteen countries included in this study (Van Dusen, 2008). Nevertheless, it is instructive to present the results of this review and to test them against Indonesian policy and practice. This analysis is presented in Table 10.

Table 10: What Works in Expanding School Participation? Local and International Experience

Forces Expanding School Participation (after Van Dusen, 2008)	The Indonesian Experience
<b>Group 1: Contextual Factors</b>	
Demographic momentum	The number of young people entering education increases participation quantitatively each year.
Changing global economy	Obtaining a basic education is increasingly valued as a means to respond to economic opportunities and advancement (See Trend of Completion Rates table at: <a href="http://www.depdiknas.go.id/">http://www.depdiknas.go.id/</a> )
Increasing attention and resources from the international community	Indonesia is a signatory to international agreements including the MDG's, EFA and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (see section 3.3.)
Increasing resources from the international community	Multilateral and bilateral donors have focused on developing basic education over the past 15 years. This assistance, although comparatively small in the total budget, has had a powerful demonstration and leadership effect in innovation and reform (Cannon and Arlianti, 2008).

Forces Expanding School Participation (after Van Dusen, 2008)	The Indonesian Experience
<b>Group 2: Policy Factors</b>	
Reduction or elimination of fees	The introduction of the BOS has had some positive impacts on participation. The objective of providing free tuition for poor students, and other forms of support such as subsidized textbooks, uniforms and transport, has not been communicated well at the local level; requires better focus on the poor (World Bank, 2006, 132; SMERU, 2006).
Incentive programs for disadvantaged children to attend school	Strategic focus on improving access for rural and remote communities; feeding programs; focus on achieving gender equity; subsidized transport.
Elimination of promotion examinations	Formal basic education examinations now held at completion of primary school and JSS. They likely present a barrier to both transition and participation. <i>Likely rates as a negative influence overall requiring further attention.</i>
Instruction in mother tongue, especially in early grades	Available in early grades in TK and SD.
Teacher training	Continuous improvements are attempted; Gol has recently upgraded the qualifications required of students to first degree level, plus one year's professional training but impact on quality is dubious. Teacher professional development structures are in place but are known to be weak (Weston, 2008). <i>Likely rates as a negative influence overall requiring further attention.</i>
Increase teacher salaries	Overall remuneration of teachers is increasing.
Innovative recruitment and redistribution of teachers	Some localised innovations, often based on development projects. The BERMUTU project is piloting ways of deploying teachers related to the number of students and ensuring the more even distribution of teachers. This needs to be supported by government regulations otherwise local governments are accused of acting outside the law and are unable to carry through their policies. Regulations need to address issues of school staffing, teacher deployment and professional conduct (Weston, 2008).
Decentralization	Overall impact is inconclusive; local management is often weak but motivation and commitment to change is demonstrably very strong in many Districts and in schools; transparency and accountability improving as evidenced by development project reports and studies.
Basic education infrastructure	Government programs to rehabilitate schools and construct new 'one-roof' schools to provide JSE in more remote areas.
Non-formal education alternatives	Strong Gol commitment reflected in national strategic plan for education and supported by development projects such as DBE3.

Forces Expanding School Participation (after Van Dusen, 2008)	The Indonesian Experience
Early childhood programs	Strong Gol commitment reflected in national strategic plan for education; evidence of impact is strong in projects where testing of SD students demonstrates consistently better academic results from children who have attended TK (MBE, 2006).
Curriculum development	Revisions of the curriculum have taken place to attempt to make it more relevant to the needs of students. Little effort has been made to ensure that teachers understand these changes and are able to translate them into appropriate classroom activities. The student assessment system has failed to change to match the curriculum (Weston, 2008). <i>Likely rates as a negative influence overall requiring further attention.</i>
Double shifting and extension of the school year	Better use of physical infrastructure is being made by increasing the length of the school day, rather than by double shifting. This occurs in some schools, especially private.

The conclusions from this review by Van Dusen are presented as a set of lessons learned. On balance Indonesian policy and practice is aligned with these lessons or reflects them in important ways.

**Lesson 1: Government leadership and commitment is essential.**

Indonesia: At both Central and District government levels where basic education policies and practices are focused, there is ample evidence of this leadership and commitment. Where it is weak or absent, comparisons with Districts that have strong commitment and leadership are clear.

**Lesson 2: External funding has played a role**

Indonesia: A recent review identified 38 different externally funded projects that had operated in Indonesia since 1990 and found that where projects were closely aligned with Gol strategic objectives they had a positive impact on change and provided a demonstration effect for development more generally (Cannon and Arlianti, 2008).

**Lesson 3: Peace and political stability enable expansion**

Indonesia: Indonesia has not suffered the loss and destruction of educational assets that have occurred in some nations and has benefitted from peace and political stability in most regions for a considerable time. The negative educational impact of conflict has been demonstrated in Aceh, for example, where test scores in the MBE project were significant lower than comparable groups in Java.

**Lesson 4: No single action will bring about success; an integrated and mutually supportive set of policies and actions is required.**

Indonesia: Youth consultations about participation and transition reported in this study clearly indicate a complex range of factors that influence student decisions around participation. These may relate to poverty, families or schools. Similarly, the analysis of development projects produced a long list of lessons learned that again reflects a complex range of factors that bring success: basic development principles, implementation strategies and governance and management being among them.

## **5.2.2 Responding to the challenges of preventing early school leaving**

Identifying reliable predictors of early school leaving is an essential prerequisite to the development of effective responses to prevent the problem and, where it exists, to manage it, according to many studies. For example, Grade 10 appears to be a critical year for early leaving in the US, according to Schwartz (1995), so the early identification of indicators before this Grade may provide clues to early school leaving prevention.

The Abbott et al. study is very clear in its recommendations:

“... prevention efforts should focus on increasing the academic success of children at risk of dropping out by virtue of these factors (that is, school, family, peers and community). Prevention strategies should focus on the factors that are part of the causal chain leading to early school leaving” (Abbott et al., 2000: 579).

A wide range of different programs to assist students at risk of early leaving has been implemented. The characteristics of successful programs should include the following, according to Withers and Russell (1998:3):

- Strategies should be comprehensive rather than category-specific (e.g., a focus on narcotics alone)
- Strategies should take a risk-focused approach to interrupt negative development patterns and strengthen positive social patterns
- Early identification, prevention and intervention are vital (early intervention is noted by Abbott, et al. (2000: 579).

Other research work strongly supports strategies that include a holistic definition of risk in meeting students' needs and the avoidance of individualistic and fragmented approaches that may produce unintended, negative consequences for students (e.g., Catalano, 1997).

An essential characteristic of holistic approaches being followed in Australia, Britain and the United States is a recognition that responsibility for the welfare of students is a shared community responsibility and not only the school's responsibility. This approach is entirely consistent with Indonesia's strong emphasis on community participation in education.

### **5.2.2.1 Factors influencing the success of interventions**

In the 'best practice approach' to early leaving and transition intervention, the following fundamental features or preconditions for success and for dissemination were identified:

- A student-centre philosophy
- Leadership within the school
- Creation of a vision for action
- Commitment to ongoing learning
- Collaboration and community linkage
- School climate and willingness to change
- A broad policy and community climate that supports innovation and change
- An integrated approach to curriculum development (such as individualised programs of study, contextualised activities, life skills and work placements) and to student support (case management, counselling, peer support, mentoring)
- Quality and relationships with staff; this may mean considerable effort in professional development, team building and collaborative planning (Commonwealth Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, 2001).

Previously it was suggested that Australian approaches to addressing early leaving issues among indigenous students might have lessons for Indonesia. This suggestion is based on the assumption that similarities in some communities with respect to remoteness, poverty and employment opportunities might be more instructive than drawing lessons from more affluent and possibly urban areas. In addition to approaches applied more widely, recommended intervention approaches to produce increased retention rates among indigenous students include the following:

- Improved and standardised data collection
- Working with students' families to improve family literacy (parents especially)
- Strengthening the integration of schools with their communities to the extent that real and imagined boundaries between communities and school are eliminated and the idea of community education centres for children, parents and the wider community is fostered. Facilities for community health and family services can also be integrated on the one site (for example, Nissani and Hagans, 1992; Wilkin, 2008) and schools can adopt a stronger focus on life-long learning from pre-school to adult education enabling better monitoring and tracking of at-risk young people.
- Improved equity in access to secondary schools in remote areas
- Support for on-going, rigorous and independent evaluation and dissemination of outcomes.



## **6 YOUNG PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCE OF TRANSITION AND PARTICIPATION**

### **6.1 Introduction**

Young people are central to the issue of transition and participation. They are the only ones who directly experience the circumstances of school on a day-by-day basis that shapes their educational lives and their decisions about their level of engagement with schooling. By 'young people' we mean the currently enrolled students in both in formal and non-formal education and the recent early school leavers, the so-called 'dropouts'.

The time taken to sensitively obtain their input is very well repaid especially when their input is placed at the centre of research and development and not at the margins – as a peripheral afterthought.

The responses from these young Indonesian students exactly mirrors the responses from young Australian early school leavers in the Smyth study:

... they show how very negative, as well as positive experiences, have often given them more maturity than the stereotyped picture of 'callow adolescence' would have us expect.

And the stories indicate how the school regime so often ignores this experience and maturity, demands compliance, punishes deviance, and generally treats them like children, rather than as emerging adults. The mismatch is between the young people's project of 'becoming somebody', and the school's agenda of 'doing what we say because we know best' (Smyth et al., 2000, 293).

The quality and good sense of student's insights into the issues confirms for this study team the importance of taking very serious note of what they have to say. Their input is a reminder that within education systems, the largest, most under-utilized, and potentially highest-quality resource is the students themselves.

### **6.2 Methodology**

The experience and input from young people was studied from their contributions to the consultation processes conducted by DBE3 in 2006/2007 with young people, and from consultations with some North Sumatra students, still in some form of junior secondary education, specifically about transition in July 2009.

The methodology, described as 'voiced research', is more fully described in section 2.3.2 above. In brief, the DBE3 consultation data was first re-analysed using NVivo software as described in section 2.3.2. This analytical process yielded an index of major themes around school participation and early leaving. The themes were subsequently used as the foundation for a classification matrix to record the input from the North Sumatra student consultations about transition.

Table 11, below, present the voices of these young people, first in terms of what they said about participation and early school leaving, secondly, what they said about transition from primary school to JSS, and finally, what they said about strategies for preventing early leaving.

### **6.3 Poverty: 'The' Obstacle to Transition and Participation in JSS**

Table 11 sets out the themes and sub-themes of the experience of young people of both participation and transition plus the views of teachers and parents about transition only.

Poverty emerges as the major theme from this analysis of obstacles. Poverty penetrates almost every other group of obstacles to participation and transition. From most of that the students, parents and teachers said, it is clear that poverty underlies community and family attitudes to education, the difficulties students experience in getting to school, being in school with all its actual and opportunity costs, the need to earn money to support the family, health issues, shame and humiliation at school and among peers, school uniforms, the physical condition of schools, the quality of teachers and teaching, and school resources for learning and teaching.

Table 11: Obstacles to Transition from Primary School to JSS and Participation in JSS – Stakeholder Experiences

Obstacles	Participation (DBE3 Student Consultation Groups)	Transition All Groups	Transition Grade 6	Transition Grade 7	Transition Grade 9	Transition NFE	Transition – Parents and Teachers	Theme in No of Different Groups
<b>Community</b>								
Community: does not value education	x	x	-	-	-	x	x	3
Community: lack of support	x	x	-	x	-	x	x	4
Community: personal safety, sense of fear	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	6
Community: negative impact of content of TV on families		x	-	-	-	-	x	1
Community: negative impact of computer games and internet		x	-	-	x	-	-	1
Community: deficiencies in operation of public transport for children		x	-	-	x	x	-	2
Community: lack of public library to support study		x	-	-	x	-	-	1
<b>Parents, Family and Home</b>								
Family: home environment difficult	x	x	-	-	x	x	x	4
Family: parents angry, not trust children	x	x	-	-	-	x	-	2
Family: parents did not attend school	x	x	-	x	-	x	x	4
Family: parents do not value education	x	x	-	-	x	x	x	4
Family: parents make or need you work outside school	x	x	x	-	-	x	x	4
Family: conflict with parents over type of JSS to attend (MTs vs SMP)		x	-	x	-	-	-	1
<b>Health</b>								
Health: exhausted	x	x	-	-	x	-	x	3
Health: sick	x	x	-	-	-	x	-	2

<b>Obstacles</b>	<b>Participation (DBE3 Student Consultation Groups)</b>	<b>Transition All Groups</b>	<b>Transition Grade 6</b>	<b>Transition Grade 7</b>	<b>Transition Grade 9</b>	<b>Transition NFE</b>	<b>Transition – Parents and Teachers</b>	<b>Theme in No of Different Groups</b>
<b>Personal Identity</b>								
Identity: ashamed of poverty and being humiliated at school assembly		X	-	-	-	X	X	2
Identity: ashamed of poverty, not paying fees	X	X	-	-	X	X	-	3
Identity: frustration when cannot follow lessons	X	X	X	-	-	X	-	3
Identity: lack of motivation, view self as lazy, unintelligent	X	X	-	-	-	X	X	3
Identity: not many friends, trouble getting new friends, broken heart	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	5
Identity: do not want to join students of different religion		X	-	-	X	-	-	1
Identity: Student afraid homework not done, afraid of raid	X	X	X	X	-	X	-	4
<b>Peers</b>								
Peers: fighting, mocking, humiliated, extortion	X	X	-	-	-	X	-	2
Peers: group pressure	X	X	X	-	-	-	-	2
<b>Poverty</b>								
Poverty: earning money leads to dropout	X	X	-	-	-	X	X	3
Poverty: lack of school equipment, books	X	X	-	X	-	X	X	4
Poverty: money problems with fees, having to work, no transport, corrupted scholarship, etc	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	5
Poverty: must work for parents	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	6
Poverty: no uniform, shoes worn out	X	X	-	-	-	X	X	3
Poverty: rainy weather-uniform wet, shoes wet, mud, cannot get to school, late for school	X	-	-	-	X	-	-	2

<b>Obstacles</b>	<b>Participation (DBE3 Student Consultation Groups)</b>	<b>Transition All Groups</b>	<b>Transition Grade 6</b>	<b>Transition Grade 7</b>	<b>Transition Grade 9</b>	<b>Transition NFE</b>	<b>Transition – Parents and Teachers</b>	<b>Theme in No of Different Groups</b>
Poverty: transport, getting to school	x	x	x	x	-	x	x	5
<b>School, Teachers, Learning &amp; Teaching</b>								
School: absence	x	x	-	-	-	x	x	3
School: behaviour	x	x	-	-	-	x	-	2
School: buildings damaged	x	x	x	-	-	-	-	2
School: exclusion or suspension	x	x	-	-	x	x	-	3
School: failure	x	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
School: inflexible rules, too many rules	x	x	x	x	x	x	-	5
School: would like continuation of active learning from Grade 6		x	-	-	x	-	-	1
School: curriculum emphasis on life skills		x	-	-	-	x	-	1
School: better extra-curricular activities after school		x	-	x	-	-	-	1
School: better sporting facilities	-	x	-	-	-	x	-	1
School: no feedback given on completed work	-	x	-	-	x	-	-	3
School: learning support lacking	x	x	-	-	x	x	-	3
School: lessons- boring, confusing, difficult	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	6
School: poor or no library facility	x	x	x	-	-	x	-	3
School: no internet		x	-	-	x	-	-	1
School: teachers should be more like a friend; personal approach	-	x	-	x	-	x	-	2
School: teachers: strict, angry, bad odour, unkind, absent, boring, lazy, old	x	x	x	-	x	x	-	4
School: teachers: too much homework, homework not done	x	x	x	x	-	-	-	3
School: time spent in school too long	x	x	x	-	-	x	-	3

<b>Obstacles</b>	<b>Participation (DBE3 Student Consultation Groups)</b>	<b>Transition All Groups</b>	<b>Transition Grade 6</b>	<b>Transition Grade 7</b>	<b>Transition Grade 9</b>	<b>Transition NFE</b>	<b>Transition – Parents and Teachers</b>	<b>Theme in No of Different Groups</b>
School: uniform compulsory	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	-	-	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	-	<b>3</b>
School: Time management problems-late because HW not done, too much homework	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	-	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	-	<b>4</b>
School: Truancy	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	-	-	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	-	<b>3</b>
School: has sufficient facilities to study		<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>1</b>
School: has computer lab		<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>1</b>
School: 'clean and green' environment		<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>1</b>
School: Absent for fear of punishment for being late		<b>x</b>	-	-	<b>x</b>	<b>x</b>	-	<b>2</b>
<b>Number of themes identified</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>19</b>	-

## **6.4 Participation, Transition, and Early School Leaving**

The emerging themes in relation to participation and early leaving were expressed as obstacles, barriers, issues or conditions related to:

- The Community – for example, attitudes to education
- Parents, family and home – for example, difficult home environment
- Personal health
- Personal identity issues – for example, making friends
- Poverty – for example working for parents to support the family
- School, teachers, learning and teaching – for example learning processes and support, teacher's attitude.

All of these themes were identified in the transition study in North Sumatra as well as in the 2007 DBE3 youth consultations study and so the following discussion of transition will also address participation and early leaving issues as well.

### **6.4.1 *Transition***

Small groups of currently enrolled students in North Sumatra JSS and NFE institutions were consulted about their experiences of transition. The output of these consultations were added to the indexed themes already identified from the DBE3 data re-analysis and a resulting matrix produced as shown in Table 11, disaggregated by main groups of respondents. Importantly, the major themes identified from the earlier DBE3 consultation groups remained stable when transition student input was added and the additional input only added further sub-themes to the matrix.

To attempt to understand transition, the small groups of six students (three boys and three girls in each group) were asked to tell about their transition experiences, in an unstructured way initially, in leaving primary school and commencing JSS. In addition, they were asked to talk about the most difficult things to manage in the process and to suggest things that could be done to make transition easier for children commencing JSS. An experienced teacher/DBE3 facilitator from another school facilitated the student group discussions.

The specific focus for 'telling' was adjusted to suit the expectations of the current Grade 6 student group, the current experience of Grade 7 students (who were in their first week of JSS at the time of the study) and the reflections of the new Grade 9 students looking back on their transition experience when they were in Grade 7.

For students considering the issue of transition, the data collection process used permitted a breakdown into groups according to grade level and teachers and parents (as one group). Analysis of these groups enables the identification of several major sub-themes embedded in the more general themes. These major themes and sub-themes are:

- The Community
  - Lack of support
  - Personal safety, sense of fear
- Parents, family and home
  - Parents did not attend school
  - Home environment difficult
  - Parents do not value education
  - Parents make you work outside school

- Personal health
  - Being exhausted
- Personal identity issues
  - Being ashamed of poverty
  - Frustration when cannot follow lessons
  - Not many friends and trouble getting new friends
  - Being afraid of homework not done
- Poverty
  - Money problems with fees, lack of equipment and books, transport costs
  - Need to work for parents
  - Transport – the difficulty many students experience of simply getting to school
- School, teachers, learning and teaching
  - Exclusion or suspension
  - Inflexible rules, too many rules
  - Lessons boring, confusing, difficult
  - Teachers: strict, angry, bad odour, unkind, absent, boring, lazy, old
  - Time management problems: late because homework not done, too much homework.

#### **6.4.2 Transition as 'risk'**

Compared with the data from the DBE3 participation group, the transition students reported more sub themes concerning community, personal identity, and especially school. In other words, they perceive their environment to be somewhat 'riskier' and having more issues, obstacles and barriers to negotiate in their lives.

This riskier environment may be one explanation for the greater numbers of students who fail to make the transition from Grade 6 in primary school across the 'boundary line' to Grade 7 in JSS. This raises the question 'why have a boundary, or administrative barrier, at all between Grade 6 and Grade 7, particularly now that the policy consistently focuses on completion of nine years of basic education – and not 6 + 3 years'? The study hopes that this question will be considered and answered, as the barrier certainly appears to be an important part of the transition issue. The criterion against which it should be answered is the educational benefit to students' criterion, not the administrative, career or political convenience of education sector personnel.

The transition students were noticeably thoughtful and constructive about what their school and learning environment should be like: they told the study team that more resources in the form of libraries, computer laboratories, Internet access and sporting facilities should be accessible to them; that better teaching should be provided in the form of attention to life skills, extra-curricular activities, active learning like primary school (PAKEM), more feedback, attention to homework policies, and a 'clean and green environment'.

Like the young people consulted in the DBE3 studies, the transition students were critical of teachers for their approach and manner, teaching skills and an ever-present fear of punishment for being late or for not having completed homework. Their perceptions of the low quality of schools and the quality of the teaching in them can also be seen as a further risk to young people at school. Low quality may be a reason why some students leave one school and enrol in another, better school elsewhere, that is, they 'vote with their feet'.



## **Fear**

A sense of fearfulness stands out from the analysis of what young people have to say about participation in JSS and about transition – a consistent concern in their young lives based on fear from within the communities in which they live and in the schools they attend. At school, fear is the antithesis of an environment that is necessary for effective learning. This very serious issue is discussed in more detail in section 6.7.2.

### **6.4.3 Parents and teachers – do they understand the students?**

Parents and teachers were also engaged in an open-ended discussion around the same broad questions of transition – the experience of leaving primary school and commencing JSS, and the most difficult things to manage in the process.

The comments they made broadly reflect those made by the student groups, with two notable exceptions.

First, they were, perhaps understandably, less well informed about personal identity issues being experienced by students and rather ‘blamed’ some students in a generalized way as being lazy and unmotivated, which almost certainly some are (but why?).

Second, they were noticeably ignorant of the wide range of factors in the school environment itself that have an impact on students and on their learning. They only recognised that absence from school and boring lessons might be factors. For example, their ‘silence’ on the theme identified by all student groups – ‘school: inflexible rules, too many rules’ suggests that change in schools will be difficult when teachers are so remote from the needs of their students.

#### **6.4.3.1 One School – Two Students**

Parents’ and teachers’ ‘silence’ suggests that they have a very different view of students to the students that are actually in their care. Or, perhaps, it is their knowledge of child abuse that leads to a culture of silence?

This suggests there may be two very different students in schools, the ‘assumed student’ and the ‘actual student’. The assumed and actual students are analytical constructs set up here as portraits on the basis of commonly observed practices and attitudes in schools (assumed) and from what students have told us in the consultation process (actual). The portraits are not intended to be factual or to represent real, known people, but rather represent realistic scenarios of what can actually be happening in almost any school.

A portrait of each student, constructed from their contributions to this study and observations of their schools, is presented in the accompanying text box. The comparative length of the portraits emphasises how their teachers can underestimate the actual complexity of real students’ lives.

It is stressed that the study is not seeking to be critical of all teachers here and recognises the important contribution of very large numbers of dedicated, enthusiastic professionals. Equally, the study recognises that there remain in the teaching profession those who are uninterested, lazy and incompetent at best and evil child abusers at worst. Students know who they are; their observation: ‘School: teachers: strict, angry, bad odour, unkind, absent, boring, lazy, old’ represents only the beginning of the daily horror some young people must endure as represented by the reporting in section 6.7.2.

### **The Assumed Student – The Teachers’ View**

*Teachers generally assume their students will arrive refreshed and on time in their school uniforms ready for a day’s schoolwork, if not enthusiastic then compliant and willing enough to go along with things. All administrative matters such as fees and costs have been settled and the focus is on school, both on the academic work, the daily rituals, and non-academic activities such as sport. There is a further assumption that students are bonded into friendship groups that will guide, support and protect their members.*

*The teachers assume the homework has been done or at least a serious attempt has been made at it and students will be ready, and appreciative, to have it corrected. Generally, they assume parents, both mum and dad, will show an interest and help their children and give them motivation at home when they get a bit lazy. Teachers believe that far too many kids are lazy and unmotivated with their minds on other things like computer games and television.*

### **The Actual Student – The Student’s View**

*It is raining this morning and transport has been very difficult to find, so the actual student arrives late, fearful of being punished for being late by an angry teacher, and exhausted because of family conflict, constant noise from the TV soap-operas playing in the background at night, lack of sleep and homework undone – there is no where to work and concentrate.*

*“I am lucky to be here at all, I was up late last night drying my one uniform that was saturated in yesterday’s rain. The teacher gets angry if we are not in a clean uniform and regularly beats us for this. Worse, at the beginning of the school year, my mum had no money to pay some fees and so I was called out at assembly and mocked by the teachers and my friends for being “poor”. I feel so alone, I have no friends here and they ridicule me because we are poor. I cannot help it. I have tried to earn some money to help at home but cannot and besides I have lots of homework to do all the time now in Grade 9.*

*Anyhow, maybe the math teacher will not be around today – as usual! Don’t know where he goes during the day but we often just look after ourselves. Mostly these are better times as we have fun and can help each other; the teacher is boring, does not know much and is always playing up to the girls in the class – they hate him. Nobody says anything about him and the principal is just as evil.*

*A girl in Grade 9 disappeared a month ago and no one knows what happened to her, some say she went to Malaysia with a man that had been waiting around near the school gates. What for? We are a bit frightened now to go anywhere alone.*

*I hate school. I think I will leave and go to Jakarta and get a job in a restaurant like a lot of other girls do and earn lots of money. I am old enough now. I was made to repeat Grade 3 for a stupid reason when the teacher lost the test results. I thought I was going OK at that time. Anyhow, it will be safer away from here, last year the roof fell in on top of the kids in the local SD and killed two. This place is just as dangerous; the building is a wreck and it smells really bad from the dead rats in the ceiling. And there are no toilets for the kids at all.”*

#### **IMPORTANT NOTE:**

*The ‘assumed’ and ‘actual students’ are analytical constructs created only as portraits based on observed practices and attitudes in schools (assumed) and from what students have told us in the consultation process (actual). The portraits are not intended to be factual.*

#### **6.4.4 NFE Students**

By way of contrast, the NFE students identified 13 different factors in the school environment as obstacles in transition. The NFE students reported a larger number of different issues that had influenced their experience of transition than any other student groups. This report was true for each of the main thematic groups with two exceptions – health and peers.

This outcome suggests that this group of young people experienced such an accumulating load of obstacles and issues that they ultimately gave up and left the formal education sector.

There is no clear ‘trigger’ for their decision to leave apart from the pervasive impact of poverty and the large number of concerns they have with the quality of their schools. A clue among the themes that has importance to this group is ‘School: teachers should be more like a friend; personal approach’. This theme is consistent with a theme that emerged in the student consultations in South Australia: how one or two negative teacher relationships can destroy school life; how one positive teacher relationship can help a student remain at school (Smyth, et al., 2000, 294). The Smyth study poses the following two questions for consideration:

- How can schools organise learning activities, school classrooms, and school structures generally so that there are more respectful relationships between teachers and students?
- When the student-teacher relationship significantly impedes learning, how can the relationship be remedied?

The answer to the question is clearly provided, in part, by the way in which NFE classes are arranged and in the relationships tutors there establish with students and, in part, by the statements of Grade 6 students who hope the atmosphere of their PAKEM classes will continue into JSS.

#### **6.5 Conclusion: Why do Students Fail to Transition to or Otherwise Participate in JSS?**

The simple answer to the main question posed for the study – ‘why do students fail to transition to or otherwise participate in JSS?’ can be constructed as follows: ‘poverty combined with dysfunctional communities, dysfunctional families and dysfunctional schools that threaten, abuse and disable young people to the point where they decide that the most appropriate choice in all their complex circumstances is to leave school’.

Can these dysfunctional elements in their lives be fixed? The answer based on recent development experience in Indonesia is very clearly ‘yes’ in relation to the school and likely ‘yes’ in relation to communities and families. Students say ‘yes’ also as their strategies imply in Table 12.

Further discussion of strategies to achieve these outcomes is beyond the scope of this work but they are accessible from a variety of sources, especially from the students’ voices shown in Table 12 and from local, Indonesian resources on the web, of which <http://SLTP.Net/index.html> is an excellent start.

## 6.6 What Initiatives could be tried to Encourage Transition to and Participation in JSS?

As part of the DBE3 participation consultation process, young people were asked to suggest strategies that may enhance participation in school. The re-analysis of the data collected from the process is presented in Table 12.

Their proposals are comprehensive, inclusive, responsible, reasonable and achievable. They are school and community focused. Rather than a simple 'student wish-list' the identified strategies look more like the outcomes of a carefully designed research project or series of meetings with mature adults facilitated by expensive consultants. The list would be an excellent starting point for discussion and action by school committees, ideally in consultation with current students.

Table 12: Strategies for Improving School Participation – Advice from the Students

School Based Strategies
<b><i>Management of facilities and services</i></b>
School: book recycling, uniform recycling, contribution from parents
School: improve facilities, resources, after school study room provision & management
School: library, optimise the library's function, able to borrow books
School: Principal should monitor teachers
School: provide security, discipline & advice for rule violation, truancy, self-defence
School: should monitor attendance
<b><i>Student support facilities</i></b>
School: additional tutoring
School: care about students and their problems, counselling
School support disabled children
School: encourage students' self discipline, care for health, using coat & umbrella on rainy days
School: flexible rules, recognise that students need to balance school and work
<b><i>Family, Community Education and Support</i></b>
School: communicate with parents, use TV, teachers, relatives, community, get parent and community input
School: educate community, parents on importance of education
School: Poverty Needs-Government aid, scholarship, books, transport, fees, support for parents
Strategies Relating to School, Teachers, Learning & Teaching
Teacher: flexible towards students with problems
Teacher: should be present in class <sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> A survey of teacher absenteeism shows that the absence rate in Indonesia is about 19%, higher than other developing countries. Teacher absence is related to education levels, poverty, and the location of schools. Teacher absenteeism is also negatively correlates with the performance of students (Usman, S. Akhmadi, and Suryadarma, D., 2004). In other words, teachers who are absent compound participation issues for children already experiencing difficulties.

School Based Strategies
Teacher: should be interesting, implement varied lessons, not boring, develop student skills
Teacher: should be patient, pleasant, understanding, caring, no smoking, no body odour
Teacher: not discriminatory, give fair penalties, non-violent
School: improve student motivation and interest
School: less HW, extend deadlines
School: offer more varied curriculum, easier subjects & after school study, extra curricular activities
Strategies Relating to Parents
Parents: develop 'agency' (capacity) to get the best out of the system for their children
Parents: better money management, find job, work harder
Parents: should learn to value education, expect less of student's time working, minding siblings
Parents: improve communication and show understanding to children
Parents: supervise children and their study
Strategies Relating to Peers
Peers: discourage truancy, manage annoying friends, select friends carefully

## 6.7 Interferences to Transition and Participation

In this section, the study focuses on the interaction of social issues that are 'interferences' (Shor, 1980, 46) to the successful transition, participation in, and completion of, nine years basic education by all children. Interferences are major barriers to participation imposed on young people primarily by those entrusted with their care or through neglect. These interferences are additional to the long list of obstacles that young people themselves identified in Table 11.

After considering the literature, analysing field observations in schools and reviewing the reports of principals, teachers, parents, educational administrators students about transition and participation, two major themes of interference emerge that warrant closer attention.

These themes are the:

- Participation in schools by children with special needs, and
- Physical and mental abuse of children in school, primarily by teachers.

### 6.7.1 *Forgotten: The Participation of Children With Special Needs*

The fifth aim of the Strategic Plan of the Ministry of National Education states:

Based on the above principles, the aims of education improvement have been determined as follows:

5. Improving equity of learning opportunities for all citizens of Indonesia in a non-discriminatory and democratic way regardless of their places of residence, socio-economic status, gender, religion, ethnic group, and other characteristic; physical, emotional, mental as well as intellectual" (MoNE, 2005, 9).

Elsewhere, the Strategic Plan states that the expansion of access to Special Education is a "priority policy" (MoNE, 2005, 22). Moreover, each of the international commitments made

by the Government of Indonesia refer to education for *all* children. Section 3.3 refers to these commitments.

This study notes that these broad policy settings are in place but draws attention to weaknesses in achieving these aims as they relate to the participation of children with physical, emotional, mental and intellectual challenges.

First, data presented by UNESCO shows that Indonesia had the worst record in the world in relation to school attendance by children with disabilities. Helen Keller International reports that 66,000 children with disabilities attend school within the Sekolah Luar Biasa (special school) system of an estimated total of between 1 – 1.5 million children with disabilities (UNESCO, 2008, 48; Helen Keller, 2008).

Second, the study identified, from one case, why such a low participation rate in schools may exist for children with disabilities in Indonesia. At SLBN Binjai, North Sumatra, there appeared to be no serious issue about transition between levels of education as this is an integrated school on one site providing education at all levels: TK, SD, SMP and SMA. However, there is an issue with participation. Being the one of two special schools in this large District, it presents enormous access issue for children and their parents. Many have to travel long distances to reach the school and, as if this is not a significant challenge alone, the children most often have to be accompanied by a parent or carer who generally waits all day at the school to accompany them home again. Some parents attempt to resolve the difficulty by enrolling their children in local SD but reports from the SLB principal and teachers suggest this is often unsatisfactory and early leaving occurs at a very high rate as neither the children nor their teachers can cope with the situation. It is reported that significant numbers of SD principals and teachers are not even aware of the resources available in SLB for these children. That such a situation exists in a heavily populated rural-urban fringe area of Medan is an indicator of a possible widespread challenge facing children with a disability in other and more remote areas of Indonesia.

Third, it is not clear how much attention development projects have given to the issue of inclusive education but it is equally clear that it is not a great deal. Children with disabilities have been largely neglected by projects. In fact, where school rehabilitation has been undertaken in projects such as in DBEP, little or nothing has been done to design and improve physical access for students with a physical disability. The exception to this pattern of 'forgetting' is in AIBEP, which is now addressing this shortcoming in its school construction program.

It is recognised that development projects cannot do everything to address the challenges of education. Equally, however, it is suggested that if MoNE is committed to inclusive education it seems reasonable for projects to include attention to this issue in all capacity development activities concerned to improve the quality of basic education and the equitable participation of all children.

Significantly, in relation to this last observation, inclusive education has become a major initiative under AIBEP. This AusAID project has worked with MoNE to try to build understanding of the need for effective mainstreaming of all children into schools irrespective of physical, intellectual, social and economic disabilities. At the systemic level, AIBEP is supporting the drafting of a Ministerial Decree and associated Guidelines that are now in the final stages of approval.

### **6.7.2 Silence: what are they not telling us?**

During student consultations in North Sumatra there was a reference made by one Grade 6

girl to a 'fear of kidnapping'. However, no other direct comments about matters of this kind or of other forms of child abuse or exploitation were clearly made, either in the DBE3 participation data or the transition data gathered in schools. Nevertheless, students made frequent references to their fears for personal safety and to the negative behaviour of teachers as being factors in affecting transition.

In fact, it is this fear that stands out in the analysis of what students have to say about participation in JSS and about transition – a concern based on fear in their communities and in their schools. Every student respondent group reported in Table 11 identified fear.

These comments alerted the study team to the possibility of a more extensive pattern of child abuse. UNICEF (2009) note that violence, abuse and the exploitation of children in Indonesia is under-reported and that this is partly due to cultural circumstances which refuse to accept the existence of such incidents. Moreover, the social infrastructure to manage these matters is very weak or non-existent in many locations.

The study team posed these questions:

- First, 'Are these indicators of a deeper malaise in schools and society related to child abuse?'
- Second, 'does the theme in the data: 'Family and home environment difficult' in Table 11 mask patterns of abuse?'
- Third, does abuse contribute to low participation and early school leaving?

The team set about seeking some evidence to answer its concerns, recognising that it may be difficult to demonstrate conclusively that the answer is 'yes' to the questions.

DBE3 staff in Medan identified the *Centre for Study and Child Protection Foundation* (Pusat Kajian dan Perlindungan Anak [PKPA]) as a potential source of advice for the study's concerns. Consultation with the Executive Director and the Project Manager and analysis of the data the PKPA generously provided, confirmed both the existence of a serious issue and the presence of silence around the issue of child abuse. Their data suggests the very strong possibility that the answer to the first question about a deep malaise in schools and society related to child abuse is likely to be a very clear 'yes'.

The scale of the issue is indicated by the data in Table 13, below. Consideration of this data needs to recognise that:

- It is not intended to be, nor can it be, accurate and comprehensive because the data only reflects cases actually reported to the PKPA and in its monitoring of three mass media sources.
- In matters such as child violence, surrounded as it is by fear and shame, the data almost certainly seriously under-represents the true picture.
- The data is only for North Sumatra. The situation is thought to be worse in former conflict zones such as Aceh, and in tourist areas such as Jogjakarta, Bali and Lombok, and in the large cities such as Jakarta, Surabaya and Semarang.

Table 13: Cases of Violence Against Children in North Sumatra, 2008 and 2009

Form of Violence	Total Reported Cases 2008	Percentage of Total Cases 2008	Total Reported Cases to June 2009	Percentage of Total Cases to June 2009
Child Trafficking for Sexual Purposes	122	30	17	13
Rape	47	12	17	13
Sexual Harassment	51	13	18	13
Abuse	30	7	20	15
Robbery	33	8	8	6
All other forms	118	30	54	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: PKPA, Kasus Kekerasan Terhadap Anak di Sumatera Utara, 2008 and 2009.

In relation to the second question, ‘Does the theme ‘Family and home environment difficult’ in Table 11 mask patterns of abuse?’ the answer is almost certainly ‘yes’ again. PKPA data reveals that, apart from unknown persons who constitute 19% of abusers, the remainder are abusers that are well known to the children. The largest groups of offenders are neighbours, lovers, friends, family members, and teachers.

In other words, a very significant proportion of offenders are in a position of trust and care of children, particularly parents and teachers.

The extent to which child abuse leads to early school leaving, school behaviour issues and a failure to make the transition from primary to secondary education is unknown. However, it must have a powerful impact on the education of victims. This impact is illustrated by just one case handled by PKPA in 2008:

<b>Victim:</b> female	<b>School status:</b> early leaving	<b>Age:</b> 14	<b>Case type:</b> indecent violation	<b>Victim’s condition:</b> being treated for trauma and refuses to return to school
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This study is making a strong recommendation that within the more general approach to questions of access, transition and participation in education, there must also be a focus on child abuse. In particular, any activity in this area should establish strong working relationships with government organisations, NGO’s and other groups including UNICEF who are working in the area. Future project activity should focus especially on school-based issues that are expected in the Child Protection Act. Consultations in the field suggest widespread ignorance of the Act and so both Gol and donors would appear to have a responsibility to ensure the Act is more effectively socialized.



There are three important implications for the question of transition and participation:

- First, abuse, violence, exploitation do lead to early leaving as the above case illustrates.
- Second, children who leave school early for any reason are especially vulnerable to exploitation and trafficking as they lack access to the education and social skills to deal with the threats in their environment.
- Third, it needs to be emphasised that early school leaving, regrettable as it may be, could be the best decision a child can make when they are struggling with an abusive situation in school. As PKPA data records, there are numerous cases of very serious abuse by teachers. This pattern of abuse by teachers is reflected in the following extract from Kompas. Concern for abuse in schools is reflected in the Child Protection Act which states that ‘children in the school and vicinity of the school must be protected from violent actions BY (emphasis added) the teachers, school management or peers in said school or other educational institutions’

A major part of the difficulty is with the quality of the teaching workforce and the District and Provincial staff who lead and manage education at the local level<sup>9</sup>.

Teachers are not well trained or paid well enough to get good people in to teaching and to retain them. Nor do professional educators appropriately supervise them and provide the high standards of professional and moral leadership teachers require and deserve. The whole teacher training, education management and supervision system needs a massive overhaul to remove the untrained, the unprofessional, the abusers and the incompetents and to prevent their entry to teaching and educational administration in the first place. The education system needs to direct attention at proper standards of truly professional and moral leadership in keeping with the expectations of the national strategic plan, at higher quality teaching, and at setting high expectations that students can reasonably meet. These expectations and challenges occur in classrooms with excellent teachers.

The continuing weakness in seriously addressing these fundamental issues of true educational leadership and professionalism will consign Indonesia to the continuing failure it seeks to address when it compares the nation’s performance against international standards (Caldwell and Harris, 2008). It will also consign large numbers of children to the various forms of abuse documented in this study at worst and to unnecessary scholastic under-performance at best.

According to the *Kompas* report shown below, records at the Indonesian Commission for Child Protection (KPAI) shows that in 2008, reported child abuse increased by 300 percent from the previous year, that is, from 4,398,625 cases to 13,447,921 cases in 2008. Can this be true – 13.5 million reported cases of child abuse, knowing that reporting falls far short of the real situation? If it is not true, what is the real situation and who is checking it?

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<sup>9</sup> “Around half the education agency heads across the country’s 33 provinces are ‘incompetent’ and only secured their positions because of campaigning they conducted for incumbent administration chiefs, a survey says. The Indonesian Teachers Association (PGRI), which conducted the survey, said in Jakarta on Tuesday most education office heads in regions are former members of political teams linked to incumbent governors, mayors and regents. ‘50 percent of them do not have the sufficient technical competency to head these education agencies,’ PGRI chairman Sulistiyo said after meeting with President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono at the presidential palace in Jakarta.

‘Some of them are former heads of local civilian police units; others are former heads of parks, special planning and public cemetery agencies or even former district heads. In short, many have never handled education issues before,’ he said. “  
Source: *The Jakarta Post*, Wednesday, 21 January, 2009.

## **Schools Are Not Safe Places for Children**

**Kompas**

Wednesday, 23 July 2008 - by Hadi Supeno

### **Violence Increases**

*From the analysis of news in 19 national newspapers published in Jakarta, during 2007, there are 455 cases of child abuse. Data from the Attorney General in 2006 shows that there are 600 child abuse cases that have been processed. Of these cases, 41 percent involves indecency and sexual abuse and 41 percent is related to rape. The remaining 7 percent is trafficking, 3 percent murder, and 7 percent physical abuse and the remaining is unknown.*

*Records at the Indonesian Commission for Child Protection (KPAI) shows that in 2008, reported child abuse increased by 300 percent from the previous year, that is from 4,398,625 cases to 13,447,921 cases in 2008 (Media Indonesia, 12 July 2008).*

*Data at KPAI shows that from all child abuse cases, teachers commit 11.3 percent, second after people supporting the child such as parents and guardians that is 18 percent. This is based on analysis of newspaper reports on child abuse. In the first half of 2008, child abuse committed by teachers increased significantly.*

*Teacher abuse does not include the pressure and threats by teachers before the national examination. If this psychological abuse is included, the percentage will be higher, based on the complaints received by KPAI from parents and guardians.*

### **Abuse in schools**

*The question is 'why do teachers become abusive to children?' Shouldn't the teacher be the most protective person towards the children? It maybe because of worsening personal hardship related to social welfare, professional life, and other psychological pressures, that push teachers to abuse their students.*

*Furthermore, the students are also abused by their peers, like during the orientation of new students. The news about the Nero Gang in Pati (Kompas, 19 June 2008) became a reason why parents worry about safety for the children in the school.*

Source: An extract from the Indonesian Commission for Child Protection:

[http://www.kpai.go.id/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=196&Itemid=1&lang](http://www.kpai.go.id/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=196&Itemid=1&lang)

### **6.7.3 Barriers: are they necessary?**

The government is committed to nine years of basic education. At least one District, Jembrana, is implementing 12 years compulsory education and at least one Province, North Sumatra, is planning 12 years by 2011.

The statistical data shows that in 2007/2008, 76% of graduates from primary school made the transition to JSS and 24% did not. This study reveals a range of reasons why students may leave early and not make that transition, but the data raises two important questions: first, why do so many students not make the transition and this point of transition and, second, why have an administrative barrier between primary school and JSS at all in a program of nine years basic education?

This study suggests that it is now timely for a careful reconsideration of the structure of basic education that is now divided three ways – TK, SD and SMP. It may be administratively convenient to have this structure but is it educationally desirable?

The irony is, of course, that an education system that is striving to ensure completion of nine years of basic education is creating barriers to achieving its aims through its own administrative structures and practices.



## 7 WHAT HAS BEEN TRIED AND WHAT WORKS?

### 7.1 Relevant Questions to be Answered by the Study

Two of the questions to be answered by the study include:

- What initiatives have been tried to encourage transition to and participation in JSS?
- What has been the impact of these initiatives and how might they be improved?

Chapter 5 discussed in detail what works and what does not work from a global, 'big picture' perspective. The present chapter now turns to recent Indonesian experience of what may work to encourage participation in JSE and support the transition from primary school to JSS.

In general, there are two very broad approaches to participation and transition that have been tried: the improving practices approach and the systemic change approach.

### 7.2 The 'Improving Practices' Approach

A typical example of this approach is where a development project and its proposed activities are socialised, capacity building in an educational practice is implemented, the activities and outcomes are monitored and improved on, and the planned changes in Indonesian basic education are evaluated.

In some cases, change is sustainable and change maybe disseminated to other Districts and schools. Advocates for the approach stress the importance of bottom-up approaches to get maximum impact and ownership.

Generally, the improving practice approach is 'incremental' in the sense that there is a focus on one set of activities, such as SBM, in a restricted area (many projects usually focus on a sample of schools within that area) and for a limited time. There is a hope that the changes will be locally sustained and disseminated through a positive demonstration effect.

The following DBE3 initiative illustrates this particular approach to educational change.

#### 7.2.1 *The DBE3 initiative*

Decentralized Basic Education – 3 (DBE3) is a five years USAID project to improve the basic education received by students in JSS and to assist youth who have dropped out of school.

DBE3 used the results of the youth consultations conducted in 2007 and worked with stakeholders in each Province to develop and implement a regional drop out prevention toolkit. The toolkit is a self-contained collection of resources which address many of the issues raised as causes of drop out in the consultations and are designed to support youth already in school to stay in school until they complete their basic education. These toolkits are called *Not One Less: Helping Youth to Finish School*. DBE3 has trained students, teachers, school managers and parents to use the resources in the toolkits. The resources specifically address each of these four groups of stakeholders. The resources seek to empower each of the groups and illustrate a focus on the development of individual and group learning.

DBE3 data for 2007/08 indicates that only 28% of the DBE3 target schools have actually used any of the approaches in the toolkit to support youth to stay in school. Project staff comments indicate that many school managers and teachers do not recognize early leaving as a significant issue and often attribute a students' non attendance to a school transfer, and consequently they do not devote resources to taking action to promote school retention.

This conclusion is an important indication of the need for more systematic tracking of students as is done in Jembrana, Bali, and of the need for the continuing professional development of education personnel in schools and in Districts where such school practices are supposed to be monitored.

The present study had intended to undertake some evaluation of this important resource-based initiative only to be thwarted by the futility of the intention from the combined impact of school holidays and the fact that key student groups had in fact graduated and left school.

This is most unfortunate as there are reasons to believe that this has been an important strategy to address early school leaving in Indonesia; important because it sets out to empower students. Moreover, the strategy was based on the series of youth consultations conducted in participating Provinces and so the materials are grounded in local conditions and local needs rather than being derived from external sources. It is suggested that further opportunities to study the impact of the strategy be identified and to build on the lessons learned from it. It will be illuminating to discover whether this process of empowerment, when it has been appropriately implemented, is sufficient to work against the very powerful forces acting on children from communities, families and schools.

Other data presented by DBE3 is more encouraging. This data shows that across target schools in all project Provinces, at least 50% of target schools recorded a decrease in their dropout rates in 2007/2008 with overall decreases in 71% of cohort 1 schools and in 65% of cohort 2 schools (USAID, 2008, 26). Whether these encouraging decreases are evidence of the *Not One Less* strategy or the result of more general developments in school quality is unknown but they are likely to be a combination of both.

**7.2.2 Other project initiatives: MBE**

Positive changes in key student participation indicators emerge in the monitoring and evaluation reports of other donor-supported projects. This phenomenon has not been systematically investigated but data from the following two projects, MBE and CLCC, illustrate that some development factor is having a desirable impact on school quality.

The first set of data is repetition rates from the USAID Managing Basic Education (MBE) project. The project operated mainly in 21 Districts in East and Central Java from 2003 – 2007.

Table 14: Repetition Rates from the USAID MBE Monitoring and Evaluation Report, 2006, p.106:

Year	SD/MI		SMP/MTs	
	M	F	M	F
2005	3.66	1.87	1.16	0.76
2006	3.48	1.94	0.49	0.14

## Discussion

The data indicates a decline in between-year repetition rates for all groups except for SD/MI girls. The change in SMP/MTs rates is comparatively large. As repetition rates are connected to early school leaving (see section 4.2), this is positive indicator of likely project impact on improvements in JSS participation.

### 7.2.3 Other project initiatives: CLCC

The following data sets are from seven SD/MI that participated in the work of CLCC.

Table 15: Changes in UAS Test Scores in Two Gugus Assisted by CLCC in Sulawesi

Subjects	Tinambung		Tapango	
	Before CLCC (2000/2001)	After CLCC (2002/2003)	Before CLCC (2000/2001)	After CLCC (2002/2003)
B. Indonesia	7.39	7.74	6.35	6.74
Mathematics	6.94	7.57	5.71	6.18
Science	6.96	7.17	6.25	6.58
Social Science	6.67	6.85	5.46	6.46

Table 16: Changes in Average Test Scores in Two Gugus Assisted by CLCC in Sulawesi

Gugus	Before CLCC (2000/2001)	After CLCC (2002/2003)	Note
Tinambung	7.07	7.24	7 SD/MI
Tapango	5.94	6.43	7 SD/MI

Table 17: Changes in School Participation Data in Two Gugus Assisted by CLCC in Sulawesi

Indicator (%)	Tinambung		Tapango	
	Before CLCC (2000/2001)	After CLCC (2002/2003)	Before CLCC (2000/2001)	After CLCC (2002/2003)
Drop out	2.61	2.02	2.40	1.58
Repeating class	4.92	6.02	12.54	2.12
Absences	4.52	2.34	12.00	7.30
Attendance	95.33	97.66	88.00	92.60
Transition to JSS	69.07	76.46	79.71	88.71

## **Discussion**

The work of CLCC in these two gugus in Sulawesi is indicated here to have had an overall positive impact on school quality. Notwithstanding the usual caution about data quality, it is apparent from these Tables that there is a consistency in the data indicating that:

- Test scores have consistently improved in each subject and in each gugus
- Participation indicators show movements towards more desirable positions in each gugus, the one exception is the repetition rate in Tinambung
- The transition rate from primary school to JSS shows considerable improvement.

### **7.2.4 *The 'Improving Practices' Approach: Conclusion***

It is concluded that these indicators of improving practice in schools, practices mostly focused on better learning and teaching and school based management, are evidence of improving school quality following a project intervention. The indicators are drawn from three different projects, at different times and from a variety of Districts in Indonesia. The consistency of the evidence from these indicators is a reliable indication that school quality is changing in positive ways.

The indicators are presented here not to justify project achievements but to demonstrate how changes in quality are associated with changes in school participation indicators. There is implicit evidence from the data available here that good quality schools are more likely to have good participation rates and good rates of transition from primary school to JSS. In other words, the improving practice approach has not been shown, on the evidence to be ineffective.

It is a proposition, however, that requires further research. From these data sets, the student consultation data and the international research literature, there is evidence that good schools are good, in part, because of strengthening student engagement and participation in the life of the school. Equally, 'disengaged' students remain at risk of early leaving and ceasing to participate.

### **7.3 The 'Systemic Change' Approach**

The systematic change approach is a policy-driven set of practices that together work to change practices or systems across a wide area that will achieve national objectives of compulsory basic education. Recent national systemic changes have been the introduction of the BOS and before that, SBM. There is a strong element of expectation that policies and practices will be implemented and monitored in this approach through laws and regulations.

A District example of a systematic change is the case of Kabupaten Jembrana in Bali where the local policy is driving completion of 12 years of school education. By locally legislating for compulsory 12 years of education, and by following up students who are absent or leave school, a high expectation of school participation has been communicated to the community, schools, teachers and students.

The systemic change approach requires strong local leadership, strong institutions of education and resources to succeed.



### 7.3.1 Change in Kabupaten Jembrana, Bali

Transition and participation issues and challenges set out a clear agenda for policy makers to address. Kabupaten Jembrana appears to have developed and addressed many of these challenges systematically and successfully. 'Appears' is used carefully here because in the limited time available in this study it was not possible to verify the schools' and Dinas perspectives on achievements with those of the young people actually involved and with their parents. Nor was there the opportunity to carefully assess impact.

This example of the systemic change approach demonstrates strong local leadership, strong institutions of education and the resources needed to succeed. The Bupati (Regent) of Jembrana was inaugurated in 2000. He subsequently visited schools and was concerned with low participation rates in schools. He was told that poverty was one of the major reasons for this. Beginning in 2001, he initiated free education in basic education (before the introduction of BOS) in order to fulfil the nine years compulsory basic education. Three additional decrees were issued in 2006 in support of free education and of 12 years of education.

Where a policy is enacted by government, it must be adequately supported through an appropriate socialization program so that all stakeholders understand their rights and obligations and through adequate resources to fully support the policy. This requirement was neglected in the socialization of the BOS (SMERU, 2006). In Jembrana, for example, it is clear that an otherwise commendable policy framework of insisting on school attendance for 12 years is not fully supported by adequate public school places for all children. This inevitably leads to frustration and disappointment at the points of transition between levels of education.

The Jembrana initiative was documented using a modified form of the good practice framework proposed by UNICEF (UNICEF, 2007). A record of this documented 'good practice' in school participation policy and practice is presented in Table 18.

Table 18: Good Practice in School Participation Policy and Practice – Jembrana, Bali

Good Practice Criteria	Clarification & Explanation
<b>Name of intervention or General description</b>	District managed policies and practices in support of transition to JSS and participation in JSS
<b>Why the intervention is considered important</b>	This is a policy-driven set of practices that is achieving national objectives of compulsory basic education and international commitments expressed in the UN Convention, MDGs and EFA goals. Moreover, by locally legislating for compulsory 12 years of education, a high expectation of school participation has been communicated to the community.
<b>Intervention location</b>	Jembrana District, Bali. Population 280,000, 4 sub districts.
<b>Background and description of situation before change initiative</b>	The Bupati of Jembrana was inaugurated in 2000. He subsequently made visits to schools and asked why there was low participation. He was told that poverty was one of the major reasons. Beginning in 2001 he initiated free education for primary school and JSS in order to fulfil the 9 years compulsory basic education.

Good Practice Criteria	Clarification & Explanation
<b>Description of intervention</b>	<p>The Bupati decree no. 24 was issued in 2001 for free education. The local government was providing a subsidy of Rp 9,000 for SD students, Rp 12,500 for SMP students and Rp 20,000 for SMA/SMK students.</p> <p>Three additional decrees were issued in 2006.</p> <p>Follow up by SD school principals to ensure students are enrolled and participate in SMP</p> <p>Home visits to students when not coming to school for 3 days</p>
<b>How outcomes were achieved: the strategies, processes, people, resources, etc</b>	<p>Four key elements are the foundation for achieving the outcomes achieved in Jembrana:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Central policy</u>: Central government policy and strategic plan commitments for nine years compulsory and free basic education.</li> <li>• <u>Local policy</u>: District government leadership (Bupati, DPRD, Dinas Pendidikan, Depag), policy and plans for 12 years compulsory and free education.</li> <li>• <u>Resources</u>: District government commitment, co-ordinated funding (Central, Provincial and District) and technical support through local organisations such as Dewan Pendidikan for socialisation, involving school committees and supervision by pengawas. Dewan (lead by former Kepala Dinas assists in review and improvement of policy and activities.</li> <li>• <u>Comprehensive Implementation and Follow-up</u>: School-level commitment to policy and students – they are not left alone, ‘handover’ by principal SD to principal SMP to ensure transition, implementation of transition programmes and monitoring and follow-up of at risk students absent from school for more than 3 days. Assistance to poor students to stay in school: students at risk because of poverty will be given money for transport, school uniform and shoes to keep them in school Participation of village officials and Posdayandu (Pos Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Terpadu or Integrated Community Empowerment Unit) for monitoring of children at risk, not in school, early leaving, etc.</li> </ul> <p>Students almost leaving because of poverty will be given money for transport, school uniform and shoes to keep them in school</p>
<b>Outcomes of intervention</b>	Transition from SD/MI to SMP/MTs is almost 100% (see Table 19, below).
<b>Estimate of Sustainability</b>	High in Jembrana as the policy and practice becomes mainstream in the District.
<b>Estimate of Transferability</b>	Conceptually, there is potentially a high degree of transferability but the impact of population, number of sub districts, local culture, and resources is a major consideration. Estimates of in excess of 800 different groups visiting to study the Jembrana strategy including multiple visits from some Districts including Bupati, DPRD and Dinas is an indicator of transferability.

Good Practice Criteria	Clarification & Explanation
<b>Lessons Learned</b>	<p>An integrated, comprehensive policy approach from all levels of government, local leadership and institutions, adequate resources, community involvement and follow-up support is effective in this domain.</p> <p>Centrality of concept of 'no child left alone' – close monitoring of children's attendance is effective transition and participation policy.</p> <p>Early leaving and at risk students are usually influenced by poverty issues.</p> <p>Effective outcomes place pressure on places in SMP; this necessitates some local sorting of students into private schools and into MTs. It also often results in very large classes places pressure on quality.</p>
<b>Source of information (key informants)</b>	<p>Bp. A.A.Gede Putrayasa, Kepala Dinas Pendidikan, Pemuda dan Olah Raga, Kebudayaan, dan Pariwisata,</p> <p>Bp. Putu Ardika, Kepala Bidang Pendidikan Menengah</p> <p>Meeting of 21 school principals (SD and SMP) on 9 July 2009 supported by visits to two SMP and one SD in the District on 10 July 2009.</p>

### 7.3.1.1 Evidence the approach is working

No opportunity was available to undertake an impact evaluation of the systemic changes in Jembrana, but it is recommended that this be done together with an assessment of claims about dissemination to many other Districts in Indonesia.

However, currently available data was studied to determine if student participation rates differ from data elsewhere, that is, Provincial level (Bali) and National level data. Jembrana grade repetition, dropout and transition to SMP figures demonstrate the District is performing better against these comparators, for both SD/MI and SMP/MTs, as shown in Tables 18 and 19. Although the published data suggests that the policy is working, more analysis and comparisons with similar Districts is necessary to confirm this.

Table 19: Education Indicators, SD, Kabupaten Jembrana, Bali, 2007/8

Location	No of Students	Repeat	Dropout	Transition to SMP
Jembrana, Bali	28,800	779 (2.70%)	3 (0.01%)	4,114 (99.91%)
Bali	400,123	13,069 (3.64%)	9,501 (2.37%)	52,927 (99.43%)
<b>Indonesia</b>	<b>26,278,236</b>	<b>1,171,814 (5.40%)</b>	<b>475,145 (1.81%)</b>	<b>2,871,088 (75.58%)</b>

Sources: Data files provided by Dinas Pendidikan, Kabupaten Jembrana, Bali; Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, *Statistic of National Education*. Available: <http://www.depdiknas.go.id/>

Table 20: Education Indicators, SMP, Kabupaten Jembrana, Bali, 2007/8

Location	No of Students	Repeat	Dropout	Transition to SMA/SMK
Jembrana, Bali	11,293	2 (0.02%)	18 (0.16%)	3,465 (99.60%)
Bali	155,564	116 (0.07%)	9,300 (5.98%)	42,552 (94.56%)
<b>Indonesia</b>	<b>2,283,578</b>	<b>35,830 (0.42%)</b>	<b>332,824 (3.94%)</b>	<b>2,393,972 (95.42%)</b>

Sources: Data files provided by Dinas Pendidikan, Kabupaten Jembrana, Bali; Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, *Statistic of National Education*. Available: <http://www.depdiknas.go.id/>

### 7.3.2 The Decentralized Basic Education Project (DBEP) 2003 – 2008

Achievements in Jembrana may be partly attributable to the impact of DBEP. The ADB supported DBEP operated in 20 poor Districts in Bali, NTB and NTT, including Jembrana. One key objective of DBEP was to improve poor children's participation in and completion of nine years of basic education (DBEP, 2003, 19).

A distinctive characteristic of DBEP was its poverty focus. It targeted school-aged children from poor households and provided scholarships to support continuation at school. There does not appear to have been any systematic evaluation of the scholarship program, but consultant reports present data which suggests that in both SD/MI and in SMP/MTs from 2004/5 to 2006/7, early school leaving decreased, transition rates improved and that final examination scores increased in SD/MI and in SMP/MTs (DBEP, 2007, 59).

The data presented, once again, raises issues with its quality but, nevertheless, the consistency across indicators, across time and at both levels of education supports the general proposition that the project may have had a beneficial effect on these indicators of participation and transition. However, without a comparison group, the evidence for this conclusion remains weak.

## 7.4 Conclusion

This chapter concludes with the question posed in the study's terms of reference: What has been the impact of these initiatives and how might they be improved?

The study was unable to marshal the resources of time and people to undertake a full impact study. As indicated in Chapter 0, the study operated more as a reconnaissance study of the field, clarifying concepts, reviewing the local and international literature and making the best assessment of initiatives that could be identified.

To minimize the risks of low participation and early school leaving, the lessons from the study indicate clearly that piecemeal approaches are unlikely to be successful and that whole-school and whole-of-schooling thinking is necessary. What works in encouraging students to engage and stay within the education system is fundamentally having access to good schools and good teachers.

Recent evidence from Indonesia shows very clear patterns in the ways to effectively move

schools and their teachers towards better quality standards in both learning and teaching and in school management. Foremost among the strategies is a 'whole-school' approach that develops all the teachers, together with their communities, across a broad range of school development issues. A focus on improved teaching and employing active learning approaches is demonstrably successful and significantly improves the learning environment for students (and their test scores).

Students frequently observe that their teachers are angry, unkind, absent, boring, and lazy. Students note that one critically important feature of good teaching is missing: *no feedback given on completed work*.<sup>10</sup> Worse, the data from NGOs and the media indicates that students suffer considerable abuse from teachers including physical violence and rape. Good teaching should be demanded, from people who are carefully selected for teaching, educated and trained, professionally developed and managed, and properly paid.

The whole-of-schooling concept recognises that transition and participation begins in the move from home to early childhood education and concludes with entry to the work force from whatever level of education the student departs. Whole-of-schooling is also an inclusive concept that recognises the needs of all children; particularly those with special needs who are far too often forgotten and so do not participate at all in education.

There is ample, detailed evidence in the study to show how participation and transition can be made to work more effectively. In addition to having access to good schools and good teachers, some key findings include:

- The necessity for Districts to collect accurate data about education to inform better standards of planning, particularly the planning of school places to accommodate rising numbers of children participating and staying in the education system.
- A 'whole-of-schooling approach' that recognises the many transitions that occur throughout school life, the importance of enrolling children at the correct age, supporting progress through the grades, addressing the grade repetition issue, and removing unnecessary barriers to participation.
- Empowering communities and parents so that they are aware of their rights and obligations and so they can participate in the democratic management of schools and appropriately support and encourage their own children.
- Empowering children to give them the life skills to manage their school participation, and transitions and the risks they will inevitably encounter in life.

Finally, the good practice case study of Jembrana in Bali demonstrates the power of whole school and whole of schooling approaches built on a foundation of policy, and a strong commitment to educational plans supported effectively at school and student level through careful monitoring and management.

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<sup>10</sup> In a report that draws on over 500,000 studies of the influences on student achievement, feedback stands out as the single most powerful influence. See: John Hattie, *Teachers make a difference: what is the research evidence?* Melbourne, Australian Council of Educational Research, October, 2003. Available: [www.acer.edu.au/workshops/documents/Teachers\\_Make\\_a\\_Difference\\_Hattie.pdf](http://www.acer.edu.au/workshops/documents/Teachers_Make_a_Difference_Hattie.pdf)



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## 9 SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTIONS VISITED

Location	School/Institution	Persons met
Jembrana, Bali	Dinas Pendidikan Nasional, Pemuda, Olahraga, dan Budaya	Drs. Anak Agung Gede Putrayasa (Kepala Dinas)  Drs. Putu Ardika (Kepala Bidang Pendidikan)  Twenty-one school principles attended a consultation meeting
	SMP4 Negara	Bp. I Wayan Ardana (Principal)
	SDN3 Banyubiru	Ibu Kamarasih (Principal)
	SMP 1 Mendoyo	Bp.I Ketut Yana (Vice Principal)
Binjai Sumatera Utara	SMP Tunas Pelita	Bp. Widiatmoko (Principal)
	SD Tunas Pelita	
	PKBM Budi Utomo	Ibu Jumiah (Principal)
	SLB Binjai	Bp. Maryana (Principal)
	MTsN Binjai	Bp. Yusran Adnin (Principal)
Deli Serdang Sumatera Utara	SMPN 2 Deli Tua	Bp. Akhiruddin (Principal)
	SD YPI Deli Tua	Bp. Bejo Susanto (Principal)
	Pondok Pesantren Al Amien	Bp. Ruben Purba (Principal)
Kota Binjai	Dinas Pendidikan Kota Binjai	Bp. Hamidan, (Kepala Bidang Perencanaan dan Informasi)
Medan	Dinas Pendidikan Provinsi Sumatera Utara	Ibu Rosmawaty Nadaek, Kepala Sub Dinas Bina Program
Medan	Pusat Kajian dan Perlindungan Anak (PKPA, Center for Study and Child Protection), Medan	Bp. Ahmad Sofian (Executive Director), Bp. Sumadi Wijaya, (Project Manager)
Jakarta	Directorate for SMP Management	Bp. Dedi Karyana (DBEP & BEC Coordinator)

<b>Location</b>	<b>School/Institution</b>	<b>Persons met</b>
Jakarta	Pusat Statistik Pendidikan, Depdiknas	Ibu Astuti (Kepala Bidang Pendidikan Menengah)
Jakarta	Directorate for SMP Development	Dr. Supriano (Deputy Director for Student Development)
Jakarta	UNICEF, Child Protection	Staff