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From Dakar to Brasília: Monitoring Unesco's Education Goals

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From Dakar to Brasilia: Monitoring Unesco's Education Goals¹

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ABSTRACT

Active participation of Brazilian civil society, coupled with the 2007 education development plan, launched by the Brazilian government provides an interesting example of the influences of the Dakar Goals. The two domestic initiatives share the same name, spirit and direction proposed in Dakar 2000. We analyse here changes in the Brazilian policies and indicators related to the Dakar Education *Goals since its creation*, we note: (i) an increase in enrolment over the relevant period; (ii) access to primary education was nearly universal by 2000; (iii) over-aged youth and adult students fell considerably during the period, but access did not expand; (iv) illiteracy has been falling at a rate which, if sustained, will enable us to meet the goal; (v) gender discrimination did not take place in Brazil; (vi) most pupil proficiency indicators have progressively deteriorated from what was already a low standard. In summary, quantity indicators did improve over the period while most quality indicators worsened.

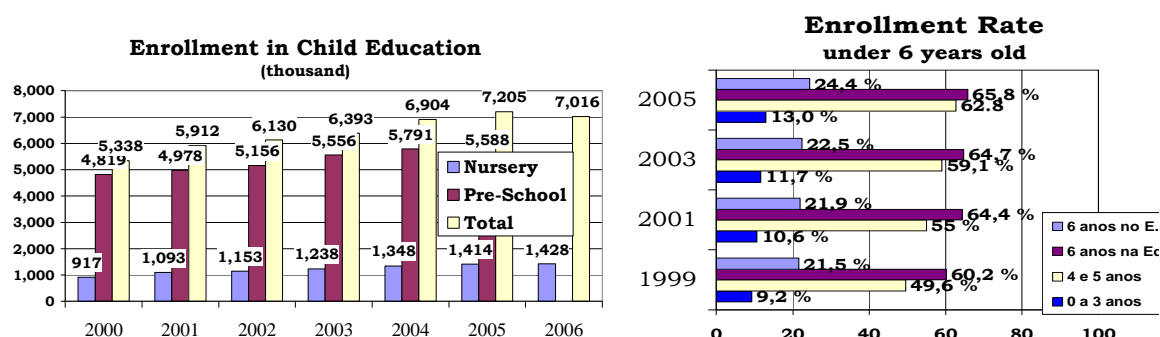
Keywords: 1.Education; 2. Social Targets; 3. School Performance

¹ This paper was prepared for Unesco as an evaluation of the Brazilian case in the context of the Global Monitoring Report 2008. A short version of the paper will be published at the Quarterly Review of Comparative Education, 2008.

Executive Summary

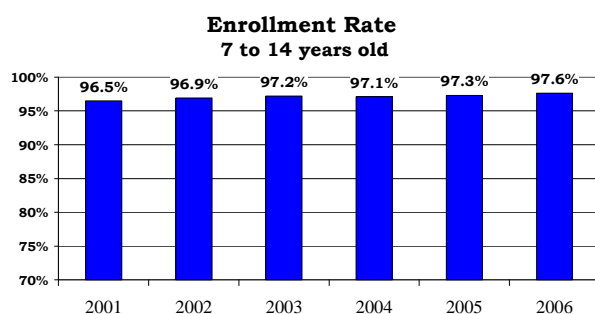
The introduction of a system of educational goals enshrined in the education development plan, recently launched by the Brazilian federal government, promises to motivate prefects and governors, as it expands the expenditures-linked model to taking into account the municipalities and schools' performance in the distribution of public funds. The federal initiative coupled with an independent participation of Brazilian civil society called *Compromisso Todos Pela Educação*, all under a same heading are pointing to where the Dakar Goals have been pointing since the year 2000. The Brazilian case provides an interesting example of the influences of the Dakar Goals that takes into account specific institutional, data availability and public policy features. This study analyses the current situation of education in Brazil in terms of its compliance with the *Dakar Education Goals*, the evolution of the main indicators since the commitment was signed in 2000, and the efforts deployed in this direction.

The first three Dakar goals include the promotion of access to education by age group: early childhood, children and teenagers, young people and adults. Hence, we will analyse the access to the various stages of the Brazilian education system corresponding to each of these age groups. With regard to the goal (i), we find a substantial expansion of early childhood care and education both in terms of the number of establishments and enrolments. However, the quality of care and infrastructure of nurseries and pre-school establishments are still very deficient, to such an extent that, in most cases, in truth they provide a place where mothers can have their children minded while they are out at work, instead of an educational space. While pre-school access is practically universal for the highest income bracket families are concerned, the poorest half's access to nurseries does not reach 10%.

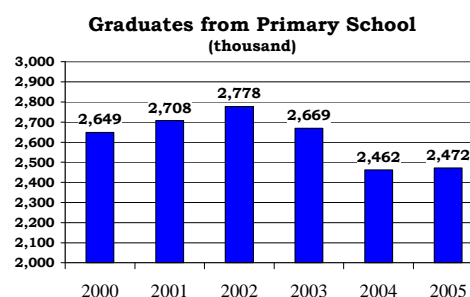


source: School Census / INEP

Concerning goal (ii), which refers to primary education, we note that access was already almost universal when the Dakar commitment was signed. Nevertheless, the completion of this schooling level, though compulsory according to the Constitution, is far from being reached by everyone. In addition, the situation is deteriorating, partly owing to changes in the age pyramid, but chiefly owing to the very high repetition and drop-out rates. If this goal is not achieved, it will become impossible to achieve universal secondary education.

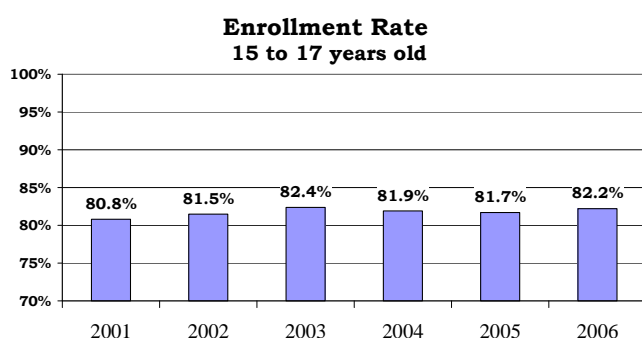


source: PNAD/IBGE

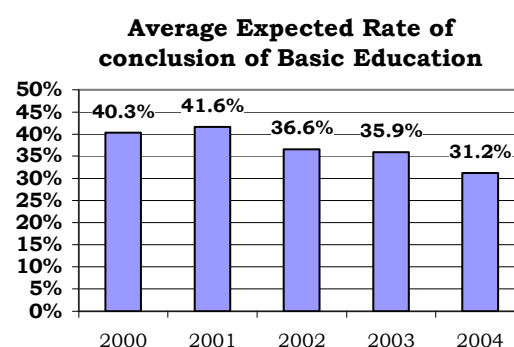


source: School Census / INEP

Relating to goal (iii), pertaining to youth and adults, we have good and bad news. Over-aged attendance fell substantially over the period, and youth and adult enrolments in education rose. Attendance remained stagnant at approximately 80%, a relatively high figure, but one which nevertheless confirms that the country is falling short of universality in this phase. In other words, the foreseen change for that goal did not occur.

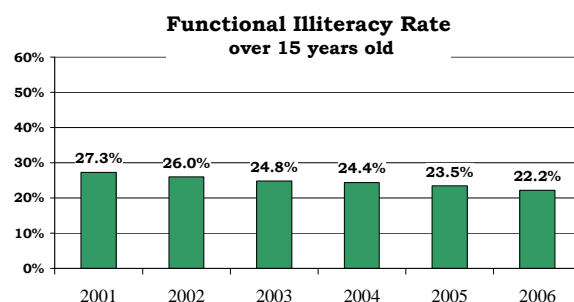
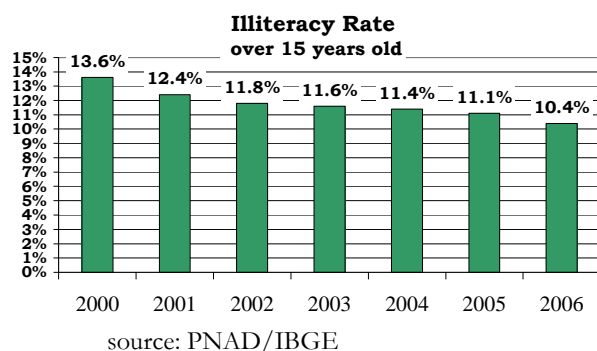


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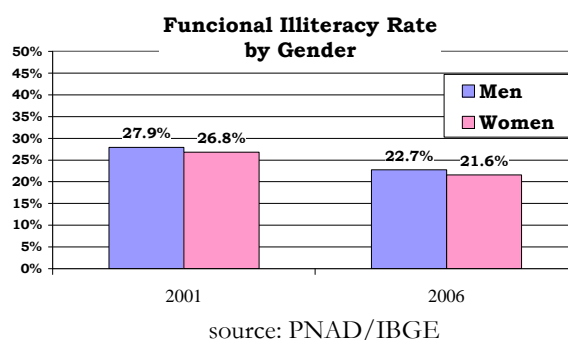
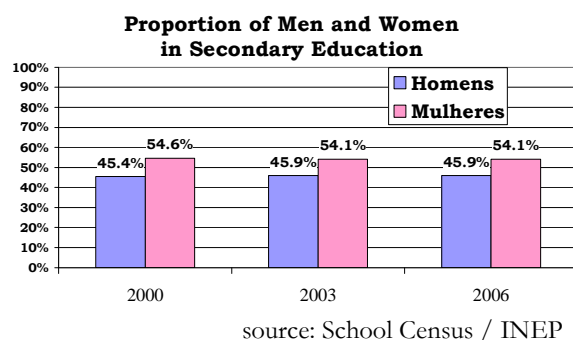


source: School Census / INEP

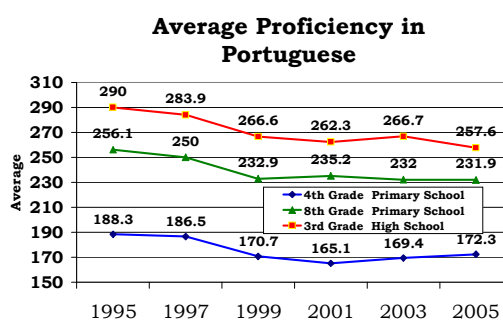
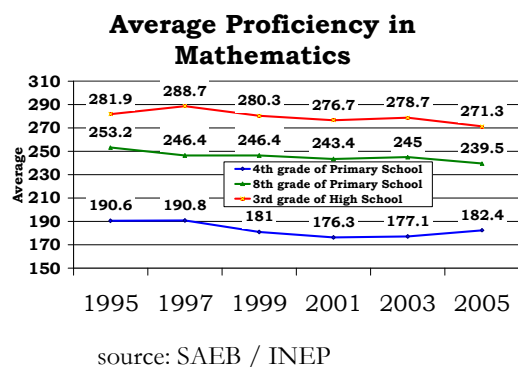
Goal (iv), which addresses the achievement of a fifty per cent reduction in illiteracy, is already being met. The trend for proper and functional illiteracy has been steadily downwards, thus, provided this pace is maintained, Brazil will meet the goal by 2015.



Goal (v) involves eliminating gender discrimination from the education market, which –differently from most countries - is not an issue in Brazil, as women have a slight advantage according to most of the indicators.



Goal (vi), in turn, has to do with the quality of education and is undoubtedly the most relevant and challenging one for Brazil. Pupil proficiency, as measured by the *Basic Education Evaluation System (SAEB)*, has gradually deteriorated, or at best has remained stable and this is quite serious in the light of our low starting point in terms of the quality of education.



In addition, the following indicators deteriorated over the period: there was a fall from 8.1 to 7.4 in the average number of completed primary education grades; an increase from 13.9 to 14 years in the average expected timeframe for completion; a reduction from 10.3 to 9.8 years in the average expected timeframe for permanence; an increase in repetition rates from 18.6% to 22.5% in secondary education; and an increase in drop-out rates from 4.9% to 6.9% in primary education and from 8% to 9.6% in secondary education, just to mention a few indicators. In other words, practically all the progression figures show a decline.

Most indicators which recorded improvements were those whose importance for the quality of education is controversial, to wit, the proportion of teachers with higher education, class sizes and the degree of computerisation of schools, as well as some infra-structure variables, such as the proportion of public schools with electrical power and basic sanitation, which are essential ones.

As we can gauge from an analysis above, the quality of public education in the country, in almost all its dimensions, is very precarious, which itself favours dropping out and repetition, the latter also leads to further dropping out. And even those pupils who persevere to the end do not build up the human capital consistent with the level of instruction reached and sufficient to measure up to the needs of the labour market, in an open economy featuring growing competition which requires an ever more skilled labour force. In other words, we are faced with a big vicious circle, mainly engendered by the low quality of education.

Policy Issues and Conclusions

In what concerns the demand side, during the present decade the main educational policy was linked to the overall social policy, mainly founded on the introduction and dissemination of targeted conditional cash transfers, among which the most relevant was *Bolsa-Familia*, intended to fight present and future poverty, through crossed education and health subsidies for the poorest families.

With respect to the supply side, in turn, we can say that probably the most relevant educational policy in the decade was the establishment of *the Fund for Primary Education Administration and Development and for the Enhancement of Teachers' Status* (FUNDEF) and its subsequently substitution by the *Fund for Basic Education Administration and Development and the Enhancement of the Status of Education Professionals* (FUNDEB). It constitutes the instrument for effecting transfers of sub-national governments own resources to afford expenditure on public education from the grades 1 to 8, after including child and secondary education as well. The fund drew on state resources, which were then shared

amongst state and municipal primary schools according to the number of pupils enrolled in each municipality and in the state system. As a consequence, municipalities were encouraged to attract the highest number of children into school and the poorest municipalities were empowered to improve the quality of education. Mendes (2001) showed that the Fundef not only generated educational progress in all regions of the country but it also reduced inequalities between regions.

In march 2007, the government launched the *Education Development Plan (PDE)*, a set of proposals aiming to improve the quality of education in the country. Among other features, it has a clear emphasis on basic education – throughout the country's history a large priority has been given to higher education – and established a target-based system. The plan's main innovation was the creation of a synthetic indicator of education quality, the *Basic Education Development Index (Ideb)*¹, based on the average passing rate and average proficiency for each municipality in the country. The federal government will determine targets for the evolution of the *Ideb* and then condition part of its education-related transfers to the accomplishment of these targets. The new plan embodies this in that it favours basic education over higher education. Secondly, the dissemination of information on education is key to mobilizing society in favour of the cause of education, and hence to making changes in the quality of education through the political process and from private choices on public schools. Finally, incentive mechanisms started to be created for all who are part of the educational process.

The PDE implementing a target-based system in Brazil happens in a moment when different actors are converging around the need to determine educational targets as the basis of educational policies. Besides, a very important umbrella NGO involving many relevant actors of civil society, named *Compromisso Todos pela Educação* (All for Education Commitment) also set five targets to be reached by 2022, when the country completes two centuries of its political independence. Fostering a culture of educational targets guiding the educational policy, which stems at the same time from an International Organization as UNESCO - with the *Education for All Commitment* signed by the Brazilian government - the federal government itself, and representative actors from civil society, holds the promise of motivating all the stakeholders from young pupils to mothers, from mayors to governors, and offers an exceptional opportunity to step up and co-ordinate efforts so as to achieve concrete results in the direction of providing high-quality education for all².

² For more details see about the *Ideb* Neri & Buchmann (2007) and Neri and Xerez (2003) about incentive based schemes in social expenditures .

Introduction

This study analyses the status of education in Brazil with a view to: (i) describing and analysing changes in the main indicators of education within the framework of the Dakar goals and (ii) considering the main education policies and efforts on the part of the government and of stakeholders in general to attain these goals and, more broadly, to improve education throughout the country.

This report will focus on primary education. We have chosen not to analyse higher education because it differs from the other levels of education in various aspects relating to supply and demand³ while involving a much smaller amount of students. For these reasons, we feel that higher education deserves a separate study and we have chosen to concentrate on basic education.

In writing this report we drew on two main databases: The National Household Sample Survey (*Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílio [PNAD]*), conducted by the IBGE, and the School Census, conducted by the Anísio Teixeira National Institute for Educational Studies and Research (*INEP*), which is associated with the Ministry of Education (*MEC*). Both are published annually. These two databases have complementary features in terms of aims, respondents and the information researched.⁴

Most of the data on changes in school variables came from the School Census, which collects data on academic progression and provision characteristics, such as infrastructures and teacher training, which are essential to assessing changes in educational quality patterns over the years. One of the reasons for using IBGE data to analyse provision of education relates to early childhood schooling because not all the institutions that provide education for under-six children are registered with the INEP - hence they do not appear in the School Census, which underestimates the coverage. Another reason is that the Ministry of Education and Culture (*MEC*) data does not include all the information on user and family profiles, especially of those who are not in school. One of the restrictions of using PNAD survey in this report is that the survey was not carried out in 2000 - it was instead the Census' year - the starting point for logging changes in Dakar goal indicators. Finally, we also used the results of the Basic Education Evaluation System (*Sistema de Avaliação do Ensino Básico [SAEB]*) and

³ One of the proposals raised by some specialists, including Cristovam Buarque, is to transfer higher education to the Ministry of Science and Technology and let the Ministry of Education concentrate on primary education alone

⁴ See Rosemberg (1999)

the National Secondary Education Examination (*Exame Nacional do Ensino Médio [ENEM]*), which will be described in the relevant section, to analyse changes in the performance of pupils in terms of skills and learning attainments.

The timeframe chosen, with the exception of core legal reforms, does not include any lengthy historical background, given the variety of the subjects monitored,. We decided to focus on the period referring to the Dakar's Education for All Commitment. Wherever possible the year 2000⁵, the year of the Dakar commitment, was taken as the starting point. For the end point, in most instances we used 2005 and 2006 for reasons of data availability and uniformity⁶.

The first three Dakar goals include the promotion of access to education by age group: early childhood, children and teenagers, young people and adults. We shall consider access to the various stages of the Brazilian education system in relation to these age groups, which are respectively: (i) nurseries and pre-school establishments; (ii) primary education (1st to 8th grade); and (iii) secondary education, technical and vocational training, and youth and adult education. The fourth goal concerns literacy, which is the prerequisite for entering the education system and constitutes one of the major challenges the country faces. The fifth goal seeks gender equality. And, finally, the sixth goal relates to the quality of education, which involves all the schooling levels and which, by its very nature, is multi-dimensional and hard to quantify and measure. Thus, we shall proceed to considering the various indicators including both the evaluation of pupil proficiency tests as well as the supply of educational inputs and indicators of progression.

As there are numerous government policies, we shall consider only the main ones. On provision, we shall examine the *Fundeb/Fundef* and the *Fundescola*, which seek to establish minimum public education standards and to even out the disparities between the various regions in the country. The former is an extensive programme, which attempts to bring about significant changes in the financial structure of the education system. Then we will turn to the teachers, the main educational input, and follow with a brief review of other programmes drawing on other inputs, like textbooks, multimedia etc. With regard to individual demand for education, the main innovation is undoubtedly the introduction, continuation and gradual extension of the conditional cash transfer system (linked to school attendance), such as the *Bolsa-Escola*, subsequently incorporated into the *Bolsa-Familia* scheme. We shall also touch

⁵ Except for the performance figures, as the SAEB examinations are only held in odd years, and the PNAD data, which is not collected in Census years, as was the case in 2000.

⁶ For some variables data is only available up to 2004, and for enrolment figures we use 2006.

upon the establishment, in some regions of the country, of the automatic progression scheme, which aims to reduce the numbers of repetitions and over-aged pupils. In terms of equity, we shall look at the policies (i) for reducing racial inequalities, (ii) for children with disabilities, (iii) adult education and, finally, we shall analyse how recent pro-poor education policies have turned out. Subsequently, we shall review other assessment systems and programmes put in place by the government, and then briefly describe the main innovative changes to the legal framework.

The report falls into four sections. The first section describes changes to each of the main indicators related to each goal. The second section examines the efforts the government has deployed in the form of institutional reforms and educational policies as well as those made by other social stakeholders. The third section considers issues of equitable access, public and private costs, educational rewards in the labour market and their development over time, education supply and demand motivations, and retention rates and their relationship to skills acquired in schools. The fourth section analyses other education-relevant dimensions, namely, child labour, regional inequalities and educational mobility between generations. Finally, the fifth and last section, which can serve as an executive summary, provides a brief summary of the main conclusions of the report.

General Figures

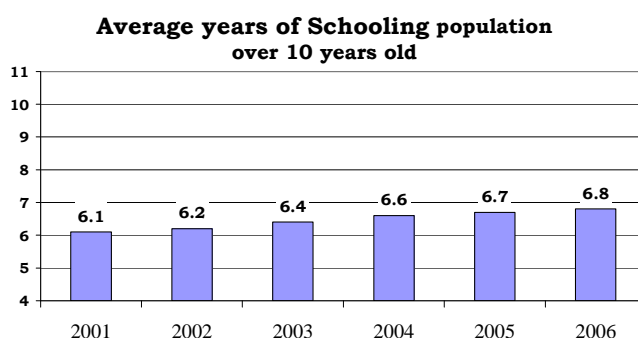
In 2006, there were 55,942,047 pupils enrolled in basic education. Of these, 7,016,095 were in early childhood education, 33,282,663 in primary education, 8,906,820 were in secondary education and 5,616,291 in youth and adult education. Of this total, 48.5 millions (87%) came from an urban environment and 7.5 millions (13%) from a rural environment. In terms of administrative provision, 25.5 millions (45.4%) accrue to the municipal system, 23.1 millions (41.6%) to the state system, 180 thousand (0.3%) to the federal system and 7 millions (12.6%) to the private system. It should be emphasized that 87% of pupils from the rural environment attended state schools and only 1.2% were in private schools.

The 1988 Constitution makes provision for cooperative school systems involving the Union, the states, the Federal District and the municipalities and establishes that “the municipalities shall be primarily responsible for primary education and early childhood education”. In practice, the responsibility for primary public education is shared between the states (40%) and municipalities (60%), while secondary public education is mainly provided by the states (97%).

In 2006, Brazil's basic education establishments totalled 203.931, of which 55% were located in urban areas and 45% in rural areas. In terms of administrative responsibility, 134.878 (66.1%) belonged to the municipal system, 33.310 (16.3%) to the state system, 206 (0.1%) to the federal system and 35.537 (17.4%) to the private system.

Regarding the deployment of teachers, 2.647.414 were working in a classroom setting, of which 85% in urban areas and 15% in rural areas. There was a further 1.146.505 (43.3%) teaching in the municipal system, 958.593 (36.2%) in the state system, 14.825 (0.6%) in the federal system and 527.491 (19.9%) in the private system.

The average number of schooling years of the population, perhaps the best indicator to sum up the current educational status of the country, has been finding its way up, from 6.1 in 2000 to 6.8 in 2006, as illustrated in the graph below. However, as it is clear from any international comparison, it corresponds to a very low schooling level for the population.



source: National Household Sample Survey (PNAD)/IBGE

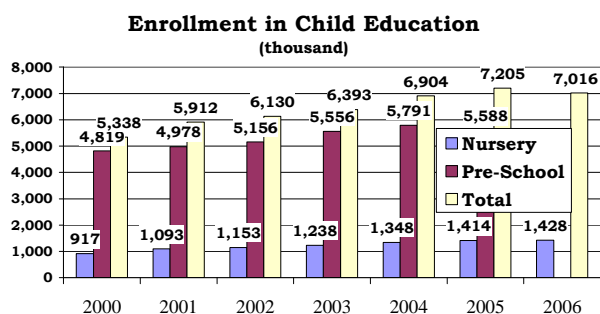
I Changes in the Main Indicators related to the Dakar Goals

In this section, we consider the educational status of Brazil by looking at the evolution of the main educational indicators as well as of the legislation, in a framework related to each one of the six goals set in Dakar.

(i) Expanding and improving early childhood care and education especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

In 2006, of the 7 million children enrolled in early childhood education, 5.5 millions were in pre-schools, which catered for children aged between 4 and 6 years old, and 1.5 million in nurseries, which catered for the 0 to 3 year-old group.

The number of children enrolled in nurseries increased from 916,864 in 2000 to 1,428,343 in 2006, as illustrated in the graph below. Of these 549,048 (59.9%) and 959,846 (67.2%) were under 4 and 98.5% were under 7 years old, in 2000 and 2006 respectively.



source: School Census / INEP

The annual expenditure per pupil enrolled in early childhood education, however, fell from R\$1.044 in 2000 to R\$926 in 2002, the most recent date for which data is available.

The average number of daily school hours in early childhood education remained practically constant, varying from 4.4 in 2002 to 4.5 in 2005 in pre-school establishments and from 7.9 in 2000 to 8 in 2005 in nurseries.

The average class size went down from 21.3 to 21.1 in the pre-school setting and from 19 to 17.3 in nurseries. These figures, however, are still very high, considering that these children are at an age when they require individual attention.

The 2005 PNAD estimated that the population of children under 6 stood at 21.4 millions. Of these, 8.6 attended nurseries, pre-school groups or the reception classes of primary education, or slightly over 40% of the population in this age group. There were 11.5 million under threes of whom almost 1.5 million or 13% of the total attended nurseries. Of the 9.8 million children between four and six years old, 72% went to pre-school groups or primary education reception classes, corresponding to 7.1 million children.

The Heckman and Cunha study (2005) shows that there are no trade-offs between efficiency and equity in early childhood schooling schemes. They show that American children who attend nurseries or pre-school education do better as adults: they have a higher

income, and are less likely to go to prison, to experience early pregnancies and to become dependent on government social assistance in later life. In other words, it is more productive, from both a fiscal and a social standpoint, to invest in citizens from early infancy. The study further suggests that the younger the child, the greater the return on the educational investment in them.

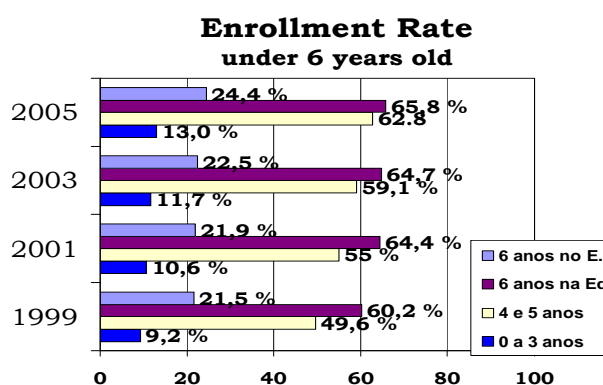
The right of these children to education and care in nurseries and pre-school groups is guaranteed by the 1988 Constitution. Unlike primary education, however, child education is not compulsory but the state is obliged to provide places for the children who seek education.

Nursery and pre-school education - which for a long time had been seen as the specific responsibility of families - made significant strides in legal and standard-setting terms in the early post-Constitution years. In pursuing the 1988 Constitution precepts - which, in article 208, specified that care in nurseries and pre-school settings for children up to six years of age was the duty of the state - the Guidelines and Bases for National Education Law (*Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional* (Law 9.394/1996) was enacted in 1996 and came to constitute the main framework for this phase of education. This law consolidated the term *educação infantil* (early childhood education), enshrined it in law as the first stage of basic education, and devolved responsibility for provision to municipalities. In 2001, the National Education Plan (PNE) was adopted (Law 10.172/2001), encompassing guidelines, objectives and goals for ECCE, which were intended to expand access and improve quality. The goal of substantially expanding care was underscored: it involved broadening early childhood education provision so as to cater, within five years, for 30% of under threes and 60% of four to six year-olds (or 4 and 5 year-olds) and to reach 50% of under threes and 80% of four and five year-olds by the end of the decade. In 2005, just before the deadline was reached, the percentage of children catered for stood below half the target figure. Growth between 1995 and 2005 hit a mere 5.8 percentage points which, if extrapolated linearly, would reach 19.1% in 2015 or, in other words, less than half the target figure set in the PNE for 2011. As to the four to six year old age group, taken as a whole, the figures in 2005 already exceeded by 10% the target set for 2006.

Another important factor for the future of early childhood education was the creation of *Fundeb* in 2006, which brought early childhood education within the overall funding system of basic education⁷, unlike *Fundef* in 1996 which did not include nurseries.

⁷ Constitutional amendment 53, 20 December 2006

Following LDB and PNE forecasts, a total of nine years of primary education⁸ was introduced in 2006. Children will enter this system at the age of 6 and pre-school provision will cover 4 and 5 year-olds⁹. This means that six year-old children should enrol in primary education at the beginning of the school year and not in pre-school establishments. Under this scheme, since this level of education became compulsory, one of the challenges in implementing the law lies in making the provision for this age group universal. The 2005 PNAD data showed that 90% of six year-olds were in school; 65% were in pre-school and 25% were already in primary education. The figure was 81.7% in 1999. Of 4 and 5 year-olds, 63.7% were attending school in 2005. It should be noted that, if the growth rate achieved between 1995 and 2005 can be sustained, by 2015 all six year-olds will be in school while the figure for 4 and 5 years olds will reach 95.6%.



source: National Household Sample Survey (PNAD)/IBGE

However, throughout the country, there was shortage of places for children whose families were seeking provision, particularly for younger children, and this has led the Department of Justice to take action in various municipalities.

Apart from difficulties pertaining to supply and demand, there remained huge inequality of opportunity in early childhood access. Whereas a third of under-threes whose families earned an income of over three times the minimum wage were in early childhood education, this percentage stood at a mere 10% for families who earned up to half the minimum wage. With respect to children from 4 to 6 year-old, we observe that in higher per capita income family groups there was almost universal access (94.0%), while for the poorest groups this figure was only 65%.

⁸ Law 11.274/2006

⁹ Constitutional amendment 53, 20 December 2006

Dwelling in an urban or a rural area also has a significant impact on access to early childhood education. 2005 PNAD data showed that there were three times as many under-threes attending nurseries in urban areas as in rural areas. The difference is also marked for 4 to 6 years olds (respectively 76% and 57%). This is due, in part, to rural depletion, which makes provision of nurseries close to the homes of children difficult, and to rural culture and lifestyles, where fewer women work outside the home and where different values about bringing up children prevail.

Another relevant feature of this type of education is that a substantial part of the provision is made by non-profit private entities. The 2005 School Census showed that 22% of the 1.4 million children enrolled in nurseries and 8% of the 5.79 million of those in pre-schooling, totalling 775 thousand children in all, were served by these entities.

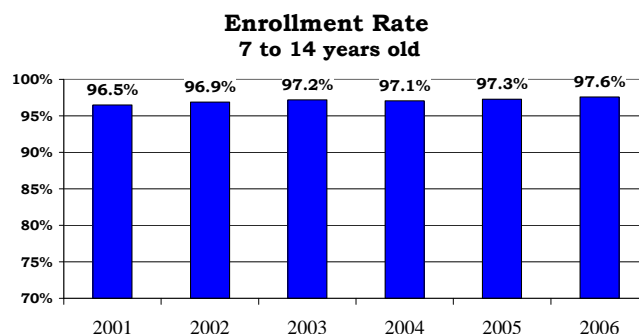
The teachers, who have benefited from government programmes, like *ProInfantil* (Pro Early Childhood) implemented in 2005, are better qualified than the national average. The 2005 School Census shows that 13% of teachers working in pre-schools did not have the qualifications required by the law, a smaller percentage than the national average of 21.3%.

Turning to the infrastructure of public institutions, we believe that there are two prerequisites for quality early childhood education provision: a children's playground, which leads to motor and play activities that are essential in this development phase, and lavatories designed for small children that meet basic hygiene and safety standards. It is noted that 45.3% of children who attended nurseries and pre-schools did not have a children's playground; where public institutions are concerned, the percentage was 54.6% and in the northern and north-eastern regions of the country the percentages were extremely high, namely 88.7% and 81.4% respectively. In what concerns adequate lavatory facilities, we observed that the percentage of children in institutions which did not have access to it was 39%, reaching 48.7% in the case of the public education system, 75.8% in the Northeast and 70.4% in the North. To sum up, the conditions fell far short of official guidelines.

Hence one of the big challenges facing Brazil today is to convert early childhood education from a little more than a minding option for mothers who need to go out to work, into efficient and effective educational institutions.

(ii) Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, vulnerable and disadvantaged children and children from ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free, compulsory primary education of good quality.

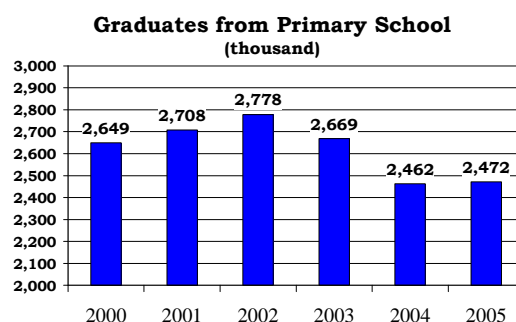
Access and completion of a school level is considered universal when more than 95% enjoy access or achieve completion. In Brazil, access to primary education is universal since 97.2% of 7 to 14 year-olds are enrolled in the educational system, and already were, back in 2000, as shown in the graph below.



source: National Household Sample Survey (PNAD)/IBGE

However, completion of primary education falls far below the goal. In 2000, 2,648,638 children had completed primary education, a larger number than the 2,462,319 in 2004, as illustrated in the graph below.

To attain universal completion of primary education, which is a constitutional requirement, dropout and repetition rates will have to be brought down while, as things stand, they are increasing as we shall see when analysing the goal (vi).



source: School Census / INEP

Primary education in Brazil covered a population of 33,534,561 pupils, of whom 90% attended public schools. Theoretically, it should cater for children aged between 7 and 14 years old, but this was not the case.

Primary education is the only free and compulsory stage of basic education. In pursuing the 1988 Federal Constitution, it became a *subjective public right*, and its “non-provision” or

“irregular provision” became the responsibility of the competent authority”¹⁰. In the following decade, this educational stage was given favourable treatment, also from the funding standpoint, through the *Fundef*, explained in details in the second part of the study. This mechanism was designed to unequivocally commit the public authorities to releasing the funds allocated to primary education under the 1988 Constitution¹¹. This rule generated the conditions necessary to increase provision and, in fact, it did so - substantially until 1998 after which it levelled off. It should be noted that the surge came later in the North and Northeast than in the Southeast region, which speaks volumes about the powerful impact *Fundef* has had on the poorer regions of the country.

However, from the 2005 PNAD data, we find that, generally speaking, the indicators record a fall in attendance of approximately 1% as compared with 2004. This trend, according to Lercher, Vidal and Costa (2007), reflects the end of the expansionary cycle of primary education, which is due to two interrelated factors: on the one hand, a relative stabilization of progression through this stage of basic education and, on the other hand, a decrease of the population in this age group.

An analysis of the behaviour of the country’s demographic pyramid shows that, over the past two decades, Brazil has undergone a demographic transition, which features a significant fall in the relative numbers of children and young people between 0 and 19 years of age as a proportion of the population at large (from 44.6% in 1992 to 36.2% in 2005). There is a reduction in the share of the population in the 5-14 year old group (by 19.8% between 1992 and 2005), which should attend primary education, as well as a reduction in the share between 0 and 4 years of age (by 25.5% over the same period), all of which confirms the downward trend in enrolments in this stage of education.

In 2005, Brazil considered that 18.2% of its primary education pupils were part of the working population.

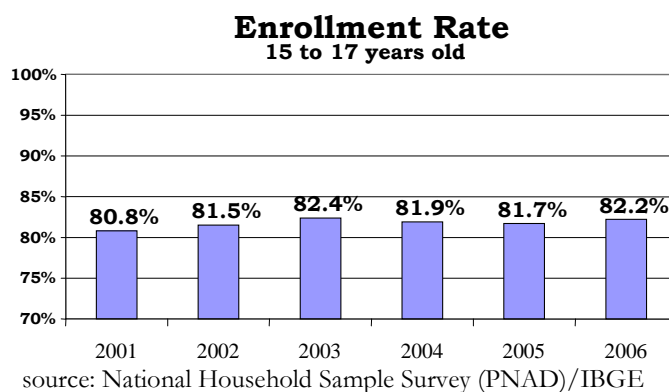
(iii) Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and to continuing education programmes.

Youth from 15 to 17 years of age

¹⁰ CF. Art. 208,§1 and 2

¹¹ CF. Art. 212

According to the 2005 PNAD, the school attendance rate of 15 to 17 year-olds increased modestly from 80.8%, in 2001, to 82.2%, in 2006, of an estimated population of 10.6 million young people, as shown in the graph below.



Nevertheless, only slightly more than half these pupils, 44.4%, were attending secondary education in 2006, a figure that fell to 22% in rural areas. Regional differences were also great, ranging from 28%, on average, in the North and North east, to 58% in the south-east. The rest were still attending primary education.

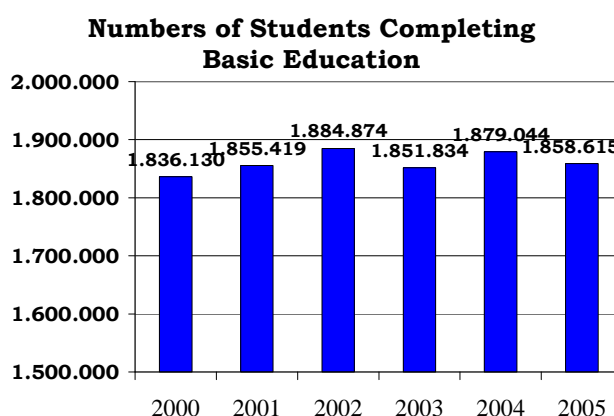
The reasons why these 17.8% in the 15-17 age group were out of school were fourfold. Firstly, we have the student's failures in primary education, represented by the high repetition and dropout rates already emphasized. Secondly, there were unfavourable socio-economic conditions, such as great economic uncertainty, which constitutes a serious barrier to building up educational capital. According to the 2005 PNAD data, 67.8% of young people between 15 and 17 came from families whose per capita income was equal to or below the minimum wage, with a striking 86% of these living in the Northeast. Thirdly, there were difficulties in access to secondary education, which is not compulsory in Brazil. According to the 2005 School Census figures, 140 municipalities did not provide regular full secondary education. The most worrying scenario pertains to arrangements for Youth and Adult Education, as part of secondary education, which did not exist in more than half the Brazilian municipalities. Fourthly and lastly, amongst other issues, there are teenage pregnancies, especially when aggravated by poor social and economic conditions. While early pregnancy only affected 1.6% of young pupils, it should be noted that 28.8% of 15 to 17 year old girls who were not in education were already mothers.

Almost all children between 7 and 14 were in school, but they began to drop out from 14 or 15 years old onwards, mainly because, due to repeating years, they fell behind. Article 208 of the Federal Constitution advocated that secondary education too should become gradually

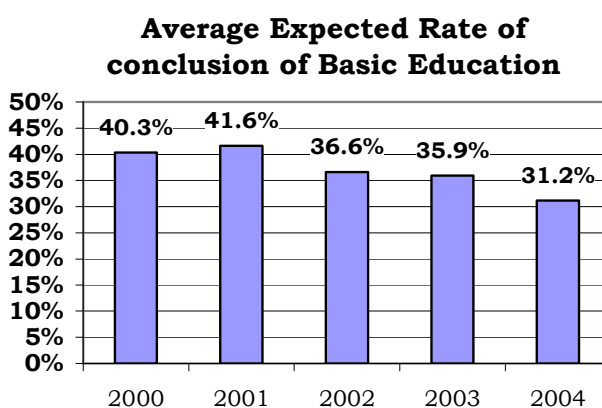
compulsory. The universal coverage of secondary education, however, requires children to move regularly up through the primary education system, in other words, getting beyond universal access to achieve universal completion.

In the meantime, gross enrolment rates show that the established capacity for provision of regular secondary education stood at 80.7% of the 15-17 years cohort, i.e. the established capacity could not meet the needs of all the contingent of 15 to 17 year-olds who should have been benefiting from this level of education. Hence, were we able to achieve a regular progression through primary education, secondary education would have to be expanded so as to meet the demand for this level in order to cater for those children who cannot progress from primary education or who have already dropped out of the system.

To see what is happening in terms of completing secondary education, which coincides with the end of basic education, we should refer to two graphs that illustrate stable numbers of pupils completing secondary education, from 2000 to 2005, and a substantial fall in the average anticipated rate of completion from 40.3% to 31.2%, from 2000 to 2004.

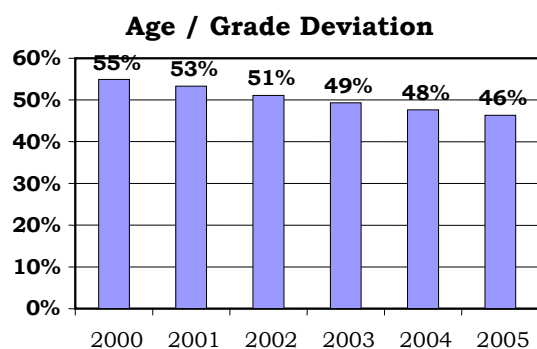


source: School Census / INEP

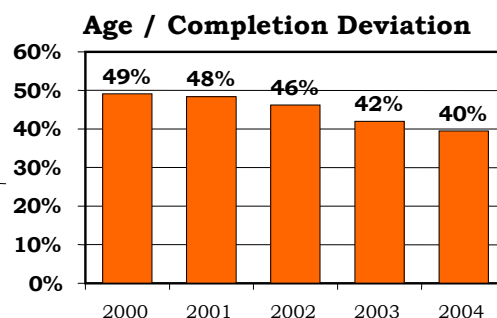


source: School Census / INEP

The age/level deviation rate for secondary education, as per data drawn from the 2005 School Census, is 46.3%, i.e. almost half of the pupils in this stage of education were older than the standard age for the level they were attending, although the figure, 55%, was higher in 2000. Close to 40% of those completing secondary education were over 17 in 2005, as compared to 49% in 2000. We can track these indicators in the graphs below, from which we conclude that the outcomes had improved, but that the figures were still too high. Only 38% of 19 year-olds had completed primary education and the numbers fell to 22% in the Northeast. This fact impinges on pupil proficiency. Through the ENEM, it has been established that pupils who complete secondary education by the age of 18, irrespective of the system, do better than those who qualify at a later age.



Source: School Census/INEP

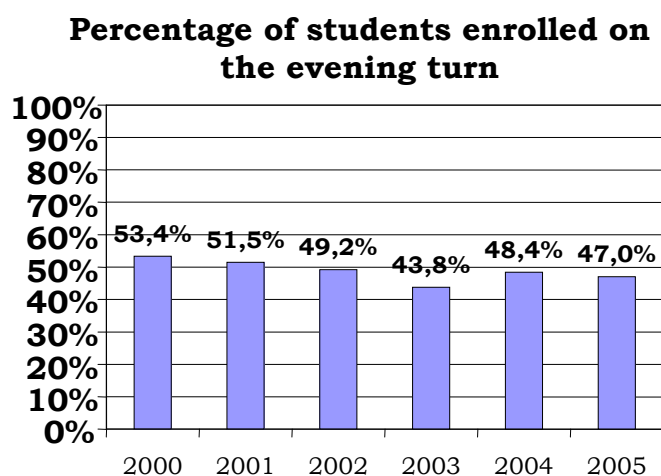


Source: School Census/INEP

The rates of school failure were also very high when one considers that although pupils spent an average of approximately 10 years in primary schooling, they successfully completed slightly more than 6.8 grades, i.e. fewer than required for compulsory education, according to the average number of years of schooling of the Brazilian population.

Worthy of note is the tremendous number of regular secondary education classes taught at night, which is typical of public education, and the way these decreased in relative terms from 2001 to 2006. While in 2001 there were 4.154 thousand pupils in the public system enrolled in evening classes and 3.129 thousand in day classes, in 2006 these figures went down to 3.747 thousand (48%) and 4.090 thousand (52%). In the private system, the percentage of evening classes fell over this period from 150 thousand (14%) to a mere 69 thousand (6%). This high concentration of public secondary education provision at night occurred in part

because, in most states, secondary education provision still uses primary education buildings, but may also reflect a response to demand on the part of pupils.



Source: School Census/ IBGE

Youth from 18 to 25

The age of 18 constitutes a clear demarcation line. Above that age the proportion of young people studying falls below those in employment, while there is a big rise in the proportion of young people who neither study nor work - 21.3% - which hints that 18 is the age of change in terms of inclusion in the labour market.

The youth unemployment rate between for those aged between 18 and 25 rose by 12.6% in 1996 to 19.4% in 2005. The trend was much less favourable than the overall unemployment rate, all of which places the matter of job creation, in general, of jobs for young people, in particular, firmly on the agenda. .

According to Sonia Rocha (2007), the growing inclusion difficulties youth encounters have to do with structural changes in the market. According to a study by Machado (2007), however, the causes of unemployment in Brazil are not mainly structural, but the decisive educational factor in employability is not predominantly structural but rather the quality of formal education as opposed to the number of training hours in specific tasks.

We all have to adapt to changes, but young people are harder hit than others: less traditional employment, i.e. a steady full-time job for life; temporary occupations with periods of idleness and unemployment; continuous changes in skills requirements that make skills obsolete rapidly, all of which calls for ongoing training and leads to non-linear professional trajectories.

Considering the contingent of 27.6 million young people between 18 and 25, we observe that 30% did not complete their primary education and, moreover, that 6.7 million (24%) had already dropped out of school. Furthermore, considering that the labour market increasingly excludes low-skilled workers, the situation of these young people can only get worse. Finally, as we know, the Brazilian labour market is becoming more specialised and increasingly rejects workers with fewer than 8 years of schooling whilst secondary education i.e. 11 years of schooling is becoming the minimum required.

Another important point is that, where young people are concerned, experience is valued even more highly than the length of education, according to Rocha (2007). Consequently, it seems advisable to provide incentives for young people, from the age of 18 in particular, to acquire work experience in parallel to their schooling as to facilitate their eventual inclusion in the labour market. In reality, it is important to create complementarities between school and work and overcome the antagonism between the two.

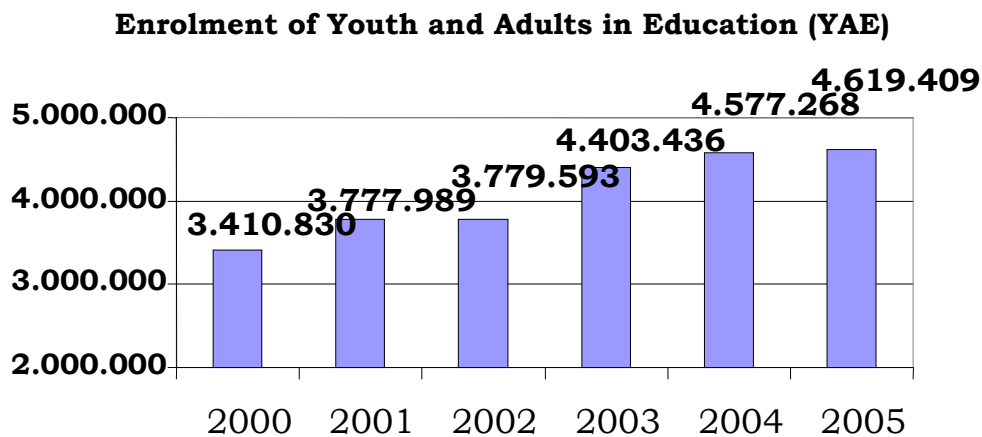
Secondary education incorporating vocational training should be promoted as an alternative to creating opportunities to acquire occupational skills, so that young people will not be irreversibly condemned to unemployment and underemployment. The differentiation factor the *Fundeb* assigned to secondary education incorporating vocational training was extremely helpful because it provides a powerful incentive for extending the scheme to the state education system.

School-support programmes, accelerated learning and youth and adult education, are also very important in recruiting for study and work individuals who, for various reasons, have been excluded or left behind by the regular education systems.

Youth and Adult Education (YAE)

The Education of Youth and Adults (*Educação de Jovens e Adultos [EJA]*) includes literacy programmes – as the beginning of the schooling process – and goes through primary and then secondary education, including the preparation for examinations whereby pupils can obtain their qualifications upon completion of their courses. Accelerated learning and vocational components are included in this programme to provide incentives to stay at school and to acquire life skills.

The numbers of pupils enrolled in YAE rose from 3.4 millions in 2000 to 4.6 millions, in 2005, i.e. a 35% increase. This trend can be seen in the graph below.



Source: School Census/INEP

Of these 4.6 millions, 3.9 million were enrolled on face to face courses and 650 thousand on face to face with a distance component or on flexible courses.

The number of YAE pupils enrolled in secondary education rose from 873,224 in 2000 to 1,223,859 in 2005, from the 5th to the 8th grade from 1,428,644 to 1,906,976, and from the 1st to the 4th grade from 843,470 to 1,488,574. The MEC only provides data for the year 2000 on the levels of learning and vocational training, which stood respectively at 20,360 and 75,253.

Accelerated Learning Programmes

Accelerated learning programmes do not feature as part of regular education but they are delivered within the regular system setting. They involve working with children who have fallen behind to enable them, in a short time, to catch up with the grade that corresponds to their age, and to complete their primary education in due time. These programmes are extremely important as they tackle one of the core problems of Brazilian education, namely high repetition rates.

Technical and Vocational Education

In the past, the conventional wisdom was that technical education offered an alternative for children who were unable to keep up with academic scores and this was always strongly connected with the socio-economic status of families. In other words, general academic-focused education was for the upper- and middle-classes while vocational and technical education was for the poor. This led to the depreciation of technical and vocational education, with the exception of a small number of specialised well-endowed institutions, such as the

federal technical schools, the *FATEC*, and the *SENAI* vocational schools as well as other entities in the “S” system. Technical and vocational education is very important as it can provide rapid practical and efficient training and help place pupils in the labour market. The experience of other countries shows that, for this type of education to be successful, it is essential that businesses take a keen direct interest in the process, in partnership with the education sector.

The so-called *Sistema S* (S-System) is conventionally used to describe the eleven professional category employer contributions system. The contributions are usually included as part of the payroll of business belonging to the corresponding categories, and are regularly levied and remitted to supervisory bodies, with a view to funding designated activities as well as improving the workers’ well being (health and leisure) and vocational refresher courses (education).

The funds raised from the S-System are passed on to entities, most of which come under private law, which are bound to use them as stipulated in the respective law of the institution. Of these entities, we should mention the National Service of Industrial Training (*Serviço Nacional de Aprendizagem Industrial [SENAI]*), National Service of Commerce Training (*Serviço Nacional de Aprendizagem do Comércio [SENAC]*), National Service of Rural Training (*Serviço Nacional de Aprendizagem Rural [SENAR]*), National Service of Rural Training (*Serviço Nacional de Aprendizagem do Transporte [SENAT]*) and National Service of Cooperatives Training (*Serviço Nacional de Aprendizagem do Cooperativismo [SESCOOP]*). All of them provide vocational and technical education and training and skills that are useful in finding a place in the labour market. Throughout the 64 years they have been in existence, they have made a substantial contribution to the vocational training and skill-building of millions of Brazilians in industry, commerce, transport agriculture and animal husbandry, the co-operative movement and entrepreneurship.

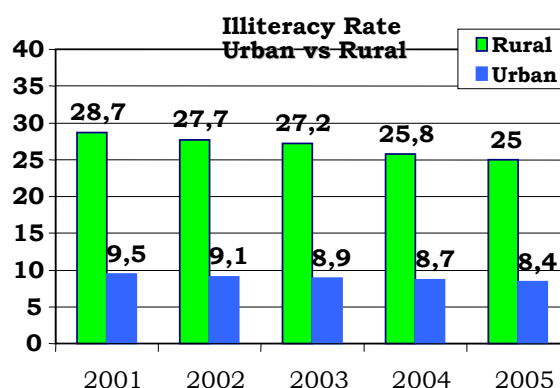
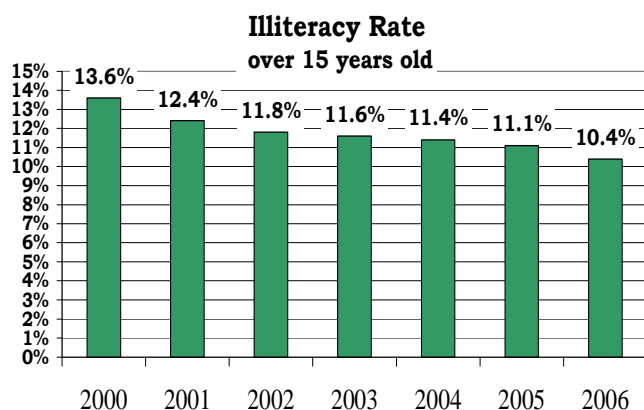
(iv) Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015 especially for women, and equitable access to primary and continuing education for all adults

For statistical purposes the IBGE considers literate “a person at least able to read and write a simple statement in the language he or she knows”. However, the concept of functional literacy is also in official use and refers to “persons who can read but are not

adequately familiar with the foundations of reading, writing and numeracy”, which in terms of numbers, covers all individuals who have not completed four school grades.

In 2000, there were 16,294,889 illiterates of 15 years and over, or 13.63% of the population. Drawing on this second criterion, which better reflects the contemporary economic and technological world, the true figure leaped to more than 27 million Brazilians.

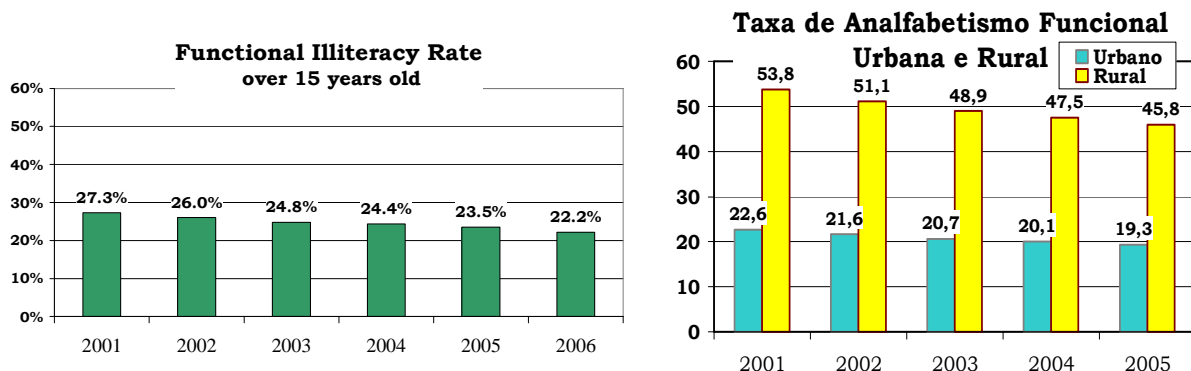
From 2000 to 2006 the illiteracy rate of 15 year-olds and over fell from 13.6% to 10.4%. To meet the Dakar goal, namely to halve this rate, we would have to attain 6.8% by 2025, which translates into an average reduction of 0.45% per annum. In other words, thus far Brazil has been set on a path of 0.53% reduction per annum, which if sustained, would enable us to attain the goal.



source: National Household Sample Survey (PNAD)/IBGE

Functional illiteracy fell from 27.3% to 22.2% from 2001 to 2006, or an annual reduction of 1.02%, slightly larger than the 0.98 annual rate required to whittle down functional illiteracy to 13.7% by 2015.

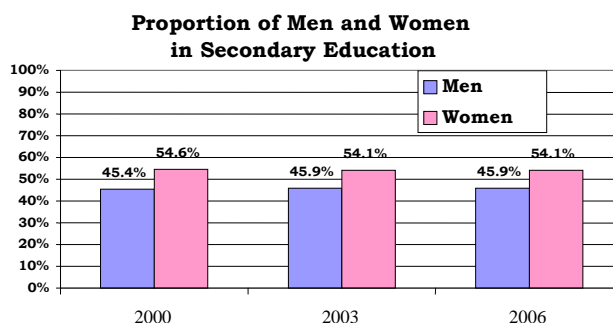
One of the major outstanding difficulties lies in the disparities between rural and urban areas; the first fell from 22.6% to 19.3% and the second from 53.8% to 45.8% from 2001 to 2005, the last date for which there is available data.



source: National Household Sample Survey (PNAD)/IBGE

(v) Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in primary education of good quality.

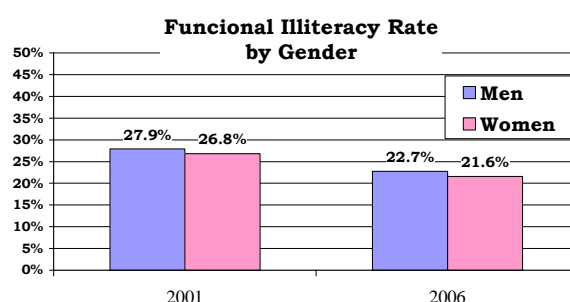
Brazil, unlike most developing countries, does not have more males than females in education, on the contrary, many of the indicators show that women have the edge on men and, above all, that gender equality prevails. In addition, this pattern remained practically unchanged from 2000 to 2005. In primary education the percentage of girls in school stood at 49% throughout the period, as well as in pre-school (varying from 49.2% to 48.8%) and in nurseries (from 48.7% to 48%). In secondary education girls predominate with percentages varying from 54.4% to 54%, during the period in question.



Source: School Census/INEP

As to illiteracy of the over fifteens in 2001, 12.3% males and 12.2% females were illiterate, and 27.9% males and 26.8% females were functionally illiterate. In 2005, these rates were reported to be 11.3% for men and 10.8% for women, and 24.1% and 23% respectively, for functional illiteracy.

Only in rural areas were there more boys than girls on the school benches, but even there, girls were catching up. In 2000, the percentage of girls was 47.1% in primary rural education showing a modest increase from 46.9%. However, the biggest surge has occurred in rural secondary education, in which her percentage went up from 44.4% to 49.9%

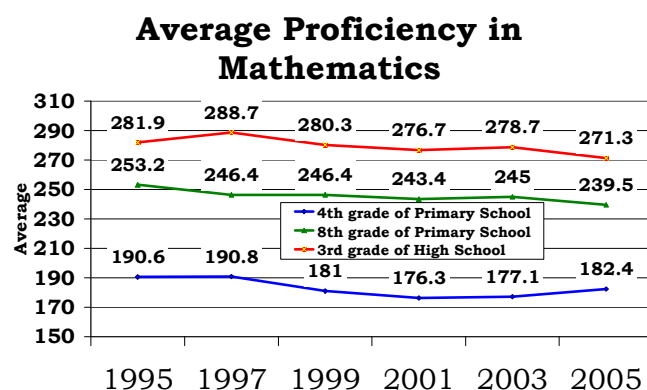


source: National Household Sample Survey (PNAD)/IBGE

(vi) Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

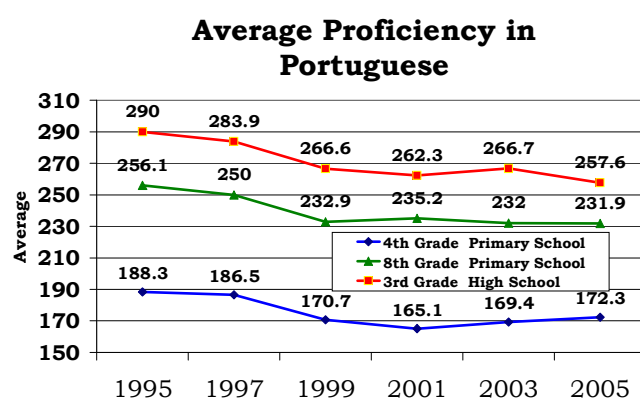
An education system is deemed to be of good quality when pupils learn and progress through the grades. We shall then analyse these two dimensions separately.

In what concerns the student's proficiency, the Basic Education Evaluation System (SAEB - which we describe in more detail in the second part) figures show that the quality of learning in Brazil has not been improving over time. The standard attained in mathematics by pupils from the 4th to the 8th grade of primary education and of 3rd (last) year of secondary education was, respectively 181, 246.4 and 280.3, in 1999 and 182.4, 239,5 and 271.3 in 2005.



source: SAEB / INEP

The standard in Portuguese was, respectively, 170.7, 232.9 and 266.6 in 1999 and 231.9, 231.9 and 257.6 in 2005. The performance since 1995 can be seen from the graph below, in which is clear a downward trend in terms of quality.

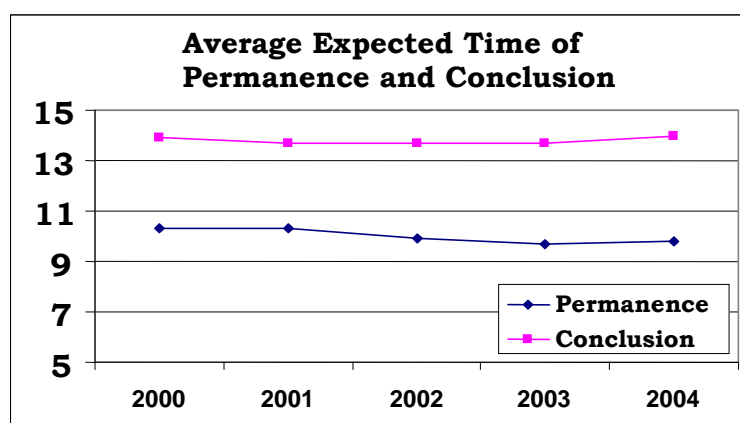


source: SAEB / INEP

It is worth remembering that satisfactory outcomes are set at: 225, 300 and 350 for mathematics and 200, 250 and 300 for the 4th and 8th grades of primary education and for the 3rd year of in secondary education, respectively.

Let us now consider the variables related to *how pupils are moving from one grade to the next and at what pace*. Almost all the progression and efficiency indicators deteriorated from 2000 to 2004, the latest year for which the MEC has these data.

The average number of grades completed fell from 8.1 to 7.4, the average time taken to complete schooling rose from 13.9 to 14 and the average anticipated retention fell from 10.3 to 9.8, mainly owing to drop-out rates. The graph below illustrates annual trends in these variables.

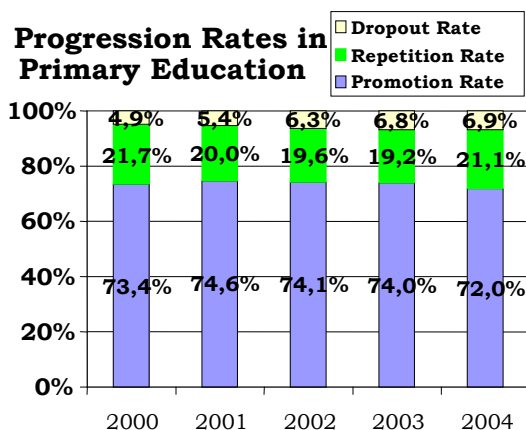


Source: School Census/INEP

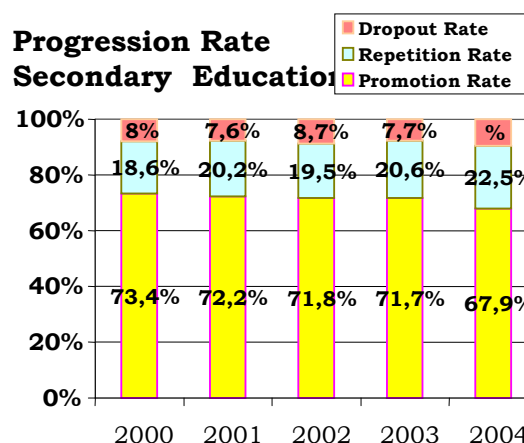
One of the few statistics that improved from 2000 to 2005 was the age/grade deviation, which fell from 41.7% to 30%, and which represents the percentage of over-aged pupils (pupils who have fallen behind). The percentage of pupils under 15 enrolled in primary education also showed an improvement from 76.5% to 83%, and the percentage of pupils under 18, from 44.3% to 52.8%. The age/completion deviation, which represents the percentage of pupils who complete a grade belatedly, rose considerably from 44.5% to 61.1% in primary education, whilst it fell from 49.1% to 39.5% in secondary education.

In terms of indicators referring to the pupils performance through the grades, we observe that secondary education passing rates went down from 75.9% in 2000 to 73.3% in 2004, while primary education passing rates improved slightly from 77.3% to 78.7%. Failure rates in both levels increased substantially, from 7.5 % to 10.7% in secondary and from 10.7% to 13% in primary education. Finally, abandon rates remained relatively steady in secondary education varying from 16.6% to 16% but fell sharply in primary education, from 12% to 8.3%. In other words, while in primary education the increase in failure rates was set off by a comparative reduction of abandon rates, in secondary education there was a rise in failure rates which was cancelled out by a fall of the same magnitude in passing rates.

With respect to indicators of progression, the most surprising finding refers to the trend of promotion rates from 2000 to 2004. We observed a remarkable growth in dropout rates, both in primary education, from 4.9% to 6.9%, and in secondary education, from 8% to 9.6%. There has also been a considerable increase in repetition rates in secondary education, from 18.6% to 22.5%, with a resulting fall in the promotion rates, from 73.4% to 67.9%. In primary education, promotion and repetition rates varied, respectively, from 73.4% to 72% and from 21.7% to 21.1%.



Source: School Census/INEP



Source: School Census/INE

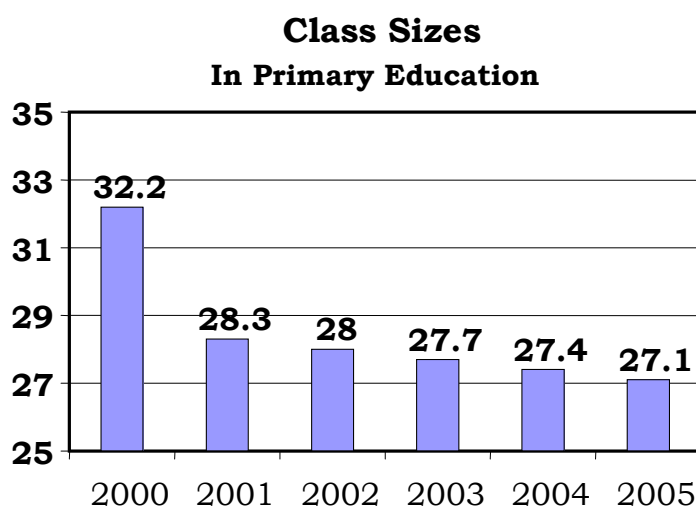
A simulation of reconstituted progression through school leads to some interesting conclusions. Simulating the promotion, repetition and dropout rates in each primary grade from 2000 to 2004, with the assumption that pupil intake occurs only at the 1st grade, shows the following results. In 2000, for 1000 pupils who entered the 1st grade, only 540 completed the course (over an average period of 10.2 years), hence involving an expenditure of 8,525 enrolments and an average of 15.8 enrolments per completing pupil. Only 81 pupils completed their education in 8 years, as would be expected from a student who does not repeat any year. A simulation of the 2004 rates shows an even worse outcome. For 1000 pupils entering the 1st grade, only 457 pupils would manage to complete primary education while, to achieve this, 8,322 enrolments would be expended and an average of 18.2 enrolments per completing pupil. Only 71 would complete their education in 8 years. This translates into an efficiency rate of 50.7% in 2000, compared with 43.9% in 2004. In other words, the waste of human and financial resources, which was already huge when the Dakar goals were signed up to, had grown further in the four years which had elapsed.

We shall now consider changes in other variables, which may also correlate with good quality education.

The number of school hours per day, which remained constant from 2000 to 2005, is very low: it stood at 4.3 hours both in primary and secondary education.

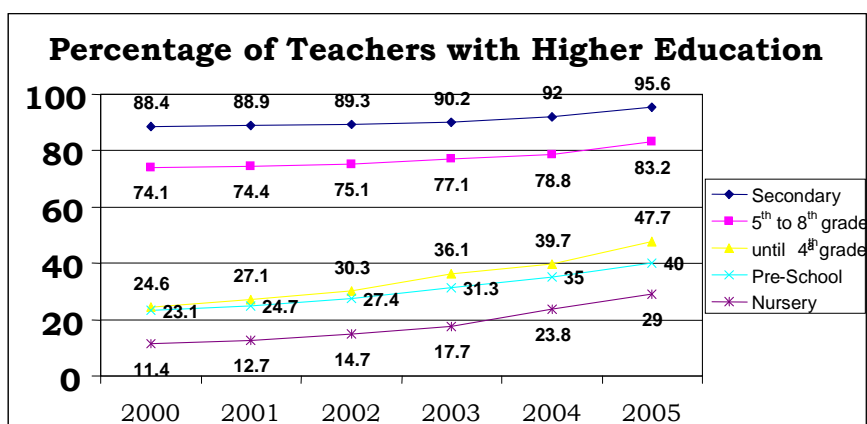
The average numbers of pupils per class has shown a big reduction in primary education, going from 32.2 in 2000 to 27.1 in 2005. This reduction was more moderate in secondary education; from 38.3 to 36.7 as can be seen in the graph below. The negative

correlation between class size and quality of education, however, is one of the more controversial issues dealt within educational literature, and the empirical evidence in the numerous studies on this topic is quite ambiguous¹².



Source: School Census/INEP

The proportion of teachers with higher education increased considerably in all levels of education from 2000 to 2005, as can be seen from the graph below. In secondary education, it increased from 88.4% to 95.6%; in primary education from the 5th to the 8th grade from 74.1% to 83.2% and from the 1st to the 4th grade from 26.4% to 47.7%, in pre-school education from 23.1% to 40% and in nurseries from 11.4% to 29%.



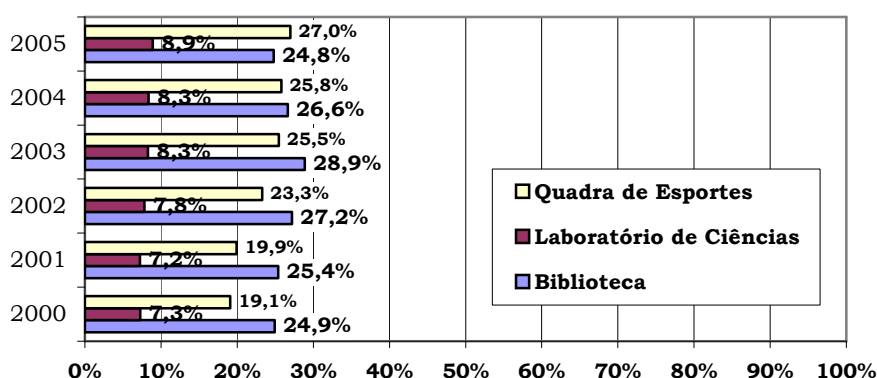
Source: School Census/INEP

¹² For a review of this literature, including Brazilian case studies see Waiselfiz (2000). See also Hanushek (1986).

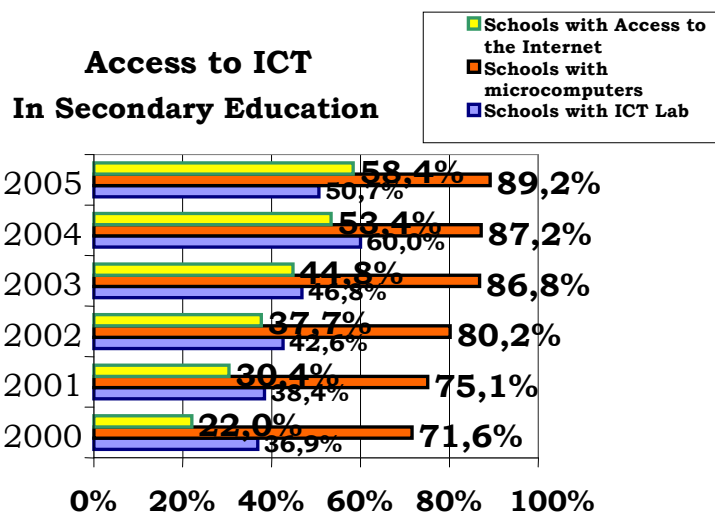
Let us now consider the status of infrastructure in schools from 2000 to 2005. We begin with the public education primary system. A very small percentage of schools (19.4% in both years) could boast libraries, those with an IT facility increased from 4.5% to 11.7%, with science laboratories from 4.8% to 5.8%, sports courts from 15.8% to 22.6%, with a TV and Video facility from 11.9% to 14.1%, with microcomputers from 16.4% to 31.7% and with Internet access from 3.9% to 14.8%. Access to electrical power became universal, increasing from 93.7% to 99.3%, connection to the sewage system went up from 79.6% to 90.1% and the number of schools with lavatories, from 83% to 91.6%. As can be seen, there has been a substantial improvement in school infrastructure, especially as regards I.T, electrical power and basic sanitation.

We now turn to the public secondary education system. The percentage of schools with libraries slumped from 78.3% to 56.2%, with I.T. facilities increased from 36.9% to 50.7%, with science laboratories remaining steady at 38%, with sports grounds going slightly up, from 70% to 72.9%, with T.V. and video facilities down from 52% to 50.2%, with microcomputers up from 71.6% to 89.2% and those with access to the Internet more than doubling, from 22% to 58.4%. Electrical power and connection to the sewage system were already universal, going up from 97.1% to 99.6% and the installation of lavatories became universal, going up from 83% to 91.6%. The findings show that secondary education, despite being much better endowed with infrastructure than primary education, has not done better in terms of evolution of indicators, with poor progress in traditional areas like libraries, sports courts and science laboratories whilst having greatly expanded I.T. and achieved almost universal electrical power and basic sanitation.

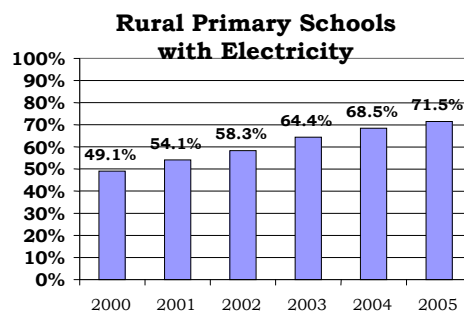
Presence of Libraries, Science Laboratories and Sports Courts



Source: School Census/INEP



Source: School Census/INEP



Source: School Census/INEP

We shall now explore a matter that relates to the interaction between quantity and quality in education, in other words, the relationship between the first five goals and the last goal, which may well shed some light on the situation and on the divergent pathways of enrolment indicators, as compared with quality education indicators.

Trends in the SAEB records show a continuing fall in pupil attainment, especially during the period from 1995 to 2001. However, this period registered a great increase in enrolment figures, i.e. many hitherto out-of-school children, or children who did not make SAEB grades, came within the evaluation net. Thanks to this, the growing expansion of the school system brought in new pupils who marginally exhibited characteristics that were inversely related to their respective educational attainments and an inferior family background. This fact, at least in part, may explain the deteriorating educational performance illustrated in the SAEB data covering that period. In other words, policies offering incentives to entice children into school and to achieve steady progression have had an impact on the

average family background of pupils being assessed under the SAEB system and Prova Brasil (Nationwide Education Survey and Examination) and thus make it difficult to compare attainments in different periods¹³.

Neri and Carvalho (2002) carried out a direct assessment of these impacts in which they sought to infer the magnitude of the composition effect found in the SAEB evolution. The procedure falls into two stages. First, they estimated an equation of education quality determinants using the SAEB data. Subsequently, they applied PNAD micro-data to the estimated equation in order to assign equivalent marks to different segments. To wit, they translated the individual, family and regional background information held on the PNAD, into equivalent marks, from which they were able to extrapolate an analysis of the group which did not respond to the SAEB test.

A comparison of the equivalent marks of those who attended school and those who did not during the 1995-2001 period shows a differential of 5.4% in favour of attendants. However, over the period there was a considerable fall in the differential from 10.4% to 5.4%. Close to one tenth of the fall in proficiency registered in the Portuguese test of 4th grade primary pupils was due to the deterioration of the group in school. The most unexpected result was that the equivalent marks of the 9 to 14 out-of-school age group rose by 3.54% as compared with 1.48% for the general population. This data, interpreted at face value, shows that of the out-of-school group, those from the worst background were most likely to find themselves on the school benches.

II Education Policies and Efforts Deployed by Stakeholders in general

2.1. Enrolment Boosting Policies - The Demand Side

Conditional Cash Transfer Policies – School Grants and Family Grants

From the second term of President Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1998-2002), social policy gradually became mainly founded on the introduction and dissemination of targeted conditional cash transfers, first with the *Bolsa-Escola* (School Grants) which, subsequently under Lula's government, were integrated and enlarged under the auspices of the *Bolsa-*

¹³ The option chosen by the OECD in the PISA has minimized this problem in that drop-out rates have remained unchanged and that a set age rather than specific school grades are used.

Familia (Family grants) scheme. These programmes are intended to fight present and future poverty, through crossed education and health subsidies for the poorest families.

The *Programa Bolsa Família (PBF)* is a direct cash transfer scheme with conditions attached and which benefit poor families (with a monthly per capita family income from R\$ 60.01 to R\$ 120.00) and extremely poor families (with a monthly per capita income below R\$ 60.00).

The conditions are that families: (i) enrol their children between 7 and 15 years old in school and achieve 85% attendance, (ii) comply with the vaccination schedule, and that (iii) pregnant women and mothers attend pre-natal and post-natal care. The financial benefits are classified in two categories, depending on family composition. The basic allowance of R\$ 60.00 is paid to families with a monthly income below R\$ 60.00 per person, irrespective of family composition. The variable portion amounts to R\$ 20.00 per child or adolescent under 15 years of age up to a financial ceiling of R\$ 60.00, or the equivalent of three children per family. Thus the allowance ranges from R\$ 20 to R\$ 120.

The *Bolsa-Escola*, initially implemented in Brasília by Cristovam Buarque, became a national programme in 2001. In practice, *Bolsa-Familia* was introduced in 2003 and resulted from the unification of the various existing social schemes, including the *Bolsa-Escola*, the Food Grants, the Gas Allowance and the Food Vouchers schemes. Nowadays, the programme caters for 11.1 million families living in all Brazilian municipalities and encompasses close to 50 million persons.

One of the advantages of this kind of scheme, according to Marcelo Neri (2005), “is its ability to use the quick effects of compensatory policies to ensure that the effects of education endure”. This is an attempt to break out of the vicious cycle of the inter-generational transmission of poverty, both providing the fish and teaching them how to fish, getting a quick and sustained return whilst simultaneously tackling the causes and consequences of poverty.

The main criticism levelled at the *Bolsa-Familia* scheme was that the focus would not be tight enough and that the social part of the bargain, mainly school attendance, would not be enforced. One of the other problems related to the incentives to attend school delivered by the *Bolsa-Familia* scheme is that it would seem to be taking coals to Newcastle. It delivered enrolment and attendance incentives to an age range where almost all the children were already enrolled in school without the aid of these programmes, while leaving out sectors which fall far short of universal schooling, i.e children from 0 to 6 years old and young people over 16.

The Portela and Cardoso study (2004) concluded that these cash transfer programmes did not have an impact on the fall of child labour rates, but did significantly and robustly boost school attendance. In other words, they improved the probability that children would attend school but did not reduce the likelihood that children would work. The results suggest that these transfers affect the way children's time is shared between school and work and diminish the incidence of children who only work and of those who neither work nor attend school, and increase the incidence of children who only attend school and of those who both attend school and work. One possible explanation is that these transfers are not big enough to constitute a disincentive to child labour.

Continuing Progression

The Continuing Progression System addresses school organisation in primary schools and is provided for in the *LDB – Leis de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional* (National Education Guidelines and Fundamentals Laws) of December 1996. It involves grouping various grades within a time period and adopting, for the grades within that period, annual progression, irrespective of the pupils' attainments. It theoretically includes significant changes over time in content and assessment and a new school practices order. It marks a move to a regime of cycles rather than the grades system, which had hitherto almost exclusively dominated public and private education in the country.

The State of São Paulo, for instance, adopted a two-cycle primary education: from the 1st to the 4th grades and from the 5th to the 8th grades, where pupils can be failed at the end of each cycle. Should it prove necessary for pupils to repeat the grade, the idea is to provide a year of special education, which would only cover the contents and skills not mastered over the four grades. Other education systems operating with at least one four-year cycle are Pará, Amapá, Rio Grande do Norte, Rio de Janeiro, Paraná and Mato Grosso do Sul - which have the four-year cycle in place in primary education - Minas Gerais and Mato Grosso - where primary education is organised in cycles but whose schools may opt for the grades system - and Ceará which, like São Paulo, has introduced cycles and continuing progression throughout primary education¹⁴. According to the MEC/INEP data, in 2002, 10.9% of Brazilian schools were delivering education organised in cycles, with the south eastern region in the lead with 37.4%.

¹⁴ Jacomini, 2002

According to Sonia Penin, “the aim of continuing progression is to avoid the deleterious consequences of repetition, both in personal and social terms, for it secures continuing learning for pupils for their eight years’ minimum compulsory schooling”. According to Penin, “empirical data demonstrate that the likelihood of a repeater failing again is 50% greater than that of a pupil who has never repeated”. The idea is that the teacher should understand the learning difficulties of a pupil or a group of pupils and develop appropriate teaching strategies. This implies a radical change in the way schools are organised as well as their teaching and evaluation methods. Furthermore, continuing progression removes the power to pass or fail pupils from teachers on to the strength of a test or at the end of a grade. “The challenge set for teachers and schools is to shift the emphasis of evaluation to less concern about averages (marks) or judgements on the pupils (pass or fail) to greater emphasis on the kind of difficulty experienced, as well as on the best ways of enabling them to learn and to revel in knowledge”. According to Luiz Carlos Freitas, the intention is to preserve the subjectivity of the pupils and the school collectivity and move away from emphasis on control and punishment”.

Franco, Lee and Satyro (2006) in weighing the pros and cons, found that a continuing progression regime is better than one based on repetition and being kept down both in terms of efficiency and equality.

However, if the continuous progression scheme is not supported by root and branch pedagogical reform and higher quality teaching, it could remove all incentives from pupils to accumulate human capital and push them to attend levels of schooling far beyond their actual abilities and the human capital embodied on them.

2.2 Quality Education Policies - The Supply Side

Fundef/Fundeb

The establishment of the *Fundo de Manutenção e Desenvolvimento do Ensino Fundamental e de Valorização do Magistério* (FUNDEF – Law No. 9424/1996) (Fund for Primary Education Administration and Development and for the Enhancement of Teachers’ Status) constitutes the instrument for effecting transfers of sub-national governments own resources to expenditure on public education from the grades 1 to 8. The *Fundef* establishes a sub-ring fencing of 15% of state and municipal resources related to ICMS, FPE, FPM and IPI

(different kinds of Brazilian taxes) for primary education, or 60% of the 25% total already constitutionally earmarked for the “administration and development of education”¹⁵

The fund drew on state resources, with each state accumulating a volume of resources that was then shared out amongst state and municipal primary schools. The resources were allocated according to the number of pupils enrolled in each municipality and in the state system. The consequences were twofold. The availability of funds now no longer depend on local financial capacity but on pupil numbers, and at the same time municipalities were encouraged to attract the highest number of children into school and the poorest municipalities were empowered to improve the quality of education. Before the *Fundef* was set up, in accordance with strict federal logic, the municipalities and states with low tax revenues were left to their own devices or had to depend on the good will of the federal government, which meant they delivered poorer quality education than neighbouring municipalities and states. In addition, municipal responsibility for primary education was promoted and this required the highest possible degree of decentralised management.

One of the problems lay in how the resources based on the numbers of pupils enrolled were transferred, as it appeared that some municipalities had been overestimating enrolment numbers for financial advantage. Municipal and state inspection councils were set up to curb this sort of behaviour.

Another important feature of the *Fundef* was that it set a minimum annual expenditure per pupil¹⁶. In states where the total amount of the funds failed to reach this minimum, the Union intervened to top up resources so that a minimum education standard was guaranteed throughout the country. This enabled the more backward states to narrow the gap between their public education systems and the others. Thus a mechanism was established which benefited those governments who, on the one hand, had a low education funding capacity and yet, on the other hand, contributed significantly to catering for primary school pupils.

Another relevant point was setting a 60% resource floor for the fund used to pay the salaries of teachers who actually taught in the classroom, which runs counter to the historic preference of governors for investment in visible things, such as schools’infra-structure, rather than in current spending. It was also stipulated that for the first five years after the fund came on stream, this 60% could be used to pay for training of unqualified teachers, thus substantially increasing the number of teachers with higher education.

¹⁵ Cf Art. 212

¹⁶ In 2001, for instance, it was set at R\$363.00.

Work by Mendes (2001) shows that the *Fundef* not only generated educational progress in all the regions of the country but that it also reduced inequalities between regions. He noted that the resource-binding exercises effectively translated into the improved quantity and quality of primary education public municipal services by increasing (i) the number of teachers' years of education, (ii) the number of school periods; (iii) the number of enrolments; (iv) the number of working teachers; and by reducing (v) the number of over-age pupils, as well as fostering municipal responsibility for education.

However, the *Fundef* was dissolved in 2006 and was replaced by the *Fundo de Manutenção e Desenvolvimento da Educação Básica e Valorização dos Profissionais de Educação* [FUNDEB] (Fund for Basic Education Administration and Development and the Enhancement of the Status of Education Professionals), which extended the Fund to include all basic education, which includes as well ECCE and secondary education. The roll out of the *Fundef* as from 1998 only contributed to the extended provision of primary education, thus leaving ECCE age children and young people who annually knock on the doors of secondary education out of the integration process. Here we had a steady increase in demand fostered by the *Fundef*'s public primary education push. This expansion was to lead to an increase in pupil numbers, up from 30.2 millions to 48.1 millions.

Other developments the *Fundeb* brought in as compared with the *Fundef* were an increase in the semi-ring fenced funds from 15% to 16.7% in year 1, 18.3% in year 2 and 20% as from year 3, in addition to the inclusion of other sources of non-specialized funding, leading to an increase in resources from R\$ 35.2 billion to R\$ 41.1 billion in year 1 R\$ 45.9 billion in year 2 and R\$ 50.7 billion as from year 3. There was also an impressive increase in the Union's contribution to the Fund, for instance, it rose from R\$314 million in 2006 to R\$ 4.5 billion from the 3rd year of its existence, making a grand total R\$ 55.2 billion from the third year, which represents an increase of 55% from the R\$ 35.5 billion recorded in 2006.

According to Chagas Fernandes, the premise on which the *Fundef* was founded is thus invalidated. It claimed that funding problems stemmed solely from the incompetent management of funds and not their paucity since, with the exception of the top up money transferred from the Union to the states, no new money had from the Union.

The *Fundeb* regulations are currently being framed in Congress. The Provisional Measure (*Medida Provisória*) 339/2006, regulating the *Fundeb*, established the *Junta de Acompanhamento dos Fundos* (Funding Supervisory Board), one of whose powers, on an annual basis, will be to determine the weighting factors applicable to the proportional distribution of funds between the 15 phases, modalities and kinds of establishments, the so

called differentiation factors. The range was given as 0.70 to 1.30, where 1 corresponds to the lower grades of urban primary education. The factors the Board determined for 2007 are 0.80 for nurseries and 0.09 for pre-school institutions; the highest value, 1.30 was ascribed to full time secondary education and to combined secondary and vocational education, and the lowest value to youth and adult education (i.e. 0.70).

Fundescola

In 1997, the Programa de Desenvolvimento da Escola [*Fundescola*] (School Development Programme) which originated in a financial agreement between the MEC and the World Bank, was set up to manage primary schools in the northern , north eastern and mid-western regions, with a view, in particular, to improving the quality of schools and the retention of children in public schools.

There have been three versions of the programme. *Fundescola I*, implemented from 1998 to 2001, only operated in 10 micro-regions in northern and mid-western regions. *Fundescola II*, in force from 1999 to 2005, encompassed 17 more micro-regions, including the north east, and reaching 4.7 million children enrolled in 13,500 schools in 247 municipalities, thus catering for 29% of pupils in the public primary education system. The schools with the highest number of poor pupils were prioritized within the most highly populated micro-regions of the three poorest regions in the country. Under *Fundescola III*, which came on stream in 2002, the *Programa de Gestão de Aprendizagem [GESTAR]* (Learning Management Programme), was implemented. It comprised various innovative teaching models, which had been developed and tested during the first two phases of the programme and one of its focuses was continuing on-the- job training for teams of teachers.

Fundescola aims, through its *Plano de Desenvolvimento da Escola [PDE]* (School Development Plan), to make schools accountable for improving the quality of education, modernizing management and strengthening the independence of schools through a strategic planning process co-ordinated by school leaders and based on participation. This decentralising strategy, intended to foster the independence of schools, operates through a fund passed on to schools and designed to stimulate the administrative staff (school heads, teachers and other specialists) to take decisions which materially affect schools and to make them accountable for the consequences of their decisions. Like the PDE, schools analyse the situation and define their strategies, goals and action plans. According to Oliveira, Fonseca and Toshi (2005), the PDE “is an instrument which will compel governments to pour money directly into schools”.

One of its main components is the *PMF, Padrões Mínimos de Funcionamento* (Minimum Operating Standards), which consists of a model to make the functional school concept operational, based on the definition of a standard with predetermined inputs on which the improved quality of education is predicated.

Schools apply to join the programme and that generates a competitive system where those who are better prepared to develop projects are then rewarded. The incentive to join lies in the fact that the development of a project of international scope bestows prestige on those who manage it, and that the funding levels are generally proportionately high for municipalities and schools.

The programme seeks to streamline the system by fostering the acquisition of management aids and tools by school staff. The main focus is on classrooms and on learning, with the development of products and strategies to overcome the main educational problems in the top priority areas. The World Bank made it a prerequisite to draw up an Appraisal Report establishing timeframes, resources, methodologies, routines and priorities.

The funding channelled through the *Fundescola*, under the auspices of the MEC, with a loan from the World Bank, diminishes, year after year, as the state's contribution gradually increases until, by the end of the project, the state will have completely taken over the PDE funding and methodology.

The programme set 5 goals to move SAEB educational attainment indicators forward by 2007: (i) increase the number the pupils passing out of primary education by 70%; (ii) increase the passing rate in primary education by 15%; (iii) increase the average passing rates in primary school to 85%; (iv) increase the proportion of 4th grade pupils with acceptable learning standards to 50%; and (v) increase the proportion of 8th grade pupils with acceptable learning standards to 60%.

The first *Fundescola* evaluation, carried out in 2001, by the World Bank, showed that almost all the goals, including enrolment rates and equipment purchasing rates as well as introducing a management model, were met.

Refresher and Incentive Programmes for Teachers

In 2005, according to the School Census, there were 2,543,194 teachers working in all levels of basic education. Most of them taught in primary schools: there were 835,386 teachers teaching in 5th to 8th grade classes, followed by 822,671 in 1st to 4th grades and 504,994 in secondary education.

Nowadays, in Brazil, there are many refresher and continuing education courses for teachers that take up considerable resources and are very popular amongst teachers. However, there is no evidence that the teachers who take these courses improve their performance in the classroom, as measured by improvements in the attainments of their pupils.

We shall describe an initiative which, although it has not been applied nationally, is worthy of attention because it offers a simple mechanism and clear rules that have a direct impact on incentives for teachers.

In 2005, the Ceará government introduced a monetary reward system for teachers whose pupils achieve the best results. The mechanism consists in paying an extra month's salary to those teachers and school heads whose schools rank highest in the annual standardized tests.

It is hoped that this monetary incentive will boost teacher commitment and thus improve the quality of teachers in the medium term. In addition, it seeks to generate competition between schools which may foster internal mechanisms leading to better results. It is also hoped that, at the same time, there will be an effort to emulate the practices adopted by the rewarded schools and an incentive to innovate, both of which should enhance school efficiency and teachers' efforts, thus improving the overall quality of education.

Two categories were set. The first rewards the schools with the best absolute attainments, to serve as a model for the others to emulate, and the other rewards schools with the greatest improvements in attainments, so as to avoid marginalizing schools which from the outset operate in poor conditions. To achieve enough visibility to serve as an incentive and attract support, it was decided to reward 7.5% of public schools. Another programme objective was to appraise quality determinants in schools, such as the average qualifications of teachers, class sizes and school participation in social projects.

Another important matter for us to address is teachers' pay, which apart from being very low has slumped in recent years, from 2002 to 2005. The national average salary of a teacher of the lower grades (1st to 4th grades) fell from R\$ 904.25 to R\$ 873.56, and in the North and Northeast the situation was even worse, with a fall from R\$ 839.70 to R\$ 610.39 and from R\$ 749.17 to R\$ 584.03, respectively. Levels of pay reflect selection and incentives as well as subjective aspects such as prestige and social respect. When teachers in a certain category see their pay reduced, they lose all incentive to work hard and efficiently and the number of people attracted into the profession decreases, both because of the loss of pay and of symbolic capital. This is precisely what has happened to the teachers in Brazil in recent years and it has not improved since the Dakar Treaty, but rather the contrary. So, we have an education system in which the average quality of teachers, who constitute the most important

educational input, is very poor, since they are unmotivated, poorly qualified and, on the average, less skilled than other professionals.

Textbook Schemes

The Ministry of Education invests significant sums of money in the purchase and distribution of school textbooks, selected by schools from a prescribed list drawn up by a specialist committee.

The *Programa Nacional de Livros Didáticos do Ensino Médio* [PNLEM] (Secondary Education Textbook National Programme) plans to distribute textbooks to all public secondary pupils nationwide. At the outset, the programme was trialled with 1.3 million pupils in grade 1 of secondary schools in the northern and north-eastern regions. By 2005, these regions had received 2.7 million Portuguese and Mathematics textbooks. FNDE Resolution No. 38, which set up the programme, determined that it would gradually supply pupils in the three secondary grades nationwide. The programme achieved universal distribution of Portuguese and Mathematics textbooks to secondary schools in 2006 and of biology textbooks in 2007. Thus, 7 million pupils in the three secondary grades in 13.2 thousand schools nationwide were served at the beginning of 2006, with the exception of Minas Gerais and Paraná school pupils and schools who have their own schemes. The 2007 PNLEM distributed 9.1 million copies to 6.9 million pupils in 15.2 thousand schools. In addition, in 2006, more than 26,268 batches of books and dictionaries for Spanish language teachers were issued.

The *Programa Nacional do Livro Didático* [PNLD] (National School Textbook Programme) aims to offer pupils and teachers in public primary schools universal free textbooks and dictionaries to support the process of teaching and learning in the classroom. This process is run in partnership with public universities who take charge of assessing textbooks in the following areas: Literature, Portuguese, Mathematics, Sciences, History, Geography and Portuguese dictionaries. At the end of the process, they draw up the Guide to School Textbooks which sets out the principles, criteria and reviews of prescribed works and evaluation sheets which provide guidance for evaluating books, and which provide an instrument to help teachers in selecting school textbooks.

There are hardly any quantitative studies which measure the impact of these schemes or assess their benefits, however, there can be no doubt that the programme is highly relevant because of the importance of school textbooks as educational inputs and the unfulfilled needs of large numbers of pupils in the public system.

Media and I.T. Access Programmes

TV Escola (School TV) is a programme of the Department of Distance Education, which belongs to the Ministry of Education, for the training and updating of basic education teachers and for enriching the teaching/learning process. School TV broadcasts 24 hours a day and has repeat broadcasts to offer various time slot options for schools to record audio-visual material. The programming is divided into five parts: ECCE, primary education, secondary education, *Salto Para o Futuro* (Leap into the Future) and *Escola Aberta* (Open School). The latter, aired on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays, shows programmes on the environment, sustainable development and health, as well as other issues of interest to the community at large, since schools have been welcoming the local community on these days. There is also the latest *DVD Escola* (School DVD), which in reality constitutes an update of *TV Escola* and introduces more technology and more democracy.

The government also supplies the *Programa Nacional de Informatica na Educação [ProInfo]* (National Programme for I.T. in Education) which promotes the use of IT as a teaching tool in public primary and secondary education.

2.3 Policies Promoting Equitable Access to Education

Policies designed to reduce Racial Inequalities

In recent years, the Federal Government has developed proactive policies intended to cater for populations of African descent and indigenous peoples¹⁷, a goal supported by the Ministry of Education. In the period from 1998 to 2005, enrolments increased most amongst black and brown populations, namely by 7% and 11.7% respectively. From 2004 to 2005, for example, the only population which experienced a fall, down by 4.7%, was white.

In 2004, the *Secretaria de Educação Continuada, Alfabetização e Diversidade [SECAD]* Secretariat for Continuing Education, Literacy and Diversity, was set up under the auspices of the Ministry of Education (MEC). The SECAD accommodates all the projects and programmes that serve these populations. Its objective is “to contribute to reducing educational inequalities through the participation of citizens, in particular youth and adults, in public policies which ensure the broadening the access to continuing education”. It also has

¹⁷ These initiatives come under the Ministry for Social Development and Combating Hunger
*

responsibility for devising political pedagogical projects intended for populations suffering from any kind of discrimination or violence.

In 2006, there were 173,341 pupils of indigenous descent in education, almost all of whom were in the state and municipal systems. While in 2000 there were 1,318 schools on indigenous lands, in 2005 this figure had risen to 2,235, corresponding to an increase of 70%. Of these 53% were located in the North and 22% in the Northeast. There were also 161,625 *quilombolas*, that is pupils enrolled in what is left of the *quilombos*¹⁸.

Policies for pupils with disabilities

The 1988 Constitution¹⁹ guarantees that people with disabilities have the right to access special needs education, preferably in regular education.

Resolution 02/01, which established the *Diretrizes Nacionais para a Educação Especial na Educação Básica* (National Guidelines for Special Education in Basic Education), provides an extremely broad definition of special needs entitlement, which is “any and every pupil who, in the course of his or her schooling, presents any need for special education be it temporary or permanent.” It provides for special teaching support to be made available in regular classes in every school: trained special needs teachers, teacher-interpreters of applicable languages and codes, support from teachers and other intra and inter-institutionally itinerant professionals; as well as other necessary mobility and communication learning aids and resource rooms²⁰. It also established requirements for special classes and schools but only in provisional or extraordinary circumstances, respectively. Hospital lessons or home teaching are reserved for cases where pupils are unable to attend school for reasons of ill health and have to be jointly arranged with the health system.

The bid to cater for special needs education pupils alongside other pupils, giving priority to joint lessons does, however, imply changes in the education system environment, in school establishments and in the practices of individual education professionals on various fronts whilst respecting their specificities. The data from the School Census shows that, in 2002²¹, of the 448,617 enrolled pupils, two thirds (338,081) attended exclusively special schools or special classes while 110,536 were taught in joint classes.

¹⁸ Quilombos were the settlements set up by fugitive negro and indigenous slaves.

¹⁹ cf 1988 Article 208, § III

²⁰ Art.8, IV and V

²¹ The School Census only holds these data up to 2002.

In the data published in the PNE/01, it can be seen that, in 1998, when data was first gathered on special education, only 48.9% of the municipalities in the country offered it. While in 1998, inclusive enrolments amounted to 15% of all enrolments in special education, in 2002 the figure amounted to 24% of the total and, in 2004, it reached 34%.

In 2006, of the 701 thousand pupils considered to be “Pupils with Special Educational Needs”, only 375,836 pupils were receiving special education, 132,548 in the public system and 243,288 in the private system. Of these 301,478 (43%) were enrolled in exclusively specialized schools and only 74,010 (10.6%) in special classes in regular schools. The remaining 325,136 (46.3%) were enrolled in regular classes. Only 14 thousand were in secondary education.

For the first time in 2006, the School Census collected data on special education, which will enable the MEC to provide pupils with more appropriate education, as was the case with the Braille textbook programme. The survey shows, for instance, that of the specialized schools or special classes in primary schools, which number 201 thousand pupils, 69.5% were in grade 1. The special needs covered in the survey are: visual, hearing, physical, mental, multiple, highly gifted, behaviourally disturbed and other classifications adopted by the schools themselves.

The trend towards high inclusion rates of special needs pupils in regular classes and the slower growth of enrolments in exclusively specialized schools or special classes has been consolidated in recent years.

Adult Literacy Programmes

Brazil has made serious efforts to promote schooling for its population and literacy for those who had no access to schooling and also those who, despite some schooling, did not achieve literacy.

The *Programa Brasil Alfabetizado* (Literate Brazil Programme) seeks to provide a route into citizenship and to promote access to education throughout life as a right for all. The programme stresses quality and a better use of the public funds invested in youth and adult education and includes: extending the literacy programme from six to eight months; a 50% increase in funds for the training of literacy teachers; setting a floor for the grants paid to literacy teachers; increasing the number of classes in sparsely populated regions and in working class suburban communities; establishing integrated programme monitoring and

evaluation; greater opportunities for youth and adults to continue their schooling, thanks to a rise from 42% to 68% in the funds earmarked for that purpose by states and municipalities.

The efforts to offer educational opportunities to illiterate adults, through the *Programa Brasil Alfabetizado* have, however, achieved modest results thus far. Those who are completely illiterate, who cannot read a sentence or write their names, are mostly old and poor and live in rural areas in the north-eastern states, and their numbers are steadily falling naturally as the years go by. Experience shows that even when people with these characteristics manage to learn to read and write thanks to campaigns or special courses, they often revert to their previous status, because they failed to acquire fluency and lacked opportunities for use and practice. To attain a sustainable reduction in adult illiteracy, it is essential that the country cease to produce illiterates. Finally, the data tells us that almost a third of illiterates have had some schooling. The investment intended to reduce adult illiteracy is high, because literacy can bring profound changes to lives, but it is clearly not a priority action area, as compared with the much more widespread issue of functional literacy which exists within formal education systems.

2.4 Efforts to Evaluate and Measure the Pupil Attainments

SAEB

The *Sistema Nacional de Avaliação da Educação Básica* (SAEB) (the National Basic Education Evaluation System) gathers data on the academic attainments of Brazilian school children by having them sit a Portuguese and mathematics examination and having pupils, teachers and school heads fill in questionnaires.

It was first introduced nationwide in 1990, but a concerted effort to ensure comparability between different years only came in from 1995 when the TRI (Item Response Theory) was introduced making it possible to draw up historical series of evaluation results.

It comprises a random sample of approximately 200 thousand pupils who are representative of the reference population, made up of Brazilian school children who attend grades 4 and 5 in primary education and grade 3 in secondary education in the regular system, across all the establishments in the Federation.

Prova Brasil (Nationwide Education Survey)

The *Prova Brasil* (Nationwide Education Survey) was devised to generate information on the education supplied individually per municipality and per school with a view to

assisting governors and managers in their decision making and in the allocation of technical and financial resources, as well as the school community in setting goals and in taking pedagogical and administrative action, to improve the quality of education.

So far, it has only taken place once, in November 2005. Its main feature was probably the quasi universality of the evaluation, as it encompassed all the pupils enrolled in public urban schools with more than 30 pupils enrolled in the grades under evaluation. *Prova Brasil* was conducted in 5.398 municipalities in all the establishments in the Federation and involved 3.306.378 pupils attending primary school grades 4 to 8 ranging over 122.463 classes in 40.920 schools. It will be conducted again in 2007.

As was the case with SAEB, Portuguese (with emphasis on reading) and mathematics examinations were held. The questions were drawn from those used in the curricula of the grades assessed in all the establishments in the Federation and also from the recommendations of the National Curricula Parametres. In addition to the examinations, children responded to a questionnaire on the social, economic and cultural context.

ENEM

The *Exame Nacional do Ensino Médio* [ENEM] (the National Secondary Education Examination) was introduced in 1998 to be taken, on a voluntary basis, by students completing this level of schooling. Held annually, its main aim is to evaluate the pupils' attainments at the end of their basic education, to gauge the development of the basic skills compatible with this phase of education and with the full exercise of citizenship.

Enem also has the following aims: (i) offer a benchmark whereby each citizen can make his own self-evaluation with a view to future choices in terms of employment and continuing studies; (ii) create a structured evaluation on completion of basic education and provide an alternative to or complement the selection processes of the various labour market sectors; (iii) create a structured evaluation on completion of basic education and provide an alternative to or complement the entrance examinations to post-secondary vocational courses and higher education; (iv) enable participation in and create access to government schemes.

The design of the examination is based on a skills and abilities matrix related to primary and secondary education contents which apply to the cognitive development of pupils coming to the end of their basic schooling. The *ENEM* comprises a single paper containing 63 multiple choice questions and an essay topic.

These examinations can provide local information of great interest both to the authorities managing the education system and help individuals take decisions on their education as well as elicit society's enthusiasm for the cause of education.

2.5 Legal Framework

The main legal and institutional initiative taken after Dakar, apart from the introduction of the various programmes described above, like the Fundef, was the *Plano Nacional de Educação* (National Education Plan) – Law 10.172, 2001 (PNE/01).

The PNE's first guideline for primary education lays down "universal provision to all primary education clientele within a period of five years from the adoption of this plan , whilst ensuring access to and retention of all children in school and establishing in regions, where necessary, specific programmes in cooperation with the Union, states and municipalities. It further stipulates "the exclusion from school of children of school age, be it through the negligence of the public authorities, or through failure on the part of families or society, is the most perverse and irremediable form of social exclusion since it denies an elementary right of citizens and reproduces the cycle of poverty and marginality and deprives millions of Brazilians of any future prospects (...)is surprising and unacceptable that there are still children out of school".

Another National Education Plan guideline recommends school independence, by decentralising education funding, administration and auditing of financial resources. Each education system was to implement a so-called democratic management, based on the shared responsibility of the Union, states and municipalities, through cooperative arrangements with national and local planning fora, education boards and the participation of the education community and families in decisions affecting schools. The Plan deems that the political pedagogical project (PPP), which educational institutions have to draw up, is an essential element in management and school independence. The PPP seeks to foster knowledge built up by the schools themselves rather than turn to contributions from outside specialists. In other words, the PNE is the benchmark document Brazilian states and municipalities can use to formulate their own education plans.

2.6 NGO and private sector initiatives

Education for All Commitment

In September 2005, representatives of private initiative, educators, economists, communicators and public education managers decided to start meeting together to discuss ways and means of making the right to a *quality* public education in Brazil. This led to the “All for Education Commitment”, a rare and precious conjugation of proposals in favour of a joint agenda rising above class, corporate and party political interests.

The main aim is, by 2022, the bi-centenary of the Independence of Brazil, that all children and young people will have access to basic education of good quality, to prepare them for the challenges of the twenty first century. Hence, 5 goals to met by 2022 were set: (i) 98% of all children and young people between 4 and 17 will be in education; (ii) all children will be able to read and write by the age of 8; (iii) at least 60% of pupils will acquire the knowledge corresponding to their grade; (iv) 80% of 16 year-olds will complete primary education and 70% of 19 year-olds will complete secondary education; (v) public investment in education will reach 5% of the GDP by 2011 and be kept at that level until 2022.

Bradesco Foundation

The Bradesco Foundation had trained close to 694 thousand students by 2006, 148 thousand of these were enrolled in primary and secondary education, 5 thousand were attending technical school and 546 thousand were in adult and in foundation or continuing worker education.

The annual progression through school in 2006 stood at 50 thousand pupils, including ECCE, primary, secondary and technical education, plus more than 21 thousand in adult education and a further 36 thousand in foundation and continuing education, making a grand total of 108 thousand pupils.

Bradesco Foundation schools are located in fairly poor communities and are equipped with classrooms, libraries and laboratories. Furthermore, free medical and dental care is made available to students as are learning materials, uniforms and lunch.

GIFE

The GIFE – *Grupo de Institutos, Fundações e Empresas* (The Institutes, Foundations and Businesses Group) is an association that brings together private entities which fund or implement social, environmental and cultural projects in the public interest. It has 83 member

institutions of which 17 are businesses, 34 private law foundations and 32 non-profit making civil associations. It operates on a total budget of almost one billion reais and has 2.200 projects currently being implemented, many of them in education. According to the 2005/6 GIFE Census, the first to be carried out, of the 68 institutions who responded on their activities, 55 executed or funded projects related to education. Of these, 26 executed their own projects, 13 funded third party projects and 16 did both. Of the total, 34 indicated the value of their investments in education, which amounted to almost 124 million reales in 2005²², and which served 1037 entities and 4 million people including 2 millions in regular primary education.

The main activity is teacher training, followed by direct activities intended to support children with learning difficulties. Next come activities to supplement regular education, such as art workshops and extra tuition. There are also cash transfers in the form of study grants and donations of school equipment and materials, as well as school head and administrative staff training.

Pupils in regular primary education are targeted, followed by secondary pupils, with less focus on other educational activities. Of the remaining groups and sectors catered for, the greatest priority goes to adult and youth education and to accelerated learning, with less attention on technical/vocational education and ECCE.

Various institutions concentrate their efforts on supporting individuals and families through study grants and support for extra tuition and they attempt to foster quality through the use of a range of reward schemes. A number of members use the distribution of rewards as an instrument for motivating high attainment in schools amongst pupils and teachers, which they extend to journalists, civil society organisations and other individuals and entities which have a stake in education. The importance of rewards lies in the way they help establish standards of good practice and disseminate these standards amongst the population, thus creating a healthy atmosphere of emulation amongst participants.

Social Policies Centre – Getúlio Vargas Foundation

The *Centro de Políticas Sociais* [CPS] (Social Policies Centre) is a research and extension centre which seeks to establish closer links between applied research and the implementation of public policies pertaining to social issues with education as one of its main focuses. Recently, it held a seminar entitled Qualidade da Educação (Quality of Education) which brought together major national and international experts like Eric Hanushek, and also

²² Total investment is estimated to be at least double this figure.

a seminar on [*Educação na Primeira Infância*](#) (Early Childhood Care and Education) in the presence of James Heckman and the Ministers of Education and Social Development. More recently, the CPS held a debate on the *Plano de Desenvolvimento Educacional (PDE)* (Education Development Plan)

On all these occasions CPS research on these issues was put in train, details of which can be found at:

- (i) <http://www4.fgv.br/cps/simulador/infantil/index.htm>,
- (ii) <http://www4.fgv.br/cps/simulador/quali2/index.htm>,
- (iii) <http://www4.fgv.br/cps/simulador/site%5Fcps%5Feducacao/>,

This latter research site also exists in English at: http://www4.fgv.br/cps/simulador/site%5Fcps%5Feducacao/Site_Quali_BF_ING/index.htm.

Generally speaking, the CPS seeks to set standards in different areas of education with a view to mobilizing governments and society in the cause of education by organising events, disseminating research, videos, texts and data banks to a broad and diversified public.

2.7 Recently announced education policies – The Education Development Plan

The “*PAC Educacional*” recently announced by the Federal Government in March 2007, the *Plano de Desenvolvimento Educational [PDE]* (Education Development Plan), places the issue of basic education at the centre of public debate and public action²³

According to the Minister of Education, Fernando Haddad, the package contains: a series of guidelines on what needs to be done to improve the quality of education in the country; a series of goals which establish a minimum acceptable standard for each city and, finally, a series of technologies, i.e. of action and equipment needed to put the guidelines into practice.

The main innovation lies in the creation of a new education quality indicator, the Ideb (Basic Education Development Index), calculated using failure and drop-out rates and the results of *Prova Brasil* in each Brazilian municipality and which will serve as a basis for part of the federal transfers to municipalities for educational purposes. The government will then set the goals and the release of funds will be contingent upon the municipalities adopting the

²³ For a discussion on the merits of some of the items in the package in terms of the educational challenges and deficiencies of the country see http://www4.fgv.br/cps/simulador/Site_Quali_BF/ for an expert seminar at the FGV.

prescribed measures and improving the municipal rating of the new indicator. The thousand municipalities with the poorest performance, according to Ideb, will be given additional resources, while the remainder will only get technical support. Joining the scheme is optional for there is no onus on prefects to join the programme. Those who do so will have to adopt an action package, under the direct guidance of government experts.

Another highly relevant point relating to this package is the extension of the Family Grant to 15 to 17 year-olds. Henceforth, the young person will be paid the grant directly and, in exchange, will have to attend school. Such a measure may well prove to be very important in achieving universal completion of primary education, and , subsequently, in achieving universal secondary education.

Two measures will be adopted to boost the fight against illiteracy. The first will be the launch of *Provinha Brasil*, which will assess the degree of literacy of 6 to 8 year-olds. The Ministry of Education will make it incumbent on prefectures to ensure that children are literate by the age of 8, that they reach grade 4 standard by the age of 10, and that schools offer individual support to pupils and thus combat the drop-out phenomenon on a case by case basis. The second measure will be to recast the *Programa Brasil Alfabetizado* (Literate Brazil Programme).

Another significant measure is the introduction of a national salary base for teachers, initially set at R\$800²⁴

Several of the new measures announced relate to educational infrastructures and inputs. The main ones are to: (i) authorize the purchase of 75.8 micro-computers and 7.58 thousand printers for the National I.T. in Education Programme, the aim being that all secondary schools should have an I.T. facility by 2007; (ii) extend the coverage of TV Escola (School T.V.) and authorize the recording and distribution of 3.78 million media DVDs made up of 75.6 thousand kits, each with 50 DVDs, known as the School DVD Programme; (iii) ensure universal supply of electric power to rural areas; (iv) distribute history, physics and chemistry textbooks for secondary schooling, to follow up on the PNLEM; and (v) provide funds for the prefectures to purchase 5 thousand school buses per year.

Other package objectives are: clear rules for the appointment and dismissal of directors in order to reduce political interference; increased school hours, making use of parks as open spaces and of cultural centres; the implementation of the *Saúde da Família* (Family

²⁴ It is important to realize that more than half are paid less.

health) programme in schools; the extension of interest-free or low interest student funding (FIES) depending on the course; and other measures..

According to the minister, the educational package currently under preparation will gradually increase the annual investment in the education sector and it may well reach 8 billion within a few years. The financial programming decree of February 2007, set the expenditure of this dossier at R\$22.4 billion counting both federal funding and state and municipal counterpart funds. If this increase actually materializes, the level of investment would reach 5% of GDP.

Conclusions

This report analyses the current situation of Brazil in terms of compliance with the Dakar goals, changes to the main indicators since the signing of the *Compromisso Educação para Todos* (Education for All Commitment) including the most recent data for which data bases are available, and the efforts deployed in this connection.

With regard to the goal (i), we find a substantial expansion of early childhood care and education both in terms of the number of establishments and enrolments. However, the quality of the care and the infrastructure of nurseries and pre-school establishments is still very deficient, to such an extent that, in most cases, in truth they provide a place where mothers can have their children minded while they are out at work, instead of an educational space. While, where the highest income bracket families are concerned, pre-school access is practically universal, the disadvantaged have difficulties in gaining access to ECCE and, in particular, to nurseries.

Concerning goal (ii), which refers to primary education, we note that access was already almost universal when the Dakar commitment was made. However, it is far from being available to everyone and, in addition, the situation is deteriorating, partly owing to changes in the age pyramid, but chiefly owing to the very high repetition and dropout rates. If this goal is not achieved, it will become impossible to achieve universal secondary education.

Relating to goal (iii), pertaining to youth and adults, we have bad news and good news. Over-aged attendance fell substantially over the period, and youth and adult enrolments in education rose. Enrolment at the age range between 15 and 17 remained stagnant at approximately 80%, a relatively high figure, but one which nevertheless attests that the country is falling short of universality in this phase. In other words, the change forecast for

that goal did not occur. Furthermore, should we achieve an expansion in complete primary education, there will be the need to increase the installed capacity of secondary education to absorb the larger contingent of pupils. There are also great disparities in access to secondary education amongst the various regions and the different socio-economic levels. There has also been slump in expected average rate of completion, i.e. not only are we failing to meet the goal but we have regressed in several dimensions.

Goal (iv), which aims to achieve a 50 per cent improvement in illiteracy, is being met. Both as regards proper and functional illiteracy, the trend has been steadily downward, thus, provided the pace is maintained, Brazil will meet the goal by 2015.

Goal (v) involves eliminating gender discrimination on the education market, which is not an issue in Brazil, as women have a slight advantage or at least equality with men according to most of the indicators.

Goal (vi), in turn, has to do with the quality of education and is indubitably the most relevant and challenging one for Brazil. Pupil proficiency, as measured by the SAEB, has gradually deteriorated, or at best has remained stable and this is quite serious in the light of our low starting point in terms of the quality of education. In addition, the following indicators deteriorated over the period: there was a fall from 8.1 to 7.4 in the average number of completed primary education grades; an increase from 13.9 to 14 in the average expected years of completion of basic education; a reduction from 10.3 to 9.8 in the average expected permanence years; an increase in repetition rates from 18.6% to 22.5% in secondary education; and an increase in dropout rates from 4.9% to 6.9% in primary education and from 8% to 9.6% in secondary education, just to mention a few indicators. In other words, practically all the progression figures show a decline. Practically all the indicators which recorded improvements were precisely those whose importance in the quality of education is controversial, to wit, the proportion of teachers with higher education, class sizes and the degree of computerisation of schools, as well as some infra-structure variables, such as the proportion of public schools with electrical power and basic sanitation, which are in turn very relevant ones.

As we can gauge from an analysis of the above-mentioned indicators, the quality of public education in the country, in almost all its dimensions, is very bad, which itself favours dropping out and repetition, the latter also leading to further dropping out. And even those pupils who persevere to the end do not build up the human capital consistent with the level of instruction reached and sufficient to measure up to the needs of the labour market, in an open economy featuring growing competitiveness, which requires an ever more skilled labour force.

In other words, we are faced with a big vicious circle, mainly engendered by the low quality of education. Or, in other words, according to Julio Waiselfiz (2003), “There is a strong connection between dropping out of school, poor attendance, repetition, the quality of education provided, equality of access to knowledge and to socially accumulated knowledge and the living conditions of the population, so much so that they strengthen and consolidate one another”.

A simulation of reconstituted progression through school, that can be used to analyse the efficiency in the use of enrolments compared with an ideal zero repetition and dropout situation, points to waste of 56.1% in 2004, which became is even higher than the 49.3% in 2000. That is to say that students remain in the system beyond the prescribed age and beyond the time necessary for the completion of primary education. They are fed up with the idea of repeating a year or they feel that they are not making any progress or learning anything and they drop-out, and this diminishes the resources available to pupils who progress normally in accordance with their age. This situation entails a duplication of investments in an area where funding is short and where there is a huge waste of resources, which could be ploughed back into the system to improve the quality of education.

Hence it is necessary to undertake a root and branch reform to improve the quality of education, which has necessarily to involve greater investment in infrastructure, a rise in teacher's wages, a rewriting of the curricula and greater accountability on the part of education managers.

The educational process happens in two complementary places: inside and outside the classroom. It is no use a pupil spending four hours a day in a high quality school if he is forced to work the rest of the time, and it is no use a pupil devoting all his time to schoolwork if the quality of education is so low that it does not lead to the building of human capital. Hence, efforts have to be made on both fronts. A structure has to be delivered that will mean that disadvantaged pupils no longer need to work to survive, either by giving them a large grant or providing full-time schooling, and, at the same time, investing in educational inputs, like quality and teachers pay, infra-structure, school and curriculum management inter alia.

While the return on private education is very high, the electoral gains from investing in education are very low, and this no doubt is one of the reasons for our serious educational deficiencies. One of the difficulties in attracting investment into education is the long period to maturation, which contrasts with the length of government terms in office. Another difficulty in education policies is that they chiefly address a population below voting age. According to Neri (2001), 45% of children who fall below the poverty line, are also below the

voting age line, while they account for 30% of the overall population. Neri (2006) demonstrates the existence of political business cycles pertaining to income transfers which increase in election years for persons of voting age. Buchmann (2005) found a negative correlation between education spending and the probability of re-election, which suggests that politicians do not derive any political capital from higher investment in education, which may even be reduced. We had an example of this political difficulty with education issues in the last presidential elections, when the candidate Cristovam Buarque, whose platform was totally based on education, a sort of samba on one note (*samba de uma nota só*), polled only 2.7% of the votes.

If we were to sum up the main issues pursued in devising innovative social schemes – that is, what is IN in public policies - we would come up with: early childhood, information and incentives²⁵. Firstly, it is fair to say that countries and parents who take care of their children, from their early infancy, make their futures more secure. From the social (and taxation) point of view, in the end prevention, read investment, is better than cure. The new government plan embodies this in that it favours basic education over higher education, the latter having been the preferred phase of education for a long time. Secondly, the dissemination of information on the personal and social benefits investments in education bring is key to mobilizing society in favour of the cause of education, and hence to making changes in the quality of education through the political process. Education constitutes both the real social opportunity cost and the investment alternative with the highest available social return. And finally, incentive mechanisms should be created for all who are part of the educational process. Pupils must have incentives to go to school and make efforts outside the classroom, and be rewarded in some way for their attainments; teachers need incentives to be motivated, acquire qualifications, make efforts, and talented individuals need encouragement to choose a teaching career, all of which can only be achieved through better working conditions; politicians need incentives to invest in education in a more efficient way, and for this we must move away from the expenditure-linked model and the irrelevance of school attainment to the distribution of public funds; and managers in general must have incentives to do their homework properly and be made accountable in concrete ways for their actions.

The PDE implementing a target-based system in Brazil happens in a moment when different actors are converging around the need to determine educational targets as the basis of educational policies. Besides, a very important umbrella NGO involving many relevant

²⁵ Similarly, what is OUT in public policies also begin with in: inefficiency and iniquity.

actors of civil society, named *Compromisso Todos pela Educação* (All for Education Commitment) also set five targets to be reached by 2022, when the country completes two centuries of its political independence. Fostering a culture of educational targets guiding the educational policy, which stems at the same time from an International Organization as UNESCO - with the *Education for All Commitment* signed by the Brazilian government - the federal government itself, and representative actors from civil society, holds the promise of motivating all the stakeholders from young pupils to mothers, from mayors to governors, and offers an exceptional opportunity to step up and co-ordinate efforts so as to achieve concrete results in the direction of providing high-quality education for all.

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