Education reform in the Education Guarantee Scheme in Madhya Pradesh, India and the Fundescola Program in Brazil[1]

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March 2003

Education has consistently played an important role within the Banks' poverty alleviation program beginning in the Mcnamara era in the 60s and lending in education has steadily increased over the last 40 years. The earlier preoccupation with physical infrastructure, technical and vocational education, though, is now replaced by concerted emphasis on basic education and its links to empowerment and economic development. Similarly, the role and approach to education and its connections with "development" is seen to evolve over the years in the World Development Reports. The 1980 report highlights the individual rates of return as a result of schooling and in the 1990s, the importance of education is seen as human resource development, thus influencing productivity. Reference is also made in the latter to the positive impact of education on child mortality and reductions in fertility rates. More recently, (WDR 98/99) the significance of education to the knowledge economy is also developed. The expansion of the definition of development to include both economic stability and for the poor to have "the freedom to organize and manage their lives (Sen, 1999, p.4) coupled with the recent publications focusing on the lives of the poor (WDR 2000/2001 and Voices of the Poor) have highlighted the implications of education not just in terms of rates of return, human resource development and productivity but also in terms of providing voice and empowerment especially to the poor.[2] Universal basic education is now upheld in the Millennium Development Goals as a target to be achieved within the next few decades.

The initiatives to achieve universal basic education, consisting of eight years of good quality primary schooling, in developing countries, has evolved over the years. The earlier, concentration was on building infrastructure based on the assumption that once there is enough space, parents would send their children to school and children would attend regularly and learn. Adequate infrastructure, however, was not sufficient to ensure that good quality education is provided to the poor, neither did parents see education as an intrinsic good. So the focus shifted to factors that could improve school quality. According to the WDR 2004, three dimensions are now seen as critical for improving schools and guaranteeing universal primary education. The first dimension is the setting in place of a policy environment that would enable and facilitate interventions to improve school quality. Here, the policy maker develops the set of rules and related institutional reform that will govern the provision of services in order to achieve the intended outcomes. The second dimension is the implementation of policy represented in the targeted, effective and timely provision of facilities and services. In this case, the provider would ensure that the services are made available and functioning adequately. A

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[1] The author would like to thank Amita Sharma in MP and Robin Horn and Antonio Augusto, Antonio Carlos Xavier, Monica Giagio working on Brazil for their support in the writing of this paper and for sharing their experience and thoughts of the programs in India and Brazil respectively.

[2] This sets the stage for the areas developed in the 2004 WDR namely health, water, and education. While education is dealt with in detail in the 1980, 1990 and 98/99 Reports, the 2004 World Development Report in fact would be the first of its series to devote a whole chapter to education.

third important dimension is the beneficiary constituting the citizen who demands proper service and also shares in and is committed to the vision of good quality primary education. and is responsible for monitoring the service provided to some extent.[3] This three-fold schema is appropriate for examining educational reform programs as it captures the main dimensions of the effective delivery of educational services critical to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals for education.

Two relatively successful education programs that have been introduced recently in two countries namely India and in Brazil respectively will be examined keeping in mind the threefold framework described above. The two programs are the Education Guarantee Scheme in Madhya Pradesh in India and the Fundescola program in Brazil. The State Government of Madhya Pradesh (GOMP) in India introduced the Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) in January 1997. The central pillar of the EGS is the community and local government and its objectives are to improve participation and school quality in the state. The EGS scheme allows communities living in remote areas and difficult to reach students (such as migrant students, working children etc) without a school close by to demand a primary school. The community contributes the physical facilities of the school while the GOMP is required to provide the remuneration for the teacher chosen by the community. The Panchayat or local governing body appoints teachers in this program and the Village Education Committee (VEC) is involved with school administration. The Madhya Pradesh EGS won the first Commonwealth International Innovation Award for the best international innovation in improving the public service through public/private sector partnership in 1998.

The Fundescola program in Brazil is a federal program working mainly through the state and municipal mechanisms with the objective of improve school quality. The program of the Government of Brazil is divided into three phases, beginning in June 1998. The central pillar of Fundescola is the provision of technical assistance and ensuring that service work. The focus of the most recent phase includes three components: the raising of schools to minimum operational standards by providing infrastructure, extra reading materials and facilitating efficient use of space. Second, establishing a process of school development planning that is strategic focusing on improving teaching and learning. Third, the project includes the institutional development of education secretariats, promotes school autonomy and sets in place a system of monitoring and research.

An introductory note is needed here to the contextual nuances of Brazil and India and Fundescola and EGS respectively. Both countries share a colonial past (though Brazil has enjoyed a longer period of independence) and a similar government structure namely a federal republic. Table 1 summarizes the main indicators for both countries. While Brazil's per capita income is higher, growth is lower and inflation higher than India. Interestingly, there is significant difference between the index for the distribution of family income for both countries, Brazil is 59.1 and India is 37.8. Infant mortality rates in

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[3] The donor who works with the policy maker, provider and citizen will not be considered in this study since the donors were not involved uniformly in both reform programs. While the World Bank is involved with the Fundescola program in Brazil, the EGS scheme, though conceptualised within the District Primary Education Project supported by donors, the Government of Madhya Pradesh established the scheme.

Brazil are much lower than India. With regards to education Brazil portrays an improved picture. It is useful here to briefly discuss the existing social structure in both countries, which would highlight the communities who are disadvantaged. India is defined by a social structure represented by the fourfold caste structure, which includes very broadly, the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas and the Shudras. Shudras are referred to as Other Backward Castes (OBCs). Outside of the fourfold structure made up of what will be referred to in this paper as the "Caste" community are the Scheduled Caste (SC) also known by the term Dalits (meaning "broken") which this community has claimed for themselves. India also has a tribal population and they are referred to as the Schedule Tribe (ST). SC and ST populations in the 2001 census constitute 16 and 8 percent of the population respectively. Brazil in descending order of disadvantage consists of four racial groups namely Asian, White, Mixed, Black and Indigenous. The population representing these different groups is not available but the blacks and indigenous people would be classified as disadvantaged groups.

Table 1: India and Brazil on significant indicators

	INDIA (1947)	BRAZIL (1822
Population	10458451226 (MP:66181170)	76029560
Population growth rate	1.51	.87
Birth rate	23.79	18.08
Death rate	8.62	9.32
Sex ratio	1.7	.97
Infant mortality rate	61.47	35.87
Life expectancy	62.23	63.55
No. of states	28 +7 union territories	26 +1 federal district
Social groups	Religious, state and caste based	Race based
% rural population	76%	23%
GDP (purchasing power)	$2.5 trillion	$1.34 trillion
GDP growth rate	5%	1.9%
GDP per capita	$2500	$7400
Population below poverty	25%	22%
Inflation	3.5%	7.7%
Gini index	37.8	59.1
Literacy rate	65%	83%
%center education expenditure of GDP	3.6% of which 47% spent on elementary	5.6%
%state and sub-state education expenditure of SGDP.	3% for MP	25%

Sources: World Factbook 2002; India Census 2002; Brazil Census 2001; IBGE Brazil; Bashir 2000

Policy environment:

The success of both programs is directly related to the planned and deliberate reform in state and central government policy enabled by a variety of factors.[4] The federal and state arrangements for education are similar in India and in Brazil with one exception namely the role and positioning of municipalities.[5] Both Central and state governments are responsible for education in the countries. School education in both countries comes under the purview of state governments while the responsibility for higher education lies more with the central government. In Brazil, different from India, the municipalities are sovereign entities under the federal government increasingly given the responsibility for providing eight years of primary education. The Central governments in both countries are also responsible for nation wide initiatives such as improving quality and reducing inequity.[6] The enabling factors influencing the program include political and financial dimensions. Politically, the commitment of the top leadership in both countries and in the state of MP in the early 90's is clearly evident in their prioritizing the universalization and decentralization of primary education. In both programs, new policies defined at the central level have had a considerable impact on its effectiveness. In India, the 1986 New Education Policy involved a comprehensive treatment of primary education focusing on the financing, quality, and decentralization as a means to achieve universal primary education. Similarly, the 1988 constitutional amendment in Brazil, specifying 18% and 25% of tax revenues to be spent by Center and the state respectively (WB Report No. 24413), played a critical role. Both these policies in India and Brazil respectively set the stage for the engagement and iterative policy formulations in the 1990's that facilitated the effective evolution of the two programs.[7]

In India in the early 1990's, the 73rd and 74th amendments to the constitutions heralded the establishment of the Panchayati raj system or local government and the administrative decentralization of primary education. In addition, the District Primary Education Program (DPEP), a donor-supported program for achieving primary education was established by the central government.[8] This program involved the financial transfers of about US$10 million per district to districts with female literacy below the national

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[4] The structure appears to be uniform in Brazil with "primary" education (*Ensino fundamental)* comprising of two stages - 1 to 4 and 5 to 8 years (7-14 age group). The government of India is attempting to put in place a uniform elementary school structure (1-5 as primary and 6-8 as upper primary) across the states, however, this has not taken place in all states. The structure in MP is according to the national norm. In this paper, in order to preserve regular nomenclature, primary education in Brazil and elementary education in India will refer to 8 years of education. Primary with reference to India will refer to 1 to 5 grades.

[5] Municipalities in Brazil are sovereign sub-national entities and are not sub-state entities. While there are municipalities in India, they are few and located only in urban centres. The comparable unit in India to the municipalities would be the district. The sub-unit of the state in Brazil is the municipality, however, the municipality is also equal to the state in terms of governance. Pre-school and primary education is the responsibility of municipalities..

[6] Interestingly, the feeding program in both countries are subsidized by the centre. In addition, the center is responsible for the distribution of textbooks across the country in Brazil whereas in India the responsibility lies with the state governments.

[7] The NPE indicated that at least 6% of the GNP be spent on education this has not happened, it is 3.6%. Expenditure in Brazil, however, has increased from 4.2% of GDP in 1995 to 5.6% in 2000 (24413-A)

[8] DPEP is a centrally sponsored scheme with the Center's share of funding procured from multilateral and bilateral sources such as the European Union, the World Bank, the Department of International Development, the Netherlands embassy and UNICEF. The states contribution to the total amount is 15%.

average to increase access and improve retention and learning. Teachers' salaries are not included in the DPEP budget except in the case of additional enrollment. Civil works expenditure in this program was capped at 24%. Interventions for retention and learning constituted around 60% of the budget and included community mobilization, textbook revision, establishing inservice training centers and the administering of inservice teacher training. Since MP had the largest number of districts (29) with female literacy below the national average, this state received initially the largest share of DPEP funding.[9] The DPEP project provided, among other factors, the necessary policy environment for the state of MP to explore further policy reform that would help the state achieve its goal of universal primary education. Financially, DPEP funding, which was 7% of the education budget, proved to be an additionality, allowing for innovation to take place. In order to facilitate financial transfers from the Center to the State and accountability issues, the DPEP initially worked through a society established independent of the department of education. The society in MP operated within the Rajiv Gandhi Missions started by the government in August of 1994, and the education wing is called Rajiv Gandhi Shiksha (or education) Mission[10] The formation of the mission according to the forward written by the Chief Minister of the state, Mr. Digvijay Singh has its beginnings in the process of producing the first sub-national Human Development Report (in the world), which highlighted the shortcomings in the education sector.[11]

One of the first tasks of the mission was to undertake the *Lok Sampak Abhiyan* (LSA) a community driven micro planning process to estimate the number of students enrolled in school and the reasons for non-enrollment especially with regards to the availability of schools.[12] The LSA conducted by Panchayats or local government with the assistance of teachers and literacy volunteers initiated client involvement as this quote by Amita Sharm the director of the program indicates: "This Lok Sampark Abhiyan transformed into a mobilization process for primary education redefining the role of the community in primary education from objects of survey to actors who could make the difference (Sharma, 1997)." [13] An important finding of the LSA is the difference of 13 percentage points between the Gross Enrollment Ratios (GERs) generated by the LSA and GERs provided by the Government Directorate of Public Instruction for the 5-14 year age group and a difference of 20 percentage points for the 6-11 age group. Government reports were inflated and dropouts identified were actually students who had never been enrolled. The findings of the *Lok Sampak Abhiyan,* specifically, the absence of adequate primary school facilities in 32% of its villages, impelled the MP government to launch the Education Guarantee Scheme in 1997 (RGSM, 2000).

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[9] DPEP is now operating in 18 states in India. Some of the other states such as Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Bihar now receive similar amounts of funding.

[10] Two such missions were initially started, one on education and one on watershed management. In 1998, a mission for food security and subsequently, in 2001 a mission for community health was started as part of the Rajiv Gandhi missions in MP.

[11] The forward was written in the book "Bringing the People Back In." by Sharma and Gopalkrishnan.

[12] India's norm for setting up primary schools is a population of 300, in the case of tribal communities, 250. In addition, a child must have a primary school located within a kilometre distance from his or her home. For upper primary, it is 3 kilometres.

[13] According to the 73rd constitutional amendment issued in 1992, a working panchayat raj system was established in MP in 1994 (AS 1997). This system involves a three tier (district, block and gram) system of local government. Financial decentralization has also taken place with 65% of the funds received by the district transferred to the panchayats. 484000 panchayats were formed (Govinda ?).

In Brazil, the mechanisms to transfer amounts defined in the 1988 constitutional amendment were specified in 1996 by the *Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educacao Nacional (LDB)* or the National Education Law. Many reports on Brazil indicate that specification of the mechanisms and the items for support in addition to the identification of the roles and responsibilities of each level of government is one of the most significant policy reforms in the last few decades. The LDB lays down minimum levels of per pupil expenditure (US$300 in 1998) and sets up the FUNDEF fund made up of 15% of the state and municipal revenues. This fund for the development of "the Maintenance and Development of Primary Education and the Enhancement of the Teaching Profession (p. 10 E in B 1995-2000)" is maintained at both the state and central levels. When states and municipalities are unable to meet the financial requirements for the number of students enrolled, the Center provides the deficit amount. In addition, with reference to overall transfers from center to state, of the 25% of the tax revenues that are provided by the Center to the state, 60% has to be spent on teachers' salaries.

To conclude, at the country level several factors can be identified, both at a global and local level, that merely existed or propelled policy reform. Globally, the Jomtien World conference in March 1990 on the theme of "Education for All" with its commitment to provide financial assistance to raise the World's literacy levels helped focus the continued political and bureaucratic attention within these to countries on education. Both countries embarked on the task of envisioning and conceptualizing new national programs based on their experiences of large-scale literacy programs implemented in the previous decade (1980 to 1990).[14] These programs include a variety of educational improvement programs in Brazil and the Total Literacy Campaign in India. With reference to policy, the 1971 law ensuring free and compulsory education in addition to other policy reforms in Brazil and the 1986 New Education Policy in India facilitated the introduction of the Fundescola and DPEP programs respectively. Other policy reforms in Brazil includes the introduction of a national system of assessment (SAEB); the improvement of quality and distribution of textbooks, upgrading of teacher qualifications and the setting of national standards with reference to the curriculum.[15] At the sub-national level in MP, the administrative and financial flexibility afforded by the centrally sponsored DPEP program and the reflections and initiatives of the state's political and bureaucratic leadership has jointly facilitated the inauguration of the Education Guarantee Scheme. Last year the act *Jan skiksha Adthinium* or the People's Education Act has been enacted in MP ensuring the right to education for which rules and regulations are still being finalized.

Making services work and Citizen's empowerment

While the initial conceptualization and implementation of Fundescola and EGS relied upon a vibrant and thoughtful policy environment the programs' success depended upon

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[14] Harbison and Hanushek (1992) discuss projects in place in the 80's. Among these projects was Edurural project funded by the World Bank for the most impoverished region in northeast Brazil. Projects across Brazil were not identical but varied in terms of inputs depending upon the nature of the need. In India the precursor of DPEP was the Total Literacy Campaign, which focused on community mobilization with the help of NGOs.
[15] For more on these schemes see Report No. 20408 BR and Report No.24413 BR.

the extent to which institutions and processes at the various levels worked together to effectively implement these projects. The projects in both countries appear to be reasonably successful with reference to their intended outcomes. The primary initial objective in the case of the EGS was to increase access. Retention of students for a full five years of primary education, and the acquisition of the necessary skills at the end of the five years have evolved to be important goals for the program. The DPEP program also operating in MP in addition to these objectives focused on management capacity building. The objectives of the Fundescola program are to increase the capacities of state and municipal authorities to manage education and with reference to students in primary schools lower repetition, increase completion and student learning.

This study is based on secondary sources and primary data based on two weeks visits each to Madhya Pradesh and Brazil respectively. I will weave together narrative accounts of the observations and discussions taking place during the visits into the analysis of secondary sources. In the following sections, implementation of the EGS program will first be discussed followed by the Fundescola program. The concluding section brings both programs together.

The implementation of the Education Guarantee Scheme:

The study is based on visits to several EGS centers in two districts in MP namely Raisen and Datia. In discussing the effectiveness of services provided at the state and sub-state level, three schools representing the different types of communities and the developing nature of the EGS will be described in more detail. The Sonari factory school in Datia with three rooms catering to the OBC community is located in a fairly prosperous village. The tribal tola (or habitation) school made up of tribal children is located in a one room concrete structure in the district of Raisen. The Harijan Basti school with mainly SC children is held in the open courtyard of the village. The significant outcome of the programs will first be enumerated in order to provide a context for the discussion on implementation. Then five aspects - the adequate provision of appropriate services; community empowerment; quality interventions; teacher motivation and program monitoring and evaluation- will be examined.

Project Outcomes: Based on the household survey (LSA), the GER in MP has increased from 76.46% in 1996 to 96.24% in 2000. The state's average literacy rate across districts (64.11), which was for three decades about eight percentage points lower than the national average, has in the last decade almost reached the national average (65.38). Further, the decadal increase in literacy, which was between 6 to 10 percent for three decades, in the last decade, was 20 percentage points (RGM: eight years, 2002).

Table 1: Enrollment in EGS
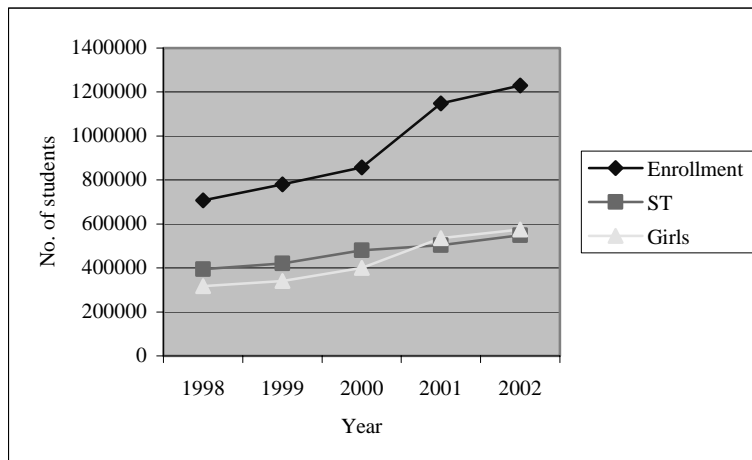
The EGS program has indeed increased the number of primary schools available across districts. There are about 80,000 primary schools in MP of which a fourth are EGS schools.[16] In comparison to the 26510 EGS schools opened since 1997, only 4209 new regular primary schools have been opened. Enrollment for all students, Schedule Tribe, and girls increased substantially since the program began. Overall enrollment (Table 1) has increased more than 50% (707393 to 1230190). Similarly, girls' enrollment has also increased more than 50% (316604 to 574951) and ST enrollment (394974 to 549000) by about 35%. Data for SC students is not available for the early years and therefore it is not possible to analyze the increase. Retention data on EGS schools is not available. Table 2 using percentiles compares the achievement of students from EGS, regular government primary and private schools on the board examinations. The performance of EGS students while lower than students from private schools are equal to and in many cases better than students from regular government schools.[17] Considering the physical infrastructure and teachers' qualifications (discussed later) in an EGS school the performance of students from the EGS system is noteworthy.

Provision of services: Client demand is very important in this program. Parents have to decide on whether they want a school and they have to translate this wish into a written request submitted to the lowest level of government or Gram Panchayat. The story of the formation of the tribal tola school depicts this process. The village was made up of 64 families, 90% from the tribal community and about 10% from the muslim community and all the parents were illiterate, land less laborers. In 1996, when a child from this village, on his way to school, was hit by a moving train the parents came together and made their request for a school in their tola to the local Gram Panchayat. The request was

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[16] No other state in India has this number of EGS schools. In West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh, states, which have the next highest number of EGS schools, there are about 7000 schools. In WB, it constitutes a third while in UP it is less than a fifth.

[17] It is interesting to note the difference between the private schools and government schools in this Table 2. There are much fewer students in the lowest percentile and many more students in the highest percentiles from private schools. There are equal numbers of students from the three types of schools in the 50 to 75th percentile.

made on plain paper, with the names of the students and their parents and the reason for a school in the tola. Most importantly, a list of candidates for the teacher or guruji had to be included. Minimum qualification of those candidates was higher secondary and if this was not available lower secondary. This tribal tola school is now located about ½ KM from the main road a KM from the caste village where the regular primary school is located. A railway line divides the caste village from the tola.
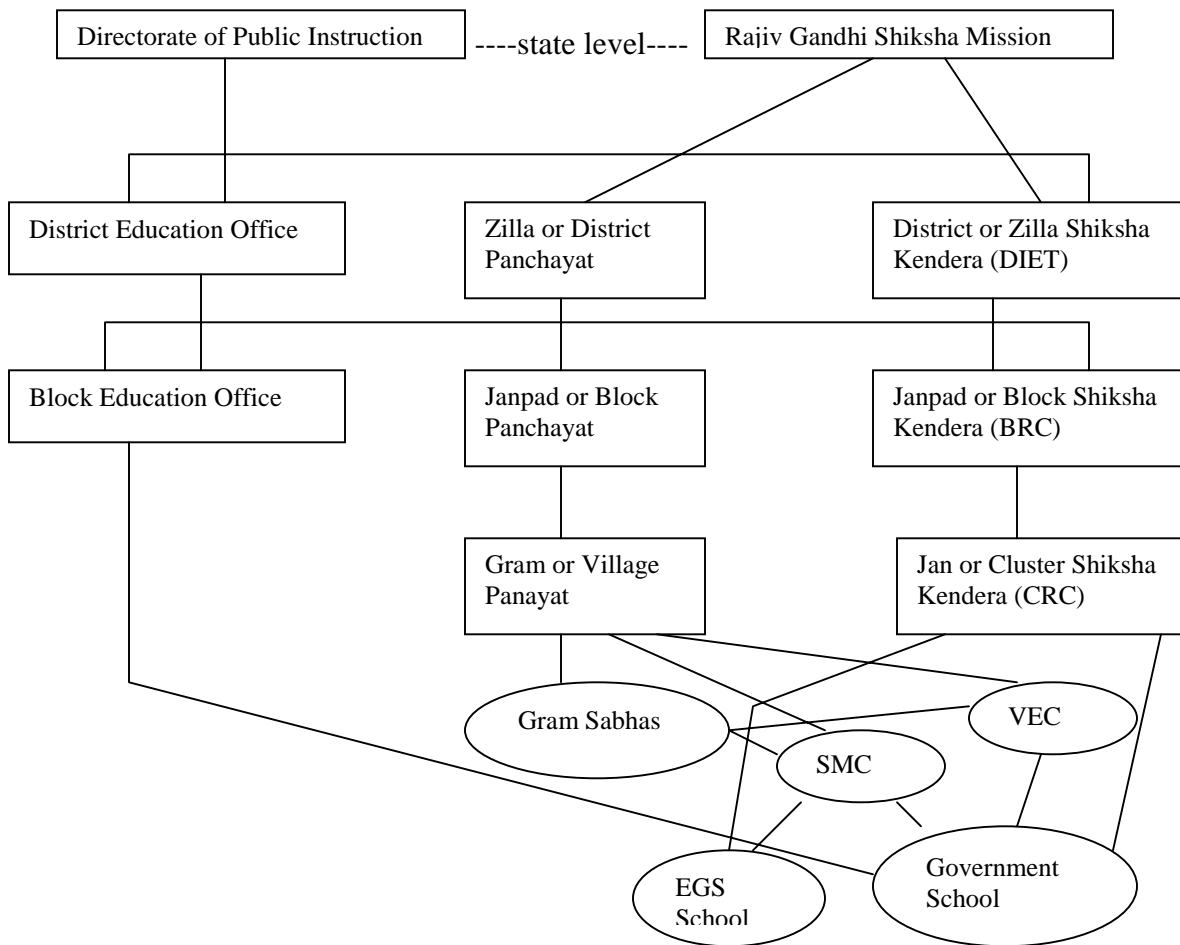
Table 2: Comparison of student achievement
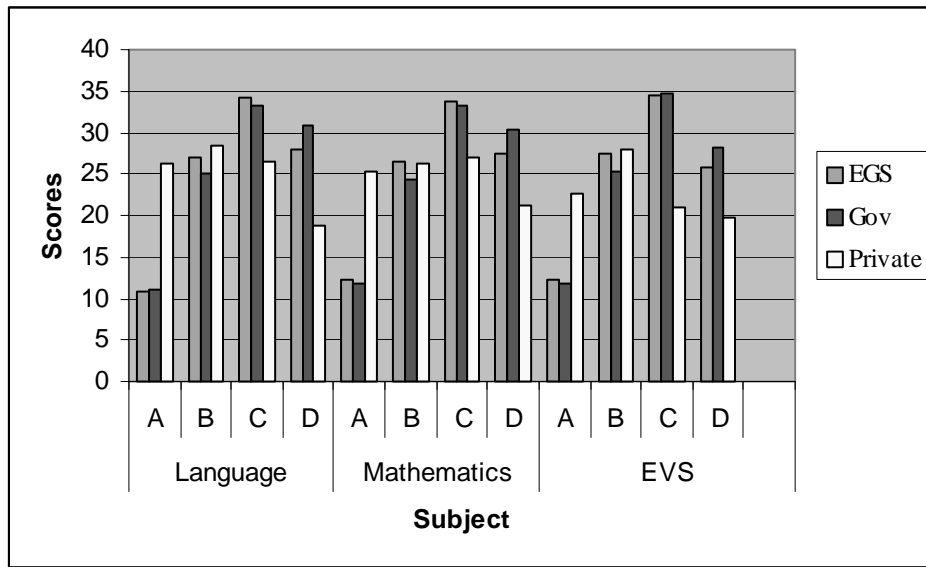
Timeliness and accountability characterize the governance of this scheme. The institutional home (Figure 1) for the administration and management of the EGS program as mentioned above is the DPEP state implementation society located in the Rajiv Gandhi Shiksha Mission (RGSM). Each districts has a similar body also called Zilla (ie district) Shiksha Kendra (ZSK). Within the ZSK there is a committee for the administration of the Education Guarantee Scheme. The EGS committee is made up of the Chief Executive Officer of the Panchayat, the DPEP project coordinator, District Education Officer and the District Collector. The committee meets once a month to review, ratify and approve all issues relating to EGS. Below the committee is the Janpad Shiksha Kendra or Block Panchayat. The Block and then the Zilla screens the request for an EGS school forwarded by the Gram Panchayat within three days of receipt. The criteria for screening include the need for a school and the appropriate selection of the teacher. If the Gram Panchayat does not forward the letter within three days parents can send the demand directly to the Janpad. Parents are entitled to a decision within three months of the receipt of the letter at the Janpad.

Once the committee decides that a particular group of parents ought to receive an EGS school, the funds for the honorarium for the teacher and the contingency amount is given directly to the parents now organized into a School Management Committee(SMC) . $350 is the amount allocated for each school. This amount includes 12 months salary for the teacher at $20 per month; teacher training ($30); instructional material, funds for

textbooks ($50) and a school contingency fund ($30). The amount is deposited in a Bank under the person-in-charge of the SMC. In order to withdraw funds two SMC members have to sign, in addition to the Guruji and a person at the Cluster level. Since the community is supposed to provide the space and physical structure this amount is supposed to be sufficient . According to Sharma and Gopalakrishnan (2000) the distribution of funds in the EGS allows 29% of the budget to be spent on items other than the teacher's salary in contrast to the regular primary school where 18% is available.

Figure 1. Institutional Structure of Education in Madhya Pradesh

| Directorate of Public Instruction | ----state level---- | Rajiv Gandhi Shiksha Mission |

| District Education Office | Zilla or District Panchayat | District or Zilla Shiksha Kendera (DIET) |

| Block Education Office | Janpad or Block Panchayat | Janpad or Block Shiksha Kendera (BRC) |

| Gram or Village Panayat | Jan or Cluster Shiksha Kendera (CRC) |

Gram Sabhas   VEC   SMC   EGS School   Government School

However, critics, considering the system as a whole including the regular government school fully supported by the government, point out the inequity involved in that EGS students who would be poorest in the state have to provide space for their own school. However, the government response would be that in a situation of scarce resources, GOMP is providing physical and instructional resources for schools outside the national norm. Students that have benefited from the scheme would not have had any education at all without this scheme. According to Vyaslu, the state's response can be referred to as "nuanced and sophisticated (2000, p. 333)." School construction is increasingly becoming an area in which GOMP is attempting to address the issue of equity by providing money for constructing a room. For example in the district of Raisen, there are 509 EGS schools. 262 schools have received $1000 and 134 schools $2000 for the construction of the school building. [18] The rationale for this difference in amount is size, however, this is often not clear as the example below indicates.

The tribal tola began in the home of one of the villagers in the community. Last year, $1000 was given as seed money and with free labor from the community to build an 18 by 28 feet room with a thatched roof. About 79, 6 to 11 year olds and 22 children below the age of 6 were seated in groups of about 4 to 6 extremely busy with a variety of tasks mostly writing, looking at pictures or reading. The room was not well lit and there were pictures and charts covering the walls. Cardboard cards with pictures strung on string hung across the room. There were two teachers to instruct this class of 99 students tightly packed into this small room. In contrast, the Sonari factory school made up of 94 children from mainly the OBC, land-owning community had 3 large rooms and a teachers' room constructed with the $5000 received from the national 10th finance commission (the only school supported in this fashion in the State). These two schools portray the problems of insisting on a financial ceiling unrelated to the financial capacity of that community and the norms for per pupil expenditure. The space was clearly insufficient in the first school, while in the second school it was more than sufficient. The conflicts between encouraging local participation with its own political power groups and issue of the just allocation of government funds are also evident. The land owning groups' capacity to corner central government funds reflects their political clout in the area.

Community empowerment: The communities that benefit from an EGS school are homogenous with a few exceptions. Homogenous in that the majority of parents would be from the same caste or tribal community. While the individual communities are homogenous, it was clear that the EGS is benefiting different types of communities that are impoverished. The heterogeneity that characterizes the EGS beneficiaries is evident in the schools visited, each supported by different groups of people including the OBCs, SCs, STs and others. With regards to the "others" for example in one of the schools visited, the community was made up of Hindu refugees from Pakistan who had fled Pakistan during the partition. They were identified as *Oads* and were traditional brewers of local liquor and in the past blacklisted with the police. This occupation had been

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[18] DPEP funds have enabled MP to support school construction. Last year when the civil works ceiling in DPEP was raised from 24 to 33% and the need was diminished for regular schools, the DPO decided to divert this money for EGS schools.

abolished some years ago and the common occupation was now agriculture. The intensity of community involvement was evident in the schools were the community was homogenous. Parents would hover around the school. Women, who had hitherto been outside the school often visited and spent time in classrooms. In one school visited, the walls were covered with paintings done by women similar to the ones done by them in their own homes. It is likely that this intensity will not be present in communities in which members on the one hand, do not belong to a single caste or tribal group and on the other hand, not as impoverished. The Sonari factory school for instance, with parents relatively better off and more heterogeneous was the only school where I did not interact with any parents. Conversations with educational officials, moreover, indicated that they rarely visit schools.

Clearly, the reform could only begin to be implemented with the deep-seated longing and enthusiasm of parents for their children to be educated. The evidence of this demand according to Gopalakrishnan and Sharma (2000) overturned the myth that parents' lack motivation and commitment to primary education. Parent ownership and commitment especially within homogenous communities provided, as it were, the seedbed for reform to take place. Ownership in concrete terms is represented in their choice of the teacher from their own community or from adjacent villages. Selecting the teacher empowered this group of illiterate parents on the one hand, by giving them access to what was for them mysterious activities inside the school and also on the other provided a channel for information from official sources to be communicated to the parents. Even if teachers were not from the specific community that parents belonged to they were connected to the community he or she taught in. The depth of the relationship between the teacher and community in an EGS context is qualitatively different from what is generally perceived in a regular government school. The children and parents are "known" by the teacher and vice versa. In a sense, the teacher appears to be able to understand parents' unarticulated expectations and include them in an informal but consistent fashion in the workings of the school.

If there are more than 50 students in the class, the program allows the community to ask for a second teacher. The stipulation that the second teacher has to be female if the first teacher is male is one way in which the program channels parents' patriarchal notions into new avenues. There has been difficulty in identifying female teachers locally so the policy of allowing female teachers to hale from the Panchayat is now accepted. The fact that employing female teachers is affecting the patriarchal norm was evident in some of the classrooms, which had female teachers. For instance, in one of the classrooms the female teachers would barely look at us with her sari covering most of her face. Her posture and deference to the male teacher and us as visitors corresponded with patriarchal expectations. In spite of this posturing, her task as instructor is providing a new model for the community.

Quality interventions: Is it working in the classroom is one of the most fundamental questions that need to be addressed. Vyasalu, Jha, Srivastava writing around 1997-98 and Saihjee (2002) affirm the effectiveness of classroom processes in the EGS classrooms. In all classrooms observed students possessed the required number of textbooks and

notebooks. Instruction made use of cooperative learning, the creative use of activities and materials, and the consistent interaction between teachers and pupils. Children were busy at work in all the classrooms observed and students and teachers were using available space, effectively and creatively. Student work in notebooks is evident, though the quality and regularity of the task completed requires attention. The traditional scene of the teacher standing in front lecturing to the students and students sitting quietly and listening is rarely seen in the EGS classroom. Records for each student appear to be maintained, though, in some schools better than others. Despite the fact that all of the above studies including my observations could be called anecdotal based on brief visits to classrooms rather than based on a reasonable sample size and systematic analysis, it is clear that qualitative changes in classroom processes has been accomplished in the EGS program. How has this change taken place and what is the pattern of incentives that have engineered this change is a question that needs to be dealt with.

Both inservice training and pedagogy including textbooks and instructional methods have gone through several changes over the last few years, again, in the attempt to address equity. While there is an overall effort to preserve the positive dimensions of the original model, this is not clearly evident. Teachers have received a considerable amount of inservice training initially using the Alternative School (AS) pattern but now similar to what is received by teachers in regular primary schools.[19] For example, one of the teachers spoken to listed the training he had received: in 2002 (20 days); 2001 (7 days); 2000 (11 days); 1999 (10 days) and 1998 (21 days). The 21 days was orientation training and the others were related to subject content. The 21 days, which was the pattern for AS schools has now become 12 days. It is also unclear as to the extent to which a teacher's individuals skills and backgrounds are considered in planning teacher training.[20] For instance, a higher secondary school teacher receives the same training as a teacher with undergraduate qualifications. The onsite support that works with the individual teacher appears to be working in some cases. For example, in one school visited the cluster coordinators had written a page of comments on the teacher's instructional method. One of the comments was encouraging the teacher to speak clearly and not allow students to answer in monosyllables to the questions he asked. The coordinator has also helped the teacher in instructing students in especially difficult concepts such as fractions and decimal points.

Again similar to training, the textbooks used in the EGS schools are now the same as those used in a regular primary school. According to Kothari et al, 2000 study of the AS, the AS syllabus, also used in the EGS program until recently, allowed students to follow his or own pace and was not driven by time bound predetermined units of study. The textbooks-cum-workbooks were written accordingly. In order to reduce differences with the regular primary school system, GOMP has produced a new set of textbooks integrating the two approaches, AS textbooks and the *Seekhana Sikhana* textbooks of the

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[19] Alternative Schools are schools established for at-risk students using the non-formal model. School timings and learning was flexible in AS schools GOMP has decided to subsume AS schools within the EGS category of schools.
[20] Accorting to Gopalakrishnan and Sharma (2000) 88% EGS teachers possess higher secondary qualifications, 9% are graduates and 3% post graduates. In the regular primary school on the other hand 55% possess higher secondary qualifications.

regular school. Interactions with teachers suggest that the flexibility and self-pacing of the AS syllabus has been effected. The impact of this standardization is still to be seen.

Teacher motivation: The problem of teacher absenteeism due to official duty and otherwise is widespread in regular primary schools in MP and across India. The EGS schools provide a contrasting scenario in this respect. According to parents interacted with teachers are regular and in some cases also teach on weekends and holidays. The Government has not provided any incentives as such for teachers to attend schools and instruct students regularly. In fact, one-sixth the salary of a regular primary school teacher offered to EGS teachers can almost be identified as a disincentive. In spite of this the teachers in the EGS are a committed and motivated group. In the classrooms visited, teachers where asked to identify reasons for their commitment to and regularity in the EGS schools. Teachers consistently mentioned their genuine interest in the teaching profession. It could be argued that since the remuneration is high, regular teachers' join the teaching profession because of the money rather than a commitment to teaching. Thus in addition to other reasons, the absenteeism and the lack of motivation among teachers in the regular primary schools could be an outcome of this absence of commitment. EGS teachers perceived their jobs as giving them independence and autonomy because these schools were not directly under the Department of Education but under the mission. They were also uniformly conscious of the value and respect given to them by the community. Working in an EGS school also gave them a chance to pursue further studies namely a diploma in education and also gave them the necessary experience (worth 25 points) to be hired as a regular teacher in the future. They also hoped that this school would become a regular school someday.

Program monitoring and evaluation: On the one hand, at the national level, the system of monitoring and evaluation is well developed. District League tables with summary problem sheets are now being produced based on district performance on input and outcome indicators. These tables are sent to district collectors who appear to value it and even attach it to their Annual Confidential Reports to government. RGSM rates districts according to their performance on these league tables. Earlier approaches focused on table monitoring through the Educational Monitoring Information System. Now a regular pattern of visits has been established - each district is entrusted to an "officer-in-charge" who spends a week in the district verifying data and sharing the problems with district officials. As incentive for performance, GOMP has instituted annual awards for VECs in each block. First prize amount is $2000, second $1500 and third $1000.

On the other hand, discussions with district officials seemed to indicate a more inspirational style of leadership and less of what I would like to call technical style of planning and management. Inspirational style leadership is linked to a culture still very much oral while technical leadership depends upon accurate reporting and description of what is taking place. The input and output indicators provide objective information of what is taking place in schools and this is an excellent system that has been put in place, well understood by the actors. However, they do not facilitate an understanding of the processes and workings of individual schools, which is necessary information for providing appropriate services. Monitoring is based on school visits by the CRC and

BRC coordinators, DIET faculty and district DPEP officials. The reports of the CRC visits are available in each school. The DIETs and the BRCs visits to schools were entered on a questionnaire consisting of two pages. The questionnaire captured useful and rich information, however, this information was never entered into the computer and collated. DIET faculty did not possess the skills to enter information into the computer and maintain a record of schools visited. DIETs were asked to analyze the information and provide summary bullet points to the District Project Coordinator. The total number of school performance that could be monitored in this fashion was about 50% and the district was yet to develop a system whereby the performance of schools was monitored over time. The limitations in monitoring are beginning to be evident in the variation across classrooms visited.

There is a vision for more systematic monitoring at the village level, which will be implemented over the next few years. The Secretary of Education depicts this vision in this quote: The intention here is to create a "clear, publicly available data set… [which will be] matched with communities own intuitive spontaneous responses to the situations…should not substitute one for the other and if they are dealt with together the chances are they will have qualitatively refined data, which they believe in. Even if it turns out to be wrong they will follow the evolutionary path of their assumptions, work on it and improve upon it." The state intends to maintain statutory or educational records at the Panchayat, habitation and school levels. According to the Secretary these records "represent the rights of children to learn and the rights of communities to demand for services. If these records are maintained as a record of rights which you actually bestow or acknowledge for the children and the community you create a stake or interest in them and to demand services accordingly."

In conclusion, in the context of the evolving nature of the program and to improve the provision of services in an adequate and appropriate manner GOMP could consider the following five aspects. First, is the issue of whether the distinctiveness of each school and its context is considered in providing necessary and fitting service to clients. In this regard, though standardization can be perceived to address the issue of comparability and equity, the financial and now academic standardization and uniformity becoming part of the EGS program limits its effectiveness. The financial standardization is particular problematic in that the amount of $350 given to each school may be sufficient for one EGS school, especially if parents can contribute more if need be, however, it may be very insufficient in another context where there are more impoverished children and parents. Second, is the importance of monitoring services that are provided and evaluating the need for constantly redefining and re conceptualizing implementation. While EGS does "convert accountability from being upward to being outward to the community (Gopalakrishnan and Sharma 2000, p.314), the accountability of the Department of Education to provide minimum operational standards, and technical assistance downward to both the school and the community also become critical.

Third, the future of the EGS teachers needs to be given much thought both in terms of remuneration and academic capacity. While the meager salary and the communities' affirmation are sufficient at this point, it is unlikely that this commitment can be

sustained long-term. Incentive structures building on this commitment are important. Teachers' subject content knowledge especially those required to instruct students in the higher grades would need to be systematically developed and their attempts at creatively instructing students sustained. Fourthly, client involvement while adequate for demanding and establishing the school, similar to teachers would need to be further developed. Perhaps, a way to do this would be to conduct parallel adult literacy programs and training on how to support their children's education. The recent enumeration by GOMP of the Panchayat's role in secondary education is a step in the right direction. Fifthly, the issue of equity will have to be continuously addressed both in terms of provision of services as discussed above and in terms of the integration of social groups. More than 60% of the enrollments in EGS schools are from SC and ST backgrounds. It is unclear whether SC and ST attendance in regular government schools are declining. If this is the case the creation of a dual educational stream has the potential for generating divisiveness in the society.

The implementation of Fundescola

The visit to Brasilia, the capital city of Brazil in which the federal office of Fundescola is located involved discussions with individuals responsible for the various components in the program. Two states, Bahia in the northeast and Acre in the north were also visited. Discussions were held with administrators of the program and visits were made to several municipal and state schools. The schools visited were large and had at least eight rooms. Principals, teachers and a few students were interacted with.

Project Outcomes: In Brazil overall the Net Enrollment Ratio (NER) for primary education has increased from 87.5% in 1994 to 96.3% in 2000 (MOE, 2002). Attendance rates for students 7 to 14 years increased over the last decade across income quintiles and the rate of increase being steeper for students in the bottom three quintiles. For examples, the increase registered by students in the lowest 20% income group is 19 percentage points and the highest, 2 percentage points. Similarly, with students from different racial backgrounds, for the indigenous groups the increase was 12% and for the Asians 2%.

Repetition, completion and learning…….data awaited.

The *Program Fundo de Fortalmecimento da Escola* (Fundescola) program is an evolving program in primary education consisting of a number of components. It began in 1998 based on the lessons learned from a set of 13 studies undertaken jointly by the Government of Brazil (GOB) and donor agencies on the impact of previous efforts at educational reform.[21] These studies consolidated in the document "A Call to Action"

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[21] Three projects preceded the Fundescola project in Brazil. The Innovations Basic Education Project (1992-99) implemented in the state of Sao Paulo appears to be similar to the EGS with 60% of the funding for physical infrastructure and the remaining on school development planning, fine tuning data information systems and putting in place student achievement tests. The Northeast Basic Education Project I, II and III targeting groups of states in the Northeast of Brazil supported the improvement of management, infrastructure, textbooks and materials with a smaller amount allocated for teacher training. The ratings of the performance of these projects are mixed in PPAR report (No. 24433).

highlighted several issues such as the conditions of classrooms, poor quality of teaching and learning, the lack of community involvement, and ineffective management (financial and administrative) of education at state, municipal and school levels. Based on the findings of the study the GOB, using both national and donor funds, decided to implement consecutive educational reform programs. Each program would build on lessons learned in the previous one and also expand geographically. Fundescola I started in 1998 and Fundescola II in 1999 and Fundescola III in 2002. Micro regions from each state are chosen on the basis of the density of their population (high) and economic status (low). [22] The program now operates in 19 center west, north and northeast states and 383 municipalities located in two micro-regions in each state. There are 33 million students in the primary school age group in Brazil out of which 17 million students are in the 19 states in which Fundescola works. Of the 17 million, 6 million (7000 schools) participate in Fundescola.

Figure 2: Organization of Fundescola
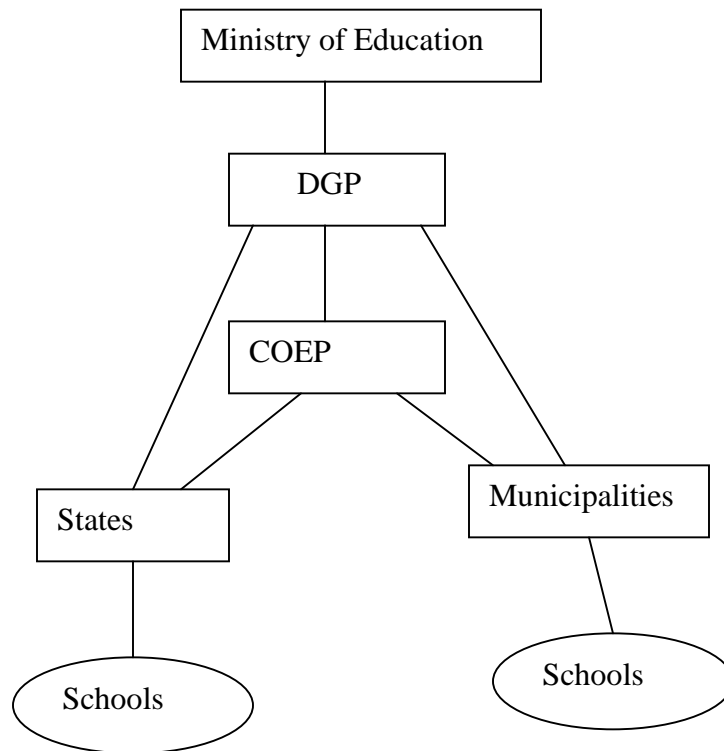
Fundescola as mentioned earlier is an initiative of the federal government to improve educational quality. The federal government, through the Central Project Coordination *Unit or Direcao Geral do Projecto* (DGP) is responsible for the overall implementation

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[22] Micro regions are defined by the Census Bureau in Brazil *(IBGE)* based on a number of factors such as population, geography, revenues etc and encompass both states and between five to 20 municipalities. The first project chose one micro-region or priority zone in each of the 19 states. These zone or *Zone de Atendimento Prioritario* (ZAP) together for the first and second project are called ZAP-I and ZAP II respectively. The decision to work in micro regions allowed the de-politicisation of the project to some extent in that areas of support were defined, thus limited the manipulation of politicians.

of this program (Figure 2). In addition, Fundescola at the national level focuses on the development of technical support in several areas to be provided to states and municipalities to assist them in their reform. Technical support entails the conceptualization of a program of reform in each of the areas that were earlier identified as unsatisfactory and ineffective such as teacher training, planning and management and so on. The program of reform includes the creation of, for example, guidelines and rules, the production of manuals and course material, defining a system of monitoring and evaluation and so on. Fundescola uses the term "product" to refer to a particular area and its related program of reform. According to Fundescola staff product represents the translation of policy into action. 125 people are employed in the federal offices of the program in ten different areas. Another 125 people are employed in the 19 states to assist and monitor implementation in states and municipalities. The criteria for states and municipalities in micro regions to participate include the commitment to ensure minimum operational standards in schools, strategic planning at the secretariat and school level, and the management and monitoring of product implementation. States and municipalities must also commit to expansion with their own resources and monitoring and evaluation.

The DGP discussed the origins of and factors that helped Fundescola develop the products integral to the program. The early beginnings of the first few products are located in the state of Mato Grosso in early 1990's, these products were first piloted in just 15 schools. Then it was further developed in the Northeast projects. The product called Escola Ativa working in multigrade schools evolved from Escuela Nueva program in Columbia. The further enhancement and fine tuning of the products and the creation of new ones were supported by the DGP teams' study tours of educational systems in various countries including London, Scotland, New Zealand, US, France, Australia, Hongkong and Canada. The team particularly valued their visit to Hong Kong and the experience with the "Quality assurance program" in that country. The products in Fundescola are now at different phases of both conceptualization and implementation. Some of products have been field-tested and are now being scaled-up in states and municipalities, others are being field-tested and others still being developed by the DGP.

The implementation of the first Fundescola program focused on Government of Brazil's program ensuring the minimum operational standards for schools or the *Projecto de Adequacao de Predios Escolares (PAPE)*.[23] This could also be considered as one of the first "products" of Fundescola ensuring the schools were ready for more educational reform. At the school level, school autonomy and an operational Bank account are the two basic criteria for schools within micro regions to be able to participate in this product of Fundescola. A number of schools and classrooms were in a particularly poor condition with broken floors, dirty walls and without ventilation. Surveys were done detailing the physical conditions of schools, the adequacy of furniture, ventilation, and equipment. Minimum standards were set for the physical structure and the infrastructure facilities available in classrooms. In order to support a larger number of schools Fundescola

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[23] This program of the government was the first time that government funds were being transferred directly to the schools, which precipitated the formation of School Management Councils to manage these funds. The School Management Council is made up of elected members. For each school shift a parent, a teacher and a student is elected on to this Council.

decided to support the reconstruction of schools that were not too dilapidated. 30,000 classrooms in 4336 schools have so far been repaired, 182 schools built, of which 176 are in rural areas and 6 in urban areas ($2000 per classroom). The classrooms visited that were repaired by Fundescola were well lit, with mosaic floors, tiled walls, fans, large new blackboards, steel cupboards, desks and chairs. PAPE is to be elaborated into the *Padroes Minimos de Funcionamento das Escolas* (PMFE) at the state level. This instrument will in addition to physical standards, capture information on a variety of areas such as instruction, provision of mid-day meals, security issues and community involvement.

Table 4: Range of Financing of PDE

Number of students	Total funding (US$)
From 200-500	3,100
From 501-1000	5000
From 1001 to 1500	6000
Above 1500	7500

Source Sobrinho, 2001

An important product of Fundescola is the School Development Plan or *Plano Desenvolvimento da Escola* (PDE).[24] This product, which is essentially a strategic planning and management tool for schools with over 200 students, is now well developed and in operation in most of the schools in the micro region for the last three years. Fundescola is supporting about 6500 schools with varying levels of funding.[25] A committee, made up of the principal, a few teachers, students and parents, puts the plan together. The parent who is involved is usually the president of the School Management Committee (SMC). Teachers who were earlier never involved with planning for the school as a whole are now responsible for planning the development of the school. The PDE is based on consultations by the SMC with teachers, students and the community. The number of consultations and the extent to which, the parents and community participate, depends entirely on how vibrant the school is in relationship to the community. All the school principals of the schools visited valued the PDE. According to the principal of the *Municipal de Bom Jua* School in the Prefeitura Salvador Municipality, the PDE helped them think in ways that they had never thought off before. The kind of planning and activities required to develop a PDE helped this school with 647 students approach school development technically (with a situational analysis), holistically and with specificity. The PDE expects schools to systematize their activities and monitor progress in implementation. The 2002 PDE of the *Bom Jua* school, for example, consisted of activities such as additional courses for teachers, improving participation of parents, establishing a library, and acquiring a TV, games equipment and books. The financing part of the PDE is enumerated in the *Projeto de Melhoria da Escola* (PME) or School Improvement Plan. Table 4 provides the levels of funding for different size schools. According to the principal of the *Bom Jua* school the only activity she was not able to complete last year was the setting up of the library in one of the schoolrooms.

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[24] The PDE is a management tool and the DGP accepts the needs identified without questioning the usefulness or necessity of the requests of a particular school.

[25] The manual for preparing the PDE "offers a step-by-step guide to the concepts, principles instruments necessary for managing the process of preparation and implementation…(Sobrinho, 2001)"

The school is ably assisted by technical advisors from the secretariat that visits every 15 days to monitor progress and discuss problems with the implementation of the PDE.

A few issues appear to be less clearly enunciated in the PDE. The plan for pedagogical renewal and the necessary changes required to make this successful such as ensuring time-or-task in the classroom are yet to be fully incorporated into the PDE. The PDE is also limited to the extent that the school's control is limited, for example the school is unable to hire or fire staff. For example the *Iracema Gomes* (state) School in Acre with 600 students had 42 support staff responsible for cleaning the premises and security and about 20 teachers. The school principal expressed her wish to be able to hire more teachers and fire some of the support staff but she was unable to do so since all staff was under contract with the secretariat and not under her control.[26] Further, there is a possibility that the PDE could become over time a necessity for receiving funding or identical to the PME rather than a tool to implement the vision and improve the functioning of the school. The School Support Management Unit and the School Development Group at the state and municipal levels respectively oversee the creation and implementation of the PDE. Across states and municipalities, there is variation in the extent to which secretariats are monitoring progress made with reference to the implementation of the PDE and the intended outcomes of reducing repetition and increasing completion. The overall performance of PDE was well monitored in the Salvador Municipality. According to the Secretary of this municipality 60% of the 248 PDEs were good and the implementation progressing on schedule - these "good" PDEs saw the connections between good management and a well functioning school, and related to the secretariat as supportive of their initiatives. The 40% PDEs were ineffective because they lacked clarity in objectives, showed no improvement in outcomes, and were unable to deal with problems analytically. Two DGP technical advisors in each state report on progress in individual schools on the PDE. The COEP and DGP are in the process of conceptualizing more detailed monitoring instruments that can provide summary data on the position of PDEs in municipalities and states.

Fundescola has recently developed a comprehensive package or product for the training of teachers to improve learning in schools. This program, *Gestao e Desenvovimento Institucional de Sistemas Educacionais* (GESTAR), is currently in 372 schools, providing training for 7000 teachers. Teachers in the schools visited in Bahia and Acre are participating in the GESTAR program. Some of the remarks by principals describing GESTAR include "a new paradigm" and "the new methodology was quite a shock," these remarks capture the difference between this method of instruction and what teachers normally do in classrooms. It is clear that teachers are intrigued, excited and sometimes confused with the new methodology of instruction. GESTAR's objectives are to help teachers nurture the reasoning and creative capacities of students using students' prior knowledge and experience. This new method is accompanied with the establishment of standards for each grade level and subject. GESTAR developed by the DGP, lists all that students should know in each grade and after each semester in language and mathematics. Criteria for schools to participate in GESTAR include a PDE in place, a coordinator nominated in the secretariat, and the clearly articulated support of the principal and

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[26] Reasons for the large number of support staff are mainly political and often unrelated to the needs of the school.

teachers. It is a two-year program with four modules (one per semester). Detailed course material for tutors (responsible for conducting the training), teachers and students have been prepared. Teachers must attend a two-hour workshop each week conducted by tutors. The tutors that have received training for ten days visit the school once in two months to observe instruction in classrooms and to discuss with teachers the extent to which they are implementing the new method. Tutors responsible for this training were thought of as providing continuity and sustainability to the training program. The effectiveness of the program is judged on the basis of students' performance – 50% on the internal assessment made by the teacher and 50% on standardized exams.

Several issues, though, will have to be addressed as the program expands. Firstly, there is the question of whether certain prerequisites necessary for this method to succeed exist in classrooms. For example, double and triple shifts in schools effect time-on-task in classrooms, which could restrict the amount of time available for teachers to implement this new method. The culture of giving routine homework and feedback to individual students, necessary for learning to take place with any model of instruction, may not be in use. Teachers also often lack the necessary subject content knowledge to appropriate this methodology.[27] Secondly, the particular situation of the teacher could effect the extent to which teachers are receptive to the new model. These factors could be the age (the older the teacher is the more difficult to change), the issue of whether teachers are instructing two shifts thus the amount of time teachers have to reflect on the new method; the relationship of the teacher to the principal and to authority, and so on. Furthermore, several teachers in the program are enrolled in a degree program for teacher education. Teaching and learning dealt with in the university are often inconsistent with what is communicated in GESTAR, thus creating confusion in teachers' mind. Thirdly, the extent to which the program is successful is measured on the basis of student outcomes, which can be problematic. In the *Bom Jua* municipality school where teachers had participated in GESTAR for almost a year, for instance, the pedagogical coordinator noticed overall a sharp increase in student repetition and decrease in achievement scores. Considering the training teachers received, teachers were puzzled by this trend. Again in the same school when achievement scores grade-wise are considered, scores are better for the higher grades than for the lower grades. The teachers suggested that perhaps it was working for older students because they had got used to the method and were able to be more effective in the higher grades. Nevertheless this relationship is not clear. It is possible that there could be conflict between setting standards and the constructivist approach upheld by the new model creating anomalies in the results. An intermediary set of indicators to measure the extent to which teachers are changing their method of instruction in classrooms would be helpful to understand the impact of training and the anomalies in student achievement scores.[28] Fourthly, the issue of sustained practice is also an issue in that teachers could use the new method sometimes but revert back to the old model at other times. Overall as the program develops, it will be critical for Fundescola to provide

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[27] The Project Performance Assessment Report (N0. 24433), describes these issues in more detail.

[28] This information could assist in understanding whether the fall in test scores is due to teachers' inability to change practice, or if there is evidence that practice has changed, however, there are problems with developing student knowledge and monitoring learning.

a safe environment where teachers and principals can discuss the extent to which they are able to adopt the new methodology and the difficulties encountered.

Brazil does not have a policy for establishing rural schools as is the case in India, neither is there evidence of the existence of levels of government below the municipality. The need for this is less apparent as in India where the majority (76%) of the population is rural. The Escola Activa (EA) program in Fundescola provides services for about 15% of the population, which live in rural areas in the 36 micro regions. These areas are characterized by a variety of terrain and climate. EA focuses on multigrade instruction. Teachers in the EA schools are trained for seven days in this methodology and during the school year they meet once month at a micro-center (similar to the cluster in MP) established for this purpose. The EA coordinator visits the teachers often to assist and observe their instruction. The methodology and materials are paced, contextual and upholds cooperative learning. The EA School visited with 23 students was fully equipped with furniture, subject specific learning corners, a variety of instructional materials, a library and kitchen. Student learning was clearly evident in the notebooks and workbooks in addition to the displays of academic skills by students. The school had an active student council, which appeared to support the nurturing of self-confidence and articulation skills among students. Parents are invited to the school to observe the achievements of their wards and to discuss problems once in two months.

The distinctive challenge of Fundescola is embodied in the work of this program with the states and municipalities. States and municipalities in Brazil are directly and equally responsible for school education. In order to monitor state institutions across the state regional centers are set up in different parts of the state. This administrative arrangement has created an implementation quagmire for educational reform. One of the first measures to address this situation is the Ministry of Education's policy of what is known as the "municipalization" of primary education. Municipalization involves the transfer of all primary education to the municipalities and the responsibility for secondary education to the state administration. This process has only begun (Table 5) and would not be easy to implement since the policy of federal financial transfers to states and municipalities entails transfer of funds based on the number of students in the system. Transfers are not made for secondary education; therefore, the extra source of funding available with primary education would make state governments reluctant to absolve their responsibility for primary education.[29] Some states are more successful than others. In the Salvador municipality of Bahia, municipalization was evident. In 1997 there were 173 municipal schools in the two micro regions, now there are 248. 127 were original state schools that have been transferred to the municipal authorities. The situation in Acre is not so encouraging.

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[29] The grants to both state and municipalities could have had the effect of introducing competitive pressure to improve school quality and therefore draw more students, however, this has not happened (Report no. 24413-BR). Reasons for this include the limited sphere of influence namely the urban areas, the difference in quality hard to perceive and the difficulty for municipalities to actually maximize revenues.

Table 5: Enrollment in state and municipal schools in the three regions
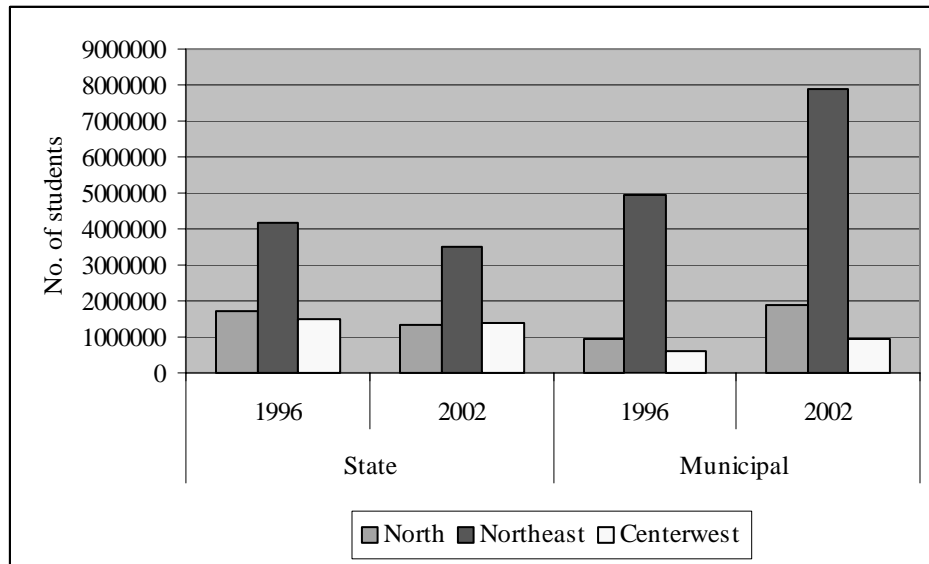
Therefore, until municipalization is complete, the strategy adopted by Fundescola is to work in coordination with state and municipal authorities responsible for primary education through the unit established at the state level called *Coordinaca Executiva do Projecto (*COEP). The COEP works with both the state and municipal secretariats in implementing the program. The way in which COEP is structured varies across states. In Salvador for example COEP is a clearly temporary unit independent of state and municipal secretariats. The unit started with four areas of responsibility, now it has two, management and pedagogy were transferred to the secretariats. However, in Acre the COEP was from the beginning located in the state secretariat with staff from the secretariat. The way in which this unit facilitates municipal secretariats is less clear. The monitoring of the program therefore, is done by COEP, state secretariats and municipal secretariats.

A strategy plan to be developed by the states and the municipalities is now a basic criterion for availing of the products of Fundescola. However, in some cases, states and municipalities were already participating in the Fundescola program before the expectation for a strategy plan was put in place. School Development Plans in several schools in the states and municipalities were in place and in the process of being implemented. One of the secretariats used the image of a broken down truck and a speeding car to describe this situation of schools having well defined plans while states and municipalities were without a strategic plan in place. In this scenario, the schools were the speeding truck with the plans in place and on track with the implementation while the broken truck was the secretariats with a coherent strategy and action plan still to be conceptualized. The speeding cars in fact gave impetus to the states to start working on a strategic plan of action. The strategic plan incorporates in addition to Fundescola, all the activities related to primary education. The DGP has prepared detailed manuals, guidelines and monitoring instruments for secretariats to prepare these plans. The plan has four parts: a situational analysis; strategic vision and plan; a plan of action and implementation schedule. Each of these phases takes between 30 to 45 days to complete

and the DGP and the COEP have a systematic process to assist states during this process. Once implementation begins states are monitored once in six months. About 10 state secretariats and 115 municipalities have completed their plans and are in the phase of implementation. The process of conceptualizing strategic plans are closely monitored by the DGP on the basis of critical qualitative indicators such as leadership, participation levels, organizational capacity and so on. Table 6 is an example of one set of criteria by which strategy plans are monitored.

Table 6: Qualitative assessment of the implementation of Secretariats strategic plans (N=77)

Category	Percent in category
Lack of internal Articulation	88
Lack of alignment with overall policies	85
Resistance to changes	82
Collection of data	76
Analysis of data	74
Requires extended support	48
Adequate use of tools and instruments	34
Difficulty in implementation	18
Use and understanding of guidelines and manual	16
Level of assimilation and incorporation of methodology	13

Source: DGP, Brasilia

Mechanisms by which, students' parents and the community could be involved with the program are not included in Fundescola. The community component in the program on the other hand focuses on awareness building in state and municipal secretariats of federal programs in education. In addition, this component includes the introduction of the legal community to Fundescola and the implications of achieving the objectives of reduced dropout, and increased completion.

The EGS and Fundescola

Several areas can be highlighted in both programs that have ensured services to beneficiary in a timely and adequate fashion. In discussing these areas, the relative strengths and limitations of the program will be conveyed in addition to ways in which service delivery and citizen ownership can be strengthened. Firstly, adequate resources were made available for program implementation. In both programs funding was from the internal and external sources. In the EGS program through DPEP, financing was available on 15:85 ratios with 15% provided as counterpart funds from the state and 85% provided as grant from the Government of India. In Fundescola the ratio was 50:50 with 50% from donor funds and 50% from the Government of Brazil. The availability of funds

in both cases spurred innovation and experimentation. It allowed necessary and to some extent sufficient personnel to be employed in order to implement the programs effectively.

Secondly, the technical assistance provided by Fundescola is particularly strong. This technical assistance focuses on well-developed products that facilitate implementation. The products, conceptualized and fine-tuned by both national expertise and national's experiences in other countries, provided a base for states and municipalities to begin thinking about reform in new ways within their own contexts. It provided guidance to states and municipalities through manuals, guides and monitoring instruments, and systematic mentoring through experienced personnel. The variety in the products captures the different dimensions of reform-physical facilities, planning, management, pedagogical renewal and monitoring and evaluation. The strategy for implementation -- beginning with pilots and for each product the expectation of each step to be completed before proceeding to the next step-- ensures a good quality product. Furthermore, the requirement for states and municipalities to expand allows modification and enhancement of the product appropriate to the particular context to take place. The technical support dimension is weak in the EGS program and needs to be cultivated.

Thirdly, citizen ownership an essential ingredient is strong in EGS program. Schools are created in the EGS program based on the community demand for the school. They provide tangible support for the school by providing space and most importantly by the choice of the teacher. While their involvement in school activities may not be technically sophisticated, nevertheless their ownership is evident in their consistent concern and presence around the school. Community participation is not one of the strengths of the Fundescola program. An experience in *Marcia Meccia* state school in Bahia portrays the significance of the community that could be more systematically nurtured to improve schools in Brazil. The principal of this school with 1400 students had formed a committee made up of churches and other organizations in the area. Supported by this committee, the school held entertainment sessions and a variety of activities for parents during the weekend at the school. These activities helped parents understand the importance of the school and enabled them to reduce violence and drugs, which were serious problems in the school. The dropout in the school, which was 42% a few years ago, was now 17%. This kind of community involvement is not a requirement in the program and therefore, in the other schools visited community involvement was less widespread and rich - about 30% of the parents participated in electing school committee members and in meetings held for parents once in two months. The size and heterogeneity of schools in Brazil is clearly evident nevertheless more effective ways of mobilizing and sustaining community and parent support would be worth exploring. Another reason for nurturing community support refers to the PDE, while the financial transfers for PDE provides incentive for the school to develop and implement a plan, when the threshold for expenditure has been reached and financial incentives no longer exist, it is unclear how the momentum for school development will be maintained. This momentum could be sustained if there is a demanding and vibrant parent community insisting on a consistently high performing school.

Fourthly, there is a system of incentives in both EGS and Fundescola, located though at different levels. The incentive in the EGS is located at a single level namely the community. The establishment of the school is an incentive for parents' participation. Once the school has been provided, perhaps, in the EGS program, more comprehensive community incentive schemes could be explored to sustain their involvement over time. Rewarding few VECs who are successful serves to validate the achievements of a few VECs but does not serve to improve VECs across the board. Clearly, at levels within the school such as at the level of the teacher the incentives seems to less financial and more social and cultural, and there does not seem to be any compelling reason to make it financial and raise salaries in this program at this time except raising salaries to the minimum wage of $1 a day. The variation in performance of EGS centers suggests the need for systems of incentives to be established at the level of the administration, at the district and sub-district levels so that the program is managed and monitored more efficiently. The league tables for districts which is currently being implemented, may not be sufficient to raise the standards overall of administration and management. More targeted capacity building and creating a structure of expectations and incentives could be considered.

In Fundescola, the incentives are located at multiple levels. At the level of states and municipalities, the request for a product and concurrence with its related conditions gives them technical and financial support to implement the product. At the level of the school, the PDE is an incentive for schools to receive funds for improvement from the secretariats. The incentive structure for teachers receives considerable attention in Brazil. In order to dissuade teachers from taking on too many jobs the government insists that 60% of all federal transfers to municipalities must be spent on teachers' salaries. Brazil also has the Boscola Escola program (independent of Fundescola) off providing R.15 monthly per child (a maximum of three children per family) to families earning half the minimum wage (R.100). If student attendance in school falls to below 85%, the family fails to receive this money.[30]

Table 7: Financing on a Declining Scale in the PDE Fundescola

| Stage	% Financed by Fundescola	% Financed by state/Municipalities
Initial Financing (year 1)	100	0
Expansion (year 1)	70	30
Consolidation 1 (year 2)	50	50
Consolidation 2 (year 3)	30	70

Source: Sobrinho 2001

Fifthly, the issue of sustainability is more fully addressed in Fundescola than in the EGS program. The question of whether the GOMP will support and expand the EGS program beyond the DPEP and the new centrally sponsored program on Elementary Education known as the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan will be decided upon in the future. In Fundescola, each component is provided support on a declining scale; Table 7 provides an example of

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[30] Bourguignon et al. (2003) found that this scheme did help attendance but did not assist in poverty alleviation or achieving equity.

the declining scale in the PDE program. In both states visited many of the products were being implemented across the state with support from the Secretariats and independent of Fundescola. The alignment of Fundescola products within the overall policies and strategies of the states and municipalities in the strategy plan helps sustainability of the products.

Sixthly, the issue of equity in targeting and magnitude of support would need to be continuously addressed in both programs. Both governments insist that the programs will not be able to remove inequity but the intention here is to reduce inequity. While this intention is at this point in program implementation acceptable, the question of equity will continue to be raised and would need to be addressed. In the case of MP, equity between the EGS school and the regular primary school and provision of services equally across schools would need to be continuously explored. Furthermore, low salaries for EGS teachers especially when it is lower than the minimum wage does become an ethical issue. The standardization of the curriculum may actually be considered unfair for EGS student as much as the difference in physical facilities. Targeting in Fundescola does become an issue considering that the products are aimed at large schools in the country (Table 8) when more the 50% of the schools have less than 200 students. Even within micro regions and with reference to schools with over 200 students, the question of whether schools in relatively better politically connected communities receive more support and monitoring than others, would need consistent attention.

Table 8: Size of schools in the three regions
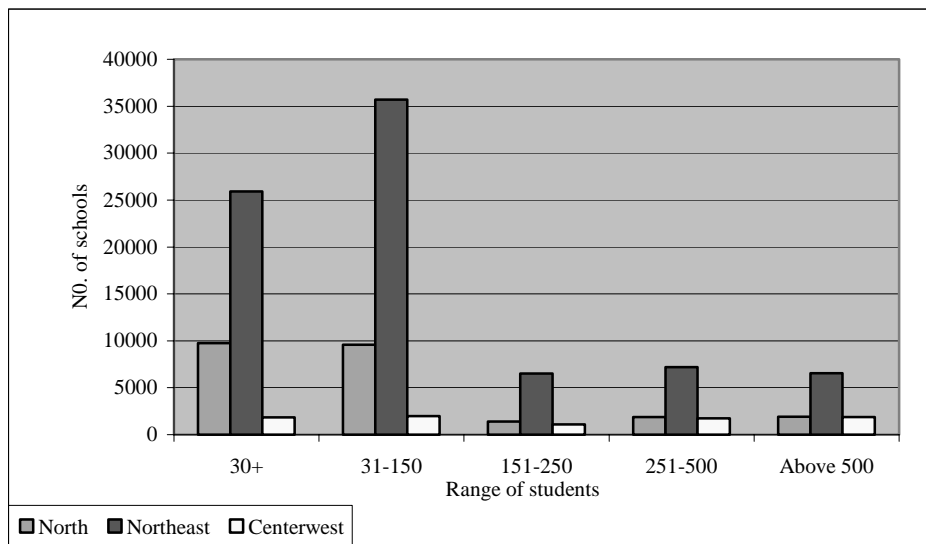
To conclude, both EGS and Fundescola represent successful educational reform in two different countries. The above discussion of the two programs further highlights the iterative nature of educational reform. The success of the two programs and the imperative to sustain and improve upon their current achievements draw attention to the need for further reform in policy such as regulations in preservice training, and financial allocations and the importance of revisiting and fine tuning the strategies employed in both programs. The community demand and support in the EGS program and the

technical assistance provided in Fundescola portray the strengths of each program in making services work. However, it also highlights the possibilities of enlarging the scope and effectiveness of the programs by engaging these dimensions -- for Fundescola the dimension of community ownership and for the EGS the development of technical assistance to districts.

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