Republic of Sierra Leone

2004 Population and Housing Census

Analytical Report on Education and Literacy

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADB	African Development Bank
BECE	Basic Education Certificate Examination
COMAHS	College of Medicine and Allied Health Sciences
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DEO	District Education Office
FBC	Fourah Bay College
GCR	Gross Completion Rate
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
GIR	Gross Intake Rate
HDI	Human Development Index
HEST	Higher Education, Science and Technology
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Country
HND	Higher National Diploma
HTC	Higher Teacher Certificate
IDA	International Development Association
IDB	Islamic Development Bank
IPAM	Institute of Public Administration and Management
JSS	Junior Secondary School
LGA	Local Government Areas
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
NCTVA	National Council for Technical, Vocational and other Academic Awards
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NIR	Net Intake Rate
NUC	Njala University College
NPSE	National Primary School Examination
OND	Ordinary National Diploma
SLIHS	Sierra Leone Integrated Household Survey

SRN	State Registered Nurse
SSS	Senior Secondary School
TC	Teacher Certificate
UBE	Universal Basic Education
UIS	UNESCO Institute of Statistics
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Educational Fund
WAEC	West African Examinations Council
WASSCE	West African Senior School Certificate Examination

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sierra Leone's 2004 Census took place almost two decades after the previous one of 1985. Separating the two censuses was a vicious civil conflict that lasted just over a decade and destroyed not only a significant percentage of the then existing infrastructure but brought the nation and its people to its knees. During the conflict, it appears that educational institutions were targeted and many schools and colleges were severely damaged or completely destroyed. A significant percentage of those who committed the most atrocious acts and who burnt down schools were school-age youths. By their acts those youths pronounced their disenchantment with all that schools represented. The message to the nation was clear.

With the end of the conflict in 2001 came much soul searching and vigorous action in the field of education. New legislations were enacted starting from 2001, new bodies were instituted and new institutions established and constructed. The enthusiasm at the centre was contagious, the fever seemingly spread to every corner of Sierra Leone and an education pandemic started. Data from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology indicated rocketing enrolments at all levels and the number of primary schools in the country appeared to grow daily.

The 2004 Census provides an opportunity to capture information on literacy and all levels of education and to confirm the explosion in enrolment suggested by data from the Ministry of Education Science and Technology. The Census attempts to obtain the needed information with just 3 questions/items:

(1) School attendance, that is, whether the person:
   (a) has never attended school
   (b) was still at school, and
   (c) had left school

(2) Educational Attainment, that is, the highest level attained
   (a) none
   (b) kindergarten
   (c) primary
   (b) Junior secondary
   (c) Senior secondary
   (d) Vocational/Commercial, etc

(3) Literacy, in terms of whether the respondent can read and write in any language

Not unexpectedly the normal census data collection and treatment problems were encountered and these have impacted to some extent on the analysis that has been possible. For example, the data collected does not allow an estimation of enrolment at the post school level and hence made computation of the Education Index based on the census data alone impossible. The Education

Index is important because it is used in computing the Human Development Index (HDI) which has been used in the past to categorise Sierra Leone as the 'least developed country'. Further, the questions asked for education mainly referred to the past rather than the situation at the time of the census itself. This necessitated a number of assumptions. Finally, no firm decision appeared to have been taken at the onset of the exercise as to whether smoothed or unsmoothed data was to be used for generating the data tables and/or for analysis purposes. This has the potential of creating a number of problems in interpreting reports written by different individuals who would arbitrarily and independently decide whether to use smoothed or unsmoothed data or a mixture of the two and may not indicate the position adopted in the report.

Notwithstanding the issues highlighted, a detailed analysis of the data collected on education was carried out for the purpose of this report and the main findings are presented below.

FINDINGS

Literacy

- ◊ The literacy rate for Sierra Leone (i.e. for 10 year olds and above) is 39%.
- ◊ At 63.9%, the 12 to 14 year olds have a higher literacy rate than all other education age ranges
- ◊ At less than 14%, the 65 year olds and above have the lowest literacy rate
- ◊ The younger age ranges possess significantly higher literacy rates than the older i.e. the gender difference in literacy rate is decreasing.
- ◊ The literacy rate of men is higher than that for women nationally and by region. The national literacy rate for men is 49% whilst that for women is 29%.
- ◊ The difference in literacy rates between males and females increases with age
- ◊ LGAs differ significantly in literacy rates
- ◊ The literacy rate for the Urban Western Area and Bo Town at 68% and 64% respectively, are higher than that of all other Local Government Areas (LGAs)
- ◊ At 21%, Koinadugu district has the lowest literacy rate of all LGAs
- ◊ The male and female literacy rates of Urban Western Area, 76% and 60% respectively, are higher than that of all other LGAs

◊ Such is the advantage of the Western Area over the other regions that the literacy rate of women in the Western Area is higher than even that of men in all other regions

◊ At 13% and 14% respectively, the female literacy rates of Kenema district, excluding Kenema Town, and Koinadugu district are the lowest in the whole of Sierra Leone

◊ The analysis suggests an urban – rural difference in literacy rates with the more urban areas having significantly higher literacy rates than the more rural areas

◊ The analysis suggests that the literacy rate will continue to increase in the coming years

◊ The analysis suggests that access to education is contributing significantly to increasing the literacy rate

School Attendance

◊ 40% of Sierra Leoneans aged 6 to 29 years have never attended school / received formal education whereas 29% of 6 to 11 year olds have never attended school

◊ At 79%, the school attendance rate is highest for 11 year olds

◊ 6 to 29 year old school attendance is higher for Makeni Town (64.6%) and Bo Town (64.2%) than for all LGAs

◊ 6 to 29 year old school attendance is lower for Koinadugu district (31.2%) than for all other districts

◊ Percentage school attendance in all main towns is higher than for Freetown (Urban Western Area)

◊ The analysis suggests an urban – rural divide in school attendance with percentage school attendance being significantly greater in the more urban areas than the more rural areas

◊ Whilst only 33 % of males aged 6 to 29 years have never attended school, the figure for females is 47%. The respective figures for 6 to 11 year olds are 29% and 30%

◊ The male – female difference in school attendance is lowest for the younger age ranges

◊ School attendance rates for the sexes differ significantly across the LGAs

◊ Male (6 to 29 year olds) school attendance rate is highest for Makeni Town (72%) and lowest for Koinadugu district (38%)

◊ Female (6 to 29 year olds) school attendance rate is highest for Bonthe Town (61%) and lowest for Koinadugu district (26%)

◊ At approximately 21%, the Western Area had the lowest percentage of 6 to 29 year olds that have never attended school of all regions

◊ The region with the highest percentage of 6 to 29 year olds that have never attended school was the Northern Region with an alarming 50%

◊ The younger age ranges have higher percentage school attendance the older age ranges

◊ The analysis suggests an encouraging picture of future school attendance assuming a continued commitment of government to increasing access to education

Kindergarten

◊ Approximately 84,979 respondents reported kindergarten as the highest level of education completed

Primary School Enrolment

◊ Approximately 823,435 five year olds and above were enrolled in primary school in 2003/04, 384,515 of whom were females

◊ Enrolment at primary school has more than doubled since the last census of 1985 which gave a primary enrolment figure of 316,158

◊ 53% of the 6 year olds and above at the primary level were males whilst 47% were females i.e. approximately 10 girls for every 11 boys in primary school

◊ Approximately 6% of the primary school population were 5 year olds in 2003/04

◊ 33% of all pupils enrolled in primary schools in 2003/04 were above 11 years of age

◊ Only 23% of pupils in Class 1 in 2003/04 were of the official school entry age of 6 years

- ◊ Only in Class 1 were pupils of the official age greater than 20%
- ◊ In Class 5, pupils of the official age formed only 8% of the total Class 5 enrolment
- ◊ Approximately 79% of pupils in Class 6 in 2004 were over 11 years of age
- ◊ The Net Intake and Gross Intake Rates (NIR and GIR) for Class 1 in 2003/04 were 29% and 128% respectively
- ◊ The NIR and GIR for girls were 29% and 130% respectively and that for boys were 28% and 126% respectively
- ◊ Class 1 contains some under-aged children but even more over-aged
- ◊ The primary school Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) in 2004 was 104%
- ◊ The GER for girls was 98% and that for boys was 110%
- ◊ The primary school Net Enrolment Rate in 2004 was 64%
- ◊ The NER for girls was 63% and that for boys was 65%
- ◊ At 81% and 137% respectively, Makeni Town had the highest NER and GER of all LGAs
- ◊ At 39% and 65% respectively, Koinadugu district had the lowest NER and GER of all LGAs
- ◊ At 77% and 116% respectively, the Western Area had the highest NER and GER respectively of all regions
- ◊ The Northern Region had the lowest NER and GER at 57% and 94% respectively
- ◊ At 83% and 80%, Makeni Town had the highest male and female NER respectively of all LGAs
- ◊ Makeni Town also had the highest male and female GERs of all LGAs at 143% and 132% respectively
- ◊ Koinadugu district had the lowest NER and GER of both sexes for all LGAs: NER – 41% (male) and 38% (female); GER – 71% (male) and 59% (female)

- ◊ The Western Area had the highest NER and GER of both sexes for all regions: NER – 78% (male) and 76% (female); GER – 120% (male) and 113% (female)

- ◊ The Northern Region had the lowest NER and GER of both sexes for all regions: NER – 60% (male) and 55% (female); GER – 102% (male) and 84% (female)

- ◊ No LGA or region had a gender parity index below 0.89

- ◊ LGAs with primary level NER gender indices of 1 and above were Kailahun district, Koidu Town, Bonthe LG District, excluding Bonthe Town, Moyamba district and Pujehun district

- ◊ LGAs with primary level GER gender indices of 1 and above were Bonthe LG District, excluding Bonthe Town, and Pujehun district

- ◊ The analysis indicated a Gross Completion Rate (GCR) of approximately 56% for the primary level

- ◊ At approximately 64%, the GCR for males was significantly higher than the 48% for females

- ◊ There are significant differences between the GCRs of the LGAs and the regions

- ◊ The GCR for Bonthe Town was an astonishing 155%

- ◊ Bonthe Town also had the highest male and female primary GCRs of all LGAs at 181% and 136% respectively

- ◊ At approximately 23%, Koinadugu district had the lowest GCR of all LGAs

- ◊ Koinadugu district also had the lowest male and female primary GCRs of all LGAs at 29% and 18% respectively

- ◊ The more urban LGAs have higher GCRs than the more rural

- ◊ At approximately 88%, the Western Area had the highest GCR of all regions

- ◊ The Northern Region had the lowest GCR (39%) of all regions

- ◊ The difference between the parity indices for the GIR and the GCR suggest that fewer girls than boys starting primary schooling at Class 1 go on to complete Class 6

◊ Should the trend of pupils entering Class 1 in 2003/04 be maintained and those entering be retained until Class 6 then by 2008/09 Sierra Leone would have achieved a 1:1 ratio in terms of enrolment of boys and girls at the primary level assuming that pupils entering primary school above Class 1 are relatively close in terms of proportion of boys and girls

◊ Sierra Leone is faced with a very stiff challenge if it is to meet its national and Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target of a Primary Completion Rate of 100% by 2015

Junior Secondary Enrolment

◊ Enrolment in Junior Secondary Schools (JSS) in 2003/04 totalled 143,407 approximately consisting of 87,787 males and 55,620 females

◊ At approximately 50,000, Urban Western Area (Freetown) had a higher JSS population than all other LGAs and all regions except the Western Area where it is found

◊ With approximately 427 students, Bonthe Town had a lower JSS enrolment than all other LGAs

◊ There were significantly more boys than girls enrolled in every LGA and every region in 2003/04

◊ The gender parity indices for numbers enrolled in JSS were still larger for the Eastern Region (1.9) and the Northern Region (2.0) than for the Western Area (1.2) in 2003/04 notwithstanding the provision of free JSS education for girls in the former regions

◊ The great majority of students (approximately 76%) in JSS in 2003/04 were over-aged

◊ Only 21% of those in JSS in 2003/04 were in the official age range of 12 to 14 years

◊ The JSS GER in 2003/04 was 41%

◊ The GER for girls was 32% and that for boys was 49%

◊ The JSS NER in 2003/04 was 12%

◊ The NER for girls was 11% and that for boys was 13%

◊ At 29% Urban Western Area had the highest NER of all LGAs

◊ At 86% Bo Town had the highest GER of all LGAs

◊ At 3% and 13% respectively, Koinadugu district had the lowest NER and GER of all LGAs

◊ At 27% and 78% respectively, the Western Area had the highest NER and GER respectively of all regions

◊ The Northern Region had the lowest NER and GER at 6% and 25% respectively

◊ At 31% and 27%, Urban Western Area (Freetown) had the highest male and female NER respectively of all LGAs, only Bo Town had an equal female NER

◊ Bo Town also had the highest male GERs of all LGAs at 107% and Urban Western Area had the highest female GER at 71%

◊ Koinadugu district had the lowest NER and GER of the sexes for all LGAs in terms of: NER – 4% (male) ; GER – 16% (male) and 9% (female). Kono LG District, excluding Koidu Town had the lowest female NER at 2%

o The Western Area had the highest NER and GER of both sexes for all regions: NER – 29% (male) and 25% (female); GER – 90% (male) and 67% (female)

o The Northern Region had the lowest NER and GER of both sexes for all regions: NER – 8% (male) and 5% (female); GER – 32% (male) and 17% (female)

◊ No LGA or region had a gender parity index above 0.88

◊ The LGAs with the highest JSS NER gender index were Bo LG District, excluding Bo Town and Urban Western Area (Freetown) at 0.88

◊ The LGA with the lowest NER gender index was Kambia district at 0.53

◊ The parity indices for the NER tend to be greater than those for the GER suggesting, amongst other things, that over-aged girls are fewer in JSS than over-aged boys

Senior Secondary Enrolment

◊ According to the Census, enrolment at SSS was approximately 65,141 in 2003/04 of whom 22,483 were girls and 42,658 were boys

◊ At 33,865 Urban Western Area (Freetown) had a higher SSS population than all other LGAs and all regions except the Western Area where it is found.

- ◊ More than 50% of all students enrolled in SSS were to be found in Urban Western Area (Freetown)

- ◊ With 181 students, Bonthe Town had a lower SSS enrolment than all other LGAs

- ◊ There were significantly more boys than girls enrolled in every LGA and every region in 2003/04

- ◊ The gender parity indices for numbers enrolled in SSS were still larger for the Eastern Region (2.8) and the Northern Region (2.5) than for the Western Area (1.6) in 2003/04 notwithstanding the provision of free JSS education for girls in the former regions

- ◊ The great majority of students (approximately 77%) in SSS in 2003/04 were over-aged

- ◊ Only 18% of those in SSS in 2003/04 were in the official age range of 12 to 14 years

- ◊ The SSS GER in 2003/04 was 22%

- ◊ The GER for girls was 14% and that for boys was 30%

- ◊ The SSS NER in 2003/04 was 6%

- ◊ The NER for girls was 5% and that for boys was 6%

- ◊ At 17% Urban Western Area (Freetown) had the highest NER of all LGAs

- ◊ At 58% Urban Western Area (Freetown) also had the highest GER of all LGAs

- ◊ Koinadugu, Moyamba, Tonkolili, Bombali, excluding Makeni Town, Kono, excluding Koidu Town, Kenema, excluding Kenema Town all had very low SSS NERs of only 1%

- ◊ Kono district, excluding Koidu Town had the lowest SSS GER of all LGAs at 3%

- ◊ At 15% and 53% respectively, the Western Area had the highest NER and GER respectively of all regions

- ◊ The Northern Region had the lowest NER and GER at 2% and 10% respectively

- ◊ At 18% and 15%, Urban Western Area (Freetown) had the highest male and female NER respectively of all LGAs

- ◊ Urban Western Area (Freetown) also had the highest male and female GERs of all LGAs at 73% and 44%, respectively

- ◊ Females attending SSS in Kono district out of Koidu Town are so small in number that the computed NER for females in the district approximate to 0%

- ◊ 13 out of 19 LGAs have male and female SSS NER of 4% and below

- ◊ Kono district had the lowest SSS male and female GERs than all LGAs at 5% and 2% respectively

- ◊ The Western Area had the highest NER and GER of both sexes for all regions: NER – 17% (male) and 14% (female); GER – 67% (male) and 40% (female)

- ◊ The Northern Region had the lowest NER and GER of both sexes for all regions: NER – 2% (male) and 1% (female); GER – 7% (male) and 3% (female)

- ◊ No LGA or region had a gender parity index above 0.84

- ◊ The LGAs with the highest SSS NER gender index was Urban Western Area at 0.84

- ◊ The LGA with the lowest NER and GER gender indices was Kambia district at 0.26 and 0.20 respectively

- ◊ The parity indices for the NER tend to be greater than those for the GER suggesting, amongst other things, that over-aged girls are fewer in SSS than over-aged boys

- ◊ The analysis clearly indicates that individuals living in towns are at an advantage relative to those in more rural areas in terms of access to SSSs

- ◊ The large LGA, regional and gender disparities in accessing SSS as indicated by the NERs and GERs are causes for concern as they have potentially serious implications for national development.

Combined School Level Enrolment

◊ 74% of all those at school are in primary school

◊ Less than 6% of those in school are in SSS

◊ School level education in Sierra Leone is very pyramidal. JSS enrolment in 2004 was 17% of primary enrolment and SSS enrolment was 8% of the same

◊ Both the NER and GER decrease significantly in moving from the primary to the junior secondary and then to the senior secondary levels

Level	Net Enrolment Ratio (NER)	Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)
Primary	64%	104%
Junior Secondary	12%	34%
Senior Secondary	6%	22%

◊ The differences in the NERs and GERs of the different levels of schooling are large and worrying for all LGAs with values for the SSS level being extremely small relative those for the primary level

◊ The difference in male and female enrolment at school level is least for the primary and highest for the SSS level

◊ The retention rate for girls across the different school levels is much less than that for boys i.e. fewer girls than boys stay on to the SSS level

Vocational / Commercial Enrolment

◊ 5,818 respondents still pursuing educational programmes reported vocational / commercial courses below OND level as the highest level of education completed

◊ Another 1,694 still pursuing educational programmes reported completing courses above the OND but below the HND level

◊ More females (64%) than males (36%) still pursuing educational courses reported completing vocational / commercial programmes nationwide

◊ 46% of all respondents still in education and reporting completion of vocational / commercial courses below HND level were from the Western Area

◊ 57,083 reported completing courses up to the level above but were not pursuing educational programmes in 2004

◊ Overall 64,595 individuals (1.3% of the national population) reported completion of vocational / commercial programmes up to HND level as their highest level completed. 41% of these individuals are to be found in the Western Area

Teacher Training (TC and HTC) Enrolment

◊ 4,920 respondents, still pursuing educational programmes, gave the Teachers Certificate and the Higher Teachers' Certificate as the highest level of education completed by 2004

◊ 3,167 (64%) of the above respondents were male and 1,753 (36%) were females

◊ 20,156 respondents gave the TC/HTC as the highest level completed but were not pursuing educational programmes in 2004

◊ Overall, 25,076 individuals (0.5% of the national population) gave TC/HTC as the highest level completed. 33% of these were in the Western Area

Technical Training (OND and HND) Enrolment

◊ Respondents still in education reporting OND and HND courses as the highest level of education completed by 2004 numbered 1,694

◊ 1,207 (71%) of the above were male and 487 (29%) were female

◊ Technical training is still largely male dominated

◊ A total of 6,995 individuals (0.1% of the national population) gave technical training up to HND level as the highest level completed. 64% of these individuals were from the Western Area

◊ The relatively small number of trained and qualified technicians available has serious implications for the development of the nation

Trained Nurses

◊ 658 individuals still pursuing educational programmes reported completing courses leading to nursing qualifications up to the State Registered Nurse (SRN) level by 2004

◊ 164 (25%) of the above were males but the great majority 494 (75%) were females

◊ Nursing is a female dominated profession in Sierra Leone

◊ 2,409 individuals not pursuing educational programmes in 2004 reported completion of nurses training up to SRN level as their highest level of education completed

◊ Overall, 3,067 individuals (0.06% of the national population) gave nurses training up to SRN level as the highest level of education completed. 50% of these individuals were found in the Western Area.

◊ The very small number of trained nurses in some of the LGAs should be a matter for national concern

Tertiary Education

◊ 6,068 respondents still pursuing educational programmes reported completion of tertiary level / university courses up to post-graduate level by 2004. 4,362 (74%) were male and 1,706 (28%) were females

◊ 3,106 (51%) of the above had completed certificate and diploma courses, 2,614 (43%) had completed first degree courses and 348 (6%) had completed post-graduate courses

◊ 25,099 individuals reported completing of tertiary/university level courses up to post graduate level were not pursuing any educational programmes in 2004

◊ Overall 31,167 individuals (0.6%) gave completion of tertiary/university level courses up to post graduate level as the highest level they had completed. 70% of these individuals were to be found in the Western Area

◊ Reported first degree completers correspond to 0.3% of the population

◊ Reported post-graduate courses/programmes completers corresponded to 0.1% of the population

Post-Secondary Education

TC/HTC	Tech OND+HND	Nursing (Up to SRN)	Tertiary Cert/Dip	Tertiary 1st Degree	Tertiary Post Grad	All Tertiary
26%	7%	3%	14%	14%	4%	32%
25,076	6,995	3,067	13,333	13,658	4,176	31,167

◊ Most individuals with post-secondary qualifications possess a TC or HTC

◊ Individuals with first degrees are only less numerous than those with TC and/or HTC

◊ Trained and qualified nurses up to SRN level constitute only 3% of those with post-secondary qualifications in the population

All Levels of Education

◊ More than 24.6% of the population gave pre-primary and/or primary education as the highest level of education completed in 2004

◊ More than 35% of the population gave school level education as the highest level of education completed

◊ Less than 3% of the population gave post-school education as the highest level of education completed

◊ There were significantly more students in 2004 than in 1985

Prim	*JSS*	*SSS*	*Voc/Comm*	*Techs*	*SRN*	*TC/HTC*	*Tertiary*	*Other*
1,224,204	318,269	207,228	62,901	6,995	3,067	25,076	31,167	3,097,964
24.60%	6.39%	4.16%	1.26%	0.14%	0.06%	0.50%	0.63%	62.25%

The overall picture of education painted by the census is one of ongoing progress and improvement but with a tremendous amount of work still to be done to improve quality at all levels, to improve net enrolment and completion rates, to make education less pyramidal and minimise academic elitism and to provide quality vocational / commercial education for the hundreds of thousands whose education may otherwise end at the junior secondary level in the future. The challenges are huge but invigorating.

Census	Primary	Secondary
Yr. 2004	823,435	208,548
Yr. 1985	316,158	98,016

SIERRA LEONE 2004 CENSUS

EDUCATION AND LITERACY

SECTION I

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Education and Literacy

The traditional definition of literacy is the acquisition of knowledge and skills to read, write and understand numbers. Education on the other hand is much broader as it involves literacy, knowledge of basic science, civic education, occupational skills, and a set of healthy values and attitudes which enable people to cope with problems of life. The interconnectedness of education and literacy is indicated by the fact that education is acquired by becoming literate i.e. the acquisition of literacy involves the acquisition of education.

Education and literacy have featured in national censuses since 1931. The census of 1963 featured an item on literacy that asked, "Can this person read and write any language?" The 1974 Census item was along the same lines. Because it has proven to be particularly difficult to probe, the tendency has been to infer literacy from levels of school attendance and educational attainment. This practice continued in the 1985 census in which there was no direct item on literacy. Instead education was probed with just two questions:

(2) School attendance, that is, whether the person:
  (a) had never attended school
  (b) was still at school, and
  (c) had left school

(3) Educational Attainment, that is, the highest level attained
  (a) primary
  (b) secondary, and
  (c) post-secondary

The 2004 census is an improvement on the 1985 census in that it includes a question on literacy unlike the 1985 census, i.e.:
Can the person read and write, in any language?

The adequacy of this question for determining whether or not an individual is literate is open to debate. Can someone who has memorised part of the alphabet or recognise a familiar word and sign his/her name only be categorised as literate? Some may respond – "Yes. If the definition so allows." This matter is discussed further later. The relevance of the debate to this report is that the literacy figures presented should truly indicate the literacy situation of the country.

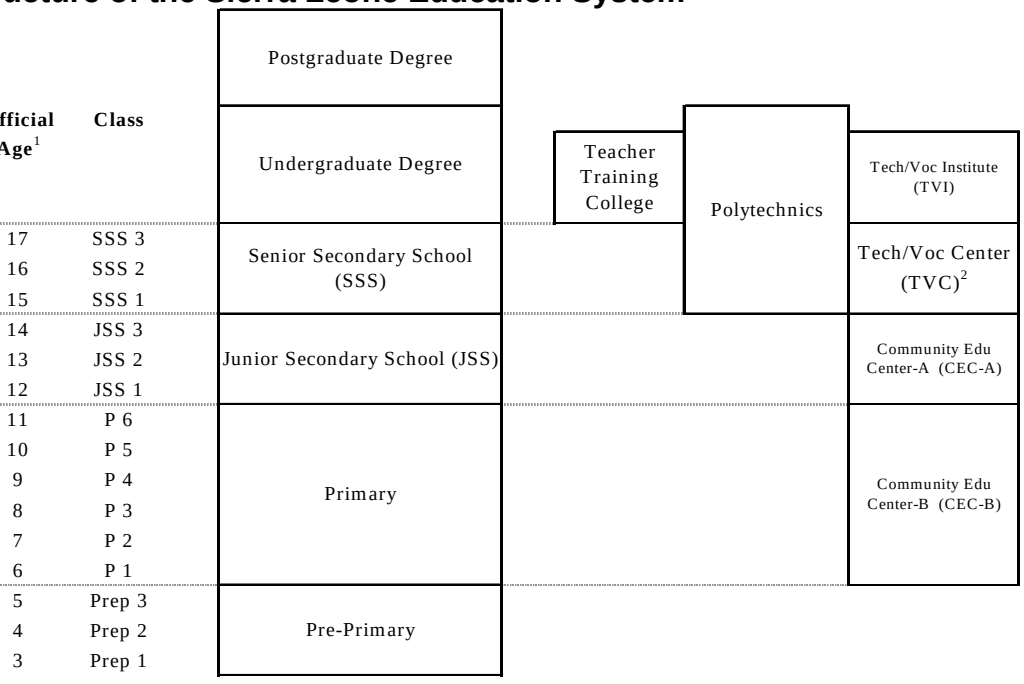
Like the 1985 census however, the 2004 edition probed education largely in terms of institution based formal education. It is only possible to adduce that the "vocational/commercial" response to the question on the highest level of education attained could be referring to both formal and non-formal situations/institutions. The uncertainty of the non-formal situation is not made easier by the "other" responses as they could refer to situations/institutions that are both formal and non-formal.

The timing of the census, the nature of the items and the manner in which the education items were presented by the enumerators have all impacted on the responses and the analysis as will be indicated later.

1.2. The Schooling System Context

The analysis that follows should be viewed within the context of a 6-3-3-4 system of education which aims at making education of quality accessible to as many as possible and which has the structure depicted pictorially below.

Structure of the Sierra Leone Education System



[1] This is the official age for general education (GE), however there is a wide range of ages currently enrolled at the different levels of the GE. These ages are not applicable to TVET programs.

[2] Vocational Trade Center (VTC) is part of Tech/Voc Center (TVC).
Taken From: Country Status Report, World Bank

The system should in theory provide openings for individuals with different abilities and talents.

1.3. The Policy and Governance of Education Context

The Constitution of Sierra Leone and the 2004 Education Act both make compulsory basic education (i.e. primary and junior secondary schooling) a target. Of high priority are also the education of women and girls and middle level man-power development through technical and vocational education and training. In order to achieve the foregoing, the government has, as shown later, allocated significant percentages of its domestically generated revenue to education and has also sourced large amounts of donor funding.

Although the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology remains in control of education and overall monitoring, setting of standards and setting national policies and goals, the Local Government Act of 2004 gives responsibility for the management of basic education (i.e. education at the primary and junior secondary school level) to Local Councils. By this single move, the major part of education is decentralised and making basic education ultimately free and compulsory becomes a major responsibility of local government.

In addition to the Education Act, Year 2004 saw the enactment of the first Universities Act. These followed on from, amongst others, Sierra Leone's first ever Polytechnics Act which was passed into 2001.

The Universities Act made possible the establishment of more than one university in Sierra Leone as well as the possibility of establishing private universities. By this Act, tertiary level education was opened up and competition introduced. Issues of enrolment at the tertiary level should therefore be viewed from the context of the expansion and the greater variety of offerings made possible by the Act.

The Polytechnics Act made possible the establishment of the first ever polytechnics in Sierra Leone and brought into existence an alternative to the university. With the establishment of the polytechnics those choosing to pursue technical / vocational programmes now no longer have to end their education below university level.

The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) provides the overall framework for donor support to Sierra Leone. A central pillar of the report is education. The PRSP priority education programme targets for the period 2006 -2007 are presented on the next page.

SL-PRSP OBJECTIVE	EXPECTED OUTCOME	SL-PRSP			TARGET	
		INDICATOR	BASE NUMBERS	BASE YEAR	2006	2007
Expand access to Basic Education For All	Increased gross enrollment rate in primary and Junior Secondary Schools	Primary Net Enrolment Rate	70%	2004	75%	78%
		JSS Net Enrolment Rate	13%	2004	17%	20%
		Primary Completion Rate	60%	2004	67%	71%
		Primary Pupil: Teacher Ratio	52:1	2004	50:1	50:1
		JSS Pupil: Teacher Ratio	28:1	2004	29:1	30:1
	Increased female enrolment	Ratio of girls to boys in Primary Education	1:1.2	2004	1:1.1	1:1.1
		Ratio of Girls to boys in Secondary Education	JSS 1:1.5 (41%) SSS 1:1.6 (38%)	2004	1:1.4	1:1.4
	Increased passes in public examination	NPSE Passes (230 Pass T-Score)	43,403	2004	61,000	63,000
		Girls passing NPSE % of total (230 Pass T-Score)	35% (15,182)	2004	37%	38%
		BECE Passes (4+passes)	16,610	2004	17,500	18,000
		Primary Textbook : Pupil Ratio in the 5 weakest districts	1:5	2004	1:3	1:2
		Literacy Rate	31%	2004	36%	38%

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology reports existing 'recognised and approved' primary schools to be in excess of 4,000 but only 280 junior secondary schools and fewer senior secondary schools. The expansion of the level above primary school must take place in order to avoid chaos and a collapse of the system but there is some doubt that the products of the tertiary level are sufficient to man expanded secondary education. This report presents data on enrolment at the different levels of schooling and thus makes it possible to estimate and cost expansion of schooling above primary level.

1.4. Government Inputs to Education

The Government of the day has indicated its commitment to education by consistently contributing more than 30% of its domestic revenue to education. In

fact in 2004, it contributed 32.7% of its domestic revenue which was equivalent to 17% of Government's total expenditure to education. This percentage of financing is larger than that for Health, Defence and Agriculture.

Using largely its own domestically generated funds, the Government has introduced free primary education by paying the fees for all primary school students, providing free primary pupils textbooks in the core subjects of English Language, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies, paying for all school level examinations (i.e. the National Primary School Examination (NPSE), the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) and the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE)), providing free junior secondary education for all successful female students attending school in the Eastern and Northern Regions, providing furniture and teaching / learning materials for schools and, with assistance from the World Food Programme (WFP), providing school feeding for some districts outside the Western Area.

In addition to the funds from its own resources, Government has sought and received loans for the development and advancement of education. The external assistance received for education includes those from the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative, the Islamic Development Bank, BADEA, and the African Development Bank (ADB) and World Bank for the Sababu Education Project. Through the Sababu Education Project in particular, approximately US$36 million is being spent on the quantitative and qualitative construction and rehabilitation of basic education and vocational skills training. Stick and palm fronds primary schools are being replaced by solid structures, junior secondary schools are being constructed for chiefdoms which never had one before although they possessed several primary schools, textbooks in English Language, Science, Mathematics and Social Studies are being supplied, untrained and unqualified primary school teachers are receiving condensed short term training and School Management Committees are being established and trained.

1.5. The Expansion of Education

As a direct consequence of the input being made into education, the demand for education has risen markedly, access has increased and enrolment, especially at the primary level has, according to data from the Inspectorate Directorate of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST), risen spectacularly. In fact it is reported that between 1995/96 and 2003, enrolment at the primary level more than doubled.

At the post-secondary / tertiary level, the biggest increases have taken place in teacher training, especially for the distance education programme. In fact enrolment on the distance education programme for teachers is now larger than for some of the teacher colleges.

Unsurprisingly there are more schools and educational institutions now than ever before.

SECTION II

Data Sources and Issues

2.1. The Survey Questions

(i) School attendance, that is, whether the person:
- (a) has never attended school
- (b) was still at school, and
- (c) had left school

(ii) Educational Attainment, that is, the highest level attained
- (a) none
- (b) kindergarten
- (c) primary
- (d) Junior secondary
- (e) Senior secondary
- (f) Voc/Comm, etc

(iii) Literacy, in terms of whether the respondent can read and write in any language

2.2. Assumptions and Limitations of Questions

The booklet for Census enumerators indicate that for respondents answering that they had attended or were still at school, the follow-up question should be on the highest level completed. The Census was conducted in December 2004. This means that for those still attending school, the responses to a large extent would indicate the class of the respondent in the 2003/04 academic year and not the 2004/05 academic year when the question was being posed. A cursory glance at the responses suggest that some enumerators may not have posed the question correctly or/and some respondents may not have properly understood what was meant by the highest class completed for a variety of possible reasons. Further, some respondents may have left school at the end of the 2003/04 academic year and therefore would not still be in school in the 2004/05 academic year but should have had their responses counted for the 2003/04 academic year. As there was no question on the year on which the class was completed there is no way of knowing who should be counted amongst those reporting to have left school. This means that enrolment for 2003/04 as indicated in the tables generated would be an underestimate. The extent of under-reporting is unknown but could be quite significant for the primary level. The alternative of deducing enrolment for the 2004/05 academic year is difficult because the transition rates from one level to another are unknown and the repetition rates are also unknown. The assumptions that would have to be made are too many for the figures generated to possess an acceptable degree of reliability for a census.

The enrolment numbers for education refer to the 2003/04 academic year. The census was conducted in December 2004. The 2003/04 academic year starts in

September/October 2003. It follows that any 6 year old respondent indicating that he was in Class 1 in 2003/04 was in fact 5 years old at the time. This means that the question does inadvertently capture the five year olds that were in the system. It confirms that significant numbers of pupils now start primary schooling below the age of six years. It also suggests that the age groupings given in the generated education tables should be amended to reflect the true age of the respondents in 2003/04. The necessary amendments have been made for this report.

Because the Census was conducted at the end of 2004 rather than at the start, and the education data refers to enrolment in the 2003/04 academic year, the population figures obtained are not the most appropriate to be used for computing some of the educational statistics unless some assumptions are made. For example, almost all that were in the age range 6-11 years in December 2003, would be in the age range 7-12 years in December 2004. This would not be a hundred per cent accurate because, amongst other things, some would have died. In the absence of anything else however, it would make more sense to use the census 7-12 years age range for computations based on those in the range 6-11 years in the 2003/04 academic year than to use the 6-11 years age range in the census.

The consequence of asking a question that refers to a previous year and others that refer to the current academic year means that not all the tables generated would be making reference to the same academic year. If possible, this should be avoided for future censuses.

The writers of this report recommend that this item be reviewed, modified and pre-tested before use in the next census. The item and the census must refer to the same year otherwise problems in computation would arise and a number of assumptions which could impact on the reliability of the data would have to be made. Further, the questions posed by the enumerators should be very simple and easily understood by respondents and enumerators alike. The response should accurately yield the information required. For example, does class completed mean: ‘the highest class the student had done one year irrespective of whether it was passed or failed’ or does it mean ‘the highest class the student passed’.

All the questions on education were designed to seek information on individuals of 6 years of age and over at the time of the census. The nature of the item and the way it was supposed to be asked by the enumerators meant that although individuals of 6 and above were questioned, the responses referred to a period of time when they were five and above. Although it may have been inadvertent, the writers of this report assume that it was planned. The fact that five year olds are covered is good, as pre-school facilities and kindergartens are mushrooming in urban areas because parents see an advantage in giving their children an early start to their education. Further, with primary level education now being free, school feeding programmes in operation in a number of districts and with the level of school support from government dependent on enrolment, many parents

and schools co-operate in getting children to start primary school below 6 years of age. In fact an analysis of the SLIHS data has shown that a significant percentage of 5 year olds (19% as compared to 26% of 6 year olds enrolled in Class 1) country-wide are enrolled in school. The omission of information on the specific number of those who may have been in school in 2003/04 but had left school by the start of the 2004/05 academic year means that the Gross and Net Enrolment Ratio values given in this report would be underestimates just as the enrolments themselves would be underestimates. This also means that the reported enrolment figures are going to be less than figures obtainable from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and from some other surveys.

With regard to the first question on education, a respondent asked whether he/she has ever attended school would respond in the affirmative whether he/she attended for 6 years or just 2 hours and this could give a misleading picture of 'real' school attendance.

Although much broader in coverage than in the 1985 census, the question on level of education attained is problematic as it appears that non-formal education is categorized as other when it has its formal equivalent. It should also be noted that 'vocational/commercial' education is not necessarily non-formal. In fact presently, a significant percentage of vocational/commercial offerings tend to be very structured and formal. For future censuses, this item should be reviewed to capture and categorise at appropriate levels all of those who have accessed and benefited from non-formal education.

The literacy item assumes, as do all other items, that respondents are honest in their statements. Especially for this item, given that illiteracy is stigmatized, the temptation for a respondent to respond in the affirmative to the question – Can you read and write in any language – is great even if it is not true. But even assuming complete honesty, a respondent who has memorized a single sentence and can reproduce that sentence as well as write his/her name will correctly respond to the question in the affirmative even though he/she can hardly be called literate expect by the definition of literacy seemingly employed for the purpose of the census.

For future censuses, it should be noted that a similar or this same item may be much improved by accompanying it with a simple and very short practical test of literacy to confirm any 'yes' responses given. As it stands the reliability of the conclusions drawn from responses to the item is open to debate. The best that can be done is to compare the census findings to that of surveys conducted around the same time such as the slightly earlier SLIHS. The only problem is that different surveys / censuses tend to use slightly different definitions of literacy as well as slightly different questions/items/approaches. Using a uniform approach and similar or same item/questions should prove useful for comparison purposes. Perhaps, the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) methodology and item could be utilized for future surveys and censuses.

The writers of the education report have a few observations about the population data. The data for the 'special group' population i.e. those that were not at home on census day but somewhere else such as in prison, on duty at the border, sleeping on the street, etc., was not disaggregated by age and added to the general population neither were the few in the 'not stated' category. Although these two groups together constitute only about 1% of the population, they should not be ignored for a true picture of the total population of Sierra Leone.

That responses to questions need to be treated with care is indicated by the single age distribution of the population as given by respondents. There are distinct spikes which have been smoothed but have not been used to generate the tables used for this report. Even though the distribution of the unsmoothed population was patently abnormal, see annexe, some argued that the unsmoothed population should be employed and the expert generating the table chose to use the unsmoothed population. The consequence is that there is a distinct possibility that generated tables are presenting a slightly misleading picture of the situation in reality. The only consolation is that it can be argued that the unsmoothed population is indicative of what the respondents gave, whether the respondents gave true or accurate responses is largely a matter of conjecture. What is known now even as this report is being written is that whilst the population of 6 to 11 years using the unsmoothed household population data is 814,285, that using the smoothed total population data is 792,646. The difference is less than 5%. It should be noted that the smoothed total and the unsmoothed total populations are identical i.e. 4,976,871, whilst the household population (exclusive of the 'special group' and 'not stated' populations) is reported as 4,930,532. The difference between the smoothed and unsmoothed populations is therefore simply a matter of distribution.

The foregoing having been said, the education questions are still improvements on those in the 1985 Census and much useful and needed information can be gleaned from the responses.

2.3 The Tables and Analysis Limitations

For the purpose of the hundred percent analyses, four basic sets of tables have been generated. All others are subsets or different orientations of these tables. The first table is on the population of 6 years of age and above not attending school at the time of the census by educational attainment, age and sex. In the table generated for the 10% analysis respondents that have attained teacher training (TC/HTC), technical institute (OND/HND) and nurses training (up to SRN) levels were grouped together but for the 100% they have been disaggregated. The same has been done for primary schooling which has been disaggregated by class for the purpose of this report.

By separating the teacher training and OND/HND levels from tertiary education the misleading impression is created that both of the former are below the tertiary level. This is not the case. For future censuses, the possible misinterpretation

can be avoided by having different categories of tertiary education e.g. institute, teacher training college, polytechnic and university.

The second table on education generated from the census covers the responses of the population of 6 years of age and above attending school at the time of the census by educational attainment, age and sex. The coverage of the table in terms of educational attainment is the same as for the first table; the unusual thing about it is that it indicates a surprising number of 6 – 11 year old respondents in senior secondary school. This is suspected to be just data entry error and it is not significant. In general, concerns are the same as for the first table, with the addition that both the Net Enrolment Ratios (NERs) and Gross Enrolment Ratios (GERs) computed will be under-estimates for the reasons given earlier.

The main problem with the second table is that it is based on responses to the question posed by enumerators on the 'highest level completed'. No mention is made of year of completion so it could be referring to the previous academic year or 10 years earlier. Whilst it can be assumed that the great majority of those respondents indicating completion of classes at school level had done so the previous academic year, it is much more difficult to make the same assumption for those at post-school level e.g. those indicating that they had completed Teacher Certificate (TC) or Higher Teacher Certificate (HTC) programmes.

The third table generated covers literacy information on 10 year olds and above. The age of 10 years was employed to keep in line with the requirements of the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS). Although the question on which the table is based is controversial because it solicits just a dichotomous and relatively subjective response, the table itself is non-controversial. For this report, in addition to the original age groupings, a second table from which literacy by single ages can be computed has also been generated.

The fourth table generated provides information on 6 to 29 years of age receiving and not receiving education. It provides supporting and confirmatory information for the first two tables. It is relatively non-controversial as it is reflective of the data collected.

2.4 Comparison with the 1985 and earlier Censuses

Prior to 1963, population census in Sierra Leone was based on a complete count in the Western Area and sample estimates in the provincial areas. These types of 'censuses' with controversial sampling and estimation procedures were conducted between 1901 and 1948 inclusive. The 1963, 1974, 1985 and 2004 censuses on the other hand were not only de facto, but were characterized by a complete count of the population of Sierra Leone. Thus, the last four censuses have provided major sources of population statistics not only for the running of government, but also for national development and planning.

As indicated earlier, the 2004 census did not only consider school attendance and educational attainment, but unlike the 1985 census, went further to probe literacy. As also indicated earlier, possibly because of disagreements on exactly how literacy should be probed and the validity of the possible inferences from the responses, literacy was probed in 1931 and 1963 but not in 1974 and 1985.

Although in comparison with 1985, the 2004 census expanded the possible responses for level of education attained, the inclusion of 'Vocational/Commercial', 'Technical' and 'Other' options however still do not allow a probing of non-formal education as no clear demarcation of what is formal and what is non-formal under each option is provided.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the 2004 Census is an improvement on earlier censuses in content.

SECTION III

The Literacy Situation

3.1 Past and Present Literacy Rates

Various literacy rates have been given by recent past surveys and reports. Comparison of the rates shown in Table 1 below is difficult because the methodology and definitions used were not identical but the overall trend shown is that of increase in the literacy rate up to 2001.

Table1 – Literacy Rates 1985, 1995, 2000, 2001

Gender	*CSO*		*CSO*
	1985	*1995*	*2000*
Male	17%	31%	40%
Female	9%	11%	20%
National Average	13%	21%	30%

The 1985 Census Report indicates that literacy quoted was not directly measured but inferred from the assumption that all completing primary education were literate. The shortcomings of this assumption are many. What is certain is that for a developing country such as Sierra Leone, it would provide a very unreliable estimate of the literacy rate. Further, the seeming assumption that those yet to complete primary education are illiterate is quite untenable.

In 2002, the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey was conducted by Statistics Sierra Leone with funds from UNICEF. The finding obtained was not unexpected as shown in Table 2 overleaf, i.e. the higher the grade attained, the easier the adult is able to read. Further, there were small differences between males and females in terms of reading ability with males having the higher score. The urban rural trend was found to be the same as that usually reported with urban scores being higher than rural scores

Table 2 : MICS 2002 - Simulation of the proportion (%) of adults (22-44) who can read easily according to highest grade attained, gender and geographical area

Highest Grade Attained	0	Gr 1	Gr 2	Gr 3	Gr 4	Gr 5	Gr 6	Gr7	Gr 8	Gr 9	Gr 10	Gr 11	Gr 12
Total population	3.8	6.3	10.4	16.6	25.5	37.1	50.3	63.6	75.0	83.8	89.9	93.9	96.3
Urban Males	7.9	12.8	20.2	30.3	42.8	56.3	68.9	79.2	86.8	91.9	95.1	97.1	98.3
Urban Females	4.4	7.4	12.1	19.2	29.0	41.3	54.7	67.5	78.2	86.0	91.4	94.8	96.9
Rural Males	4.2	7.1	11.5	18.3	27.9	40.0	53.4	66.4	77.2	85.4	91.0	94.5	96.8
Rural Females	2.3	4.0	6.6	10.9	17.4	26.6	38.5	51.8	64.9	76.1	84.6	90.4	94.2

The results of the 2003-2004 Sierra Leone Integrated Household Survey are still being analysed but work done to date suggests a national adult literacy rate of 27%. The ongoing analysis also suggests that not much improvement in literacy rate is achieved beyond the JSS3 level.

MICS 3 is in the process of being analysed and although the assessment of literacy is based on a different procedure, interim figures are not significantly different from those computed from the 2004 Census data.

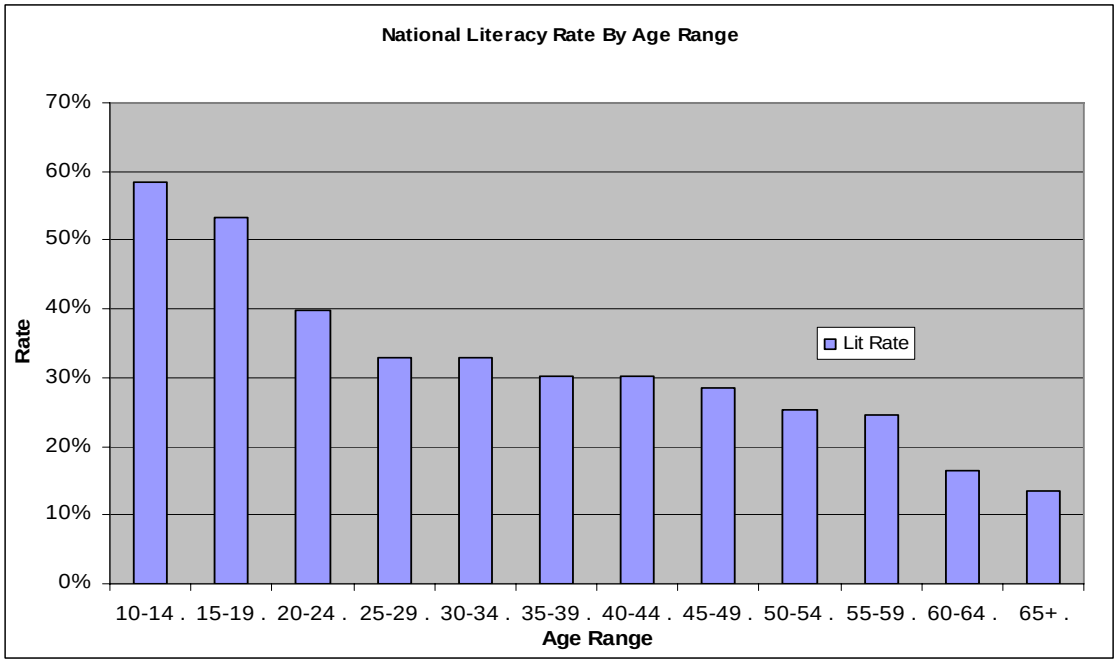
3.2 Literacy in the 2004 Census

3.2.1 Findings

The basic definition of literacy seemingly adopted for the 2004 Census is ability to read and write in any language. Chart 1 shows that of the 3,439,284 responses for those of 10 years of age and above sampled, 39% reported themselves to be able to read and write in at least one language. 60% reported themselves to be unable to read and write in any language and 1% did not respond. Whereas this 39% is higher than the CSO figure for Year 2000 and seemingly much higher than the estimate from the SLIHS data, caution needs to be exercised in using the figure because of the nature of the question employed. Notwithstanding the foregoing, and noting the weakness of the assumption made for the 1985 literacy, the 39% national literacy rate yielded by the 2004 Census is a significant improvement on the 13% figure of 1985.

A fascinating trend yielded by the analysis is that older members of the population tend to be more illiterate than the younger. For example, whereas 85% of the 65 year olds and above categorized themselves as illiterate, only 41% of those between the ages of 10 and 14 regarded themselves as illiterate. This is welcome news as it confirms that more of the younger generation are accessing education / schooling and that the literacy rate will continue to increase with time. This bodes well for the development of the nation.

Chart 1 – National Literacy Rate of 10Year Olds and Above By Age Range



If the literacy rate is measured by the age range corresponding to the different school levels, an interesting picture is obtained as in shown in Table 3 below:.

Table 3 – Literacy Rates for Official Age Ranges Of School Levels

Age Range	Literacy Rate
6-11 Yrs	43.8
12-14 Yrs	63.9
15-17 Yrs	56.1
18-21 Yrs	44.1

The suggestion from the table is that literacy is highest for those of the age range corresponding to the official age range for the JSS level.

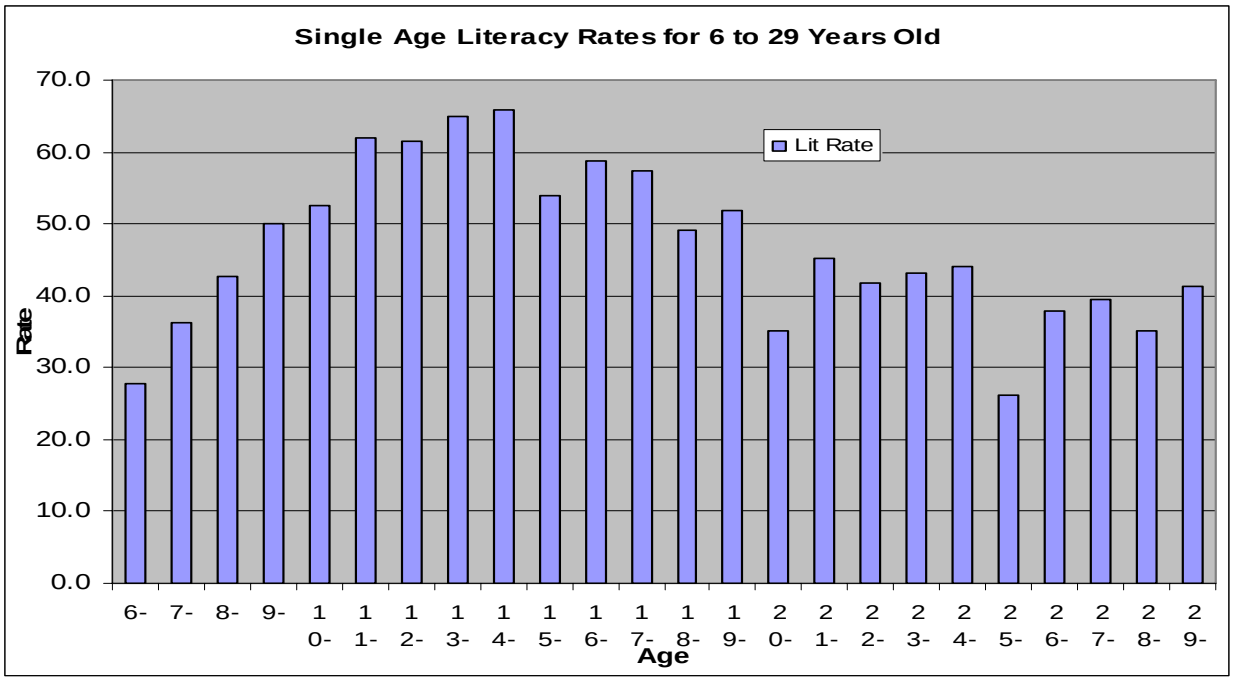
Different agencies have different definitions of the 'adult' age range. In this report, the literacy levels of 10 year olds and above is that mainly used. For different age ranges the literacy rates will tend to be different as illustrated by the table 4 below:

Table 4 – Literacy Rates for Two Different 'Adult Age' Ranges

Age Range	Literacy Rate
10-35 yrs	45.0
15-35 Yrs	40.2

Literacy rates for single ages are examined and illustrated in Chart 2 below. It appears that literacy reaches a peak presently at around 14 years of age. At 61.9% and 61.6%, the literacy rates of 11 and 12 year olds respectively indicate that the majority are literate by the time they complete primary schooling. Schooling beyond JSS (12-14yrs) does not appear to further improve literacy as defined for the purpose of the census. It appears therefore that by getting all children to school and improving the quality of education provided, Sierra Leone can in the medium term, improve its literacy rate significantly.

Chart 2 – Single Age Literacy Rates for 6 – 29 Year Olds

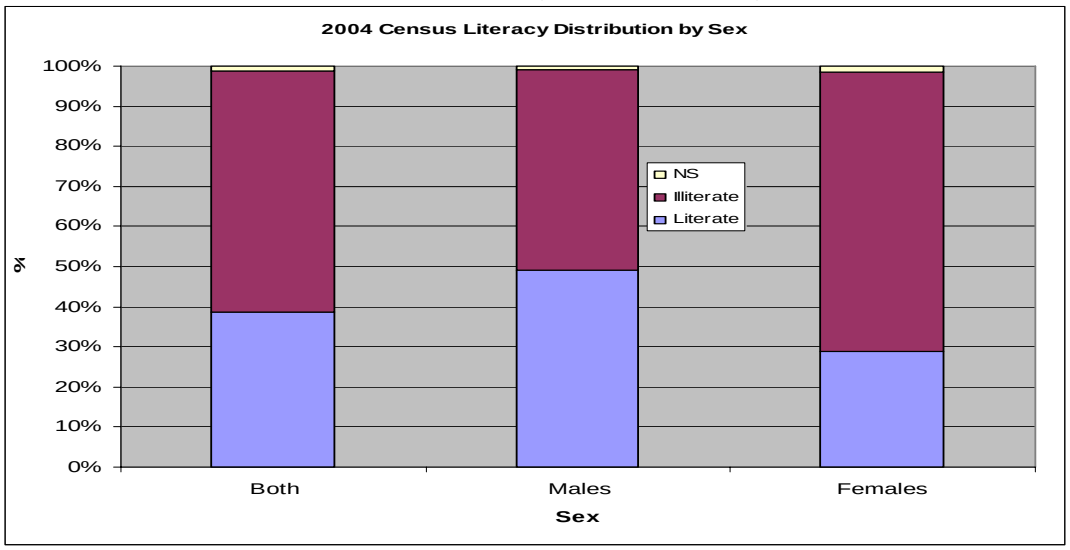


The literacy picture yielded by the census is particularly worrying in a number of respects. Even though much higher than in 1985, a literacy rate of 39% is not something to celebrate but what is even more alarming is the fact that the national literacy rate for women (29%), as measured by the number of women declaring themselves as literate divided by the number of women sampled, is 20 percentage points lower than that for males (49%) measured in a similar manner (See Table 5 and Chart 3 overleaf).

Table 5 – Literacy Distribution by Sex

	Literate	Illiterate	NS
Both	39%	60%	1%
Males	49%	50%	1%
Females	29%	70%	1%

Chart 3 – Literacy Distribution by Sex

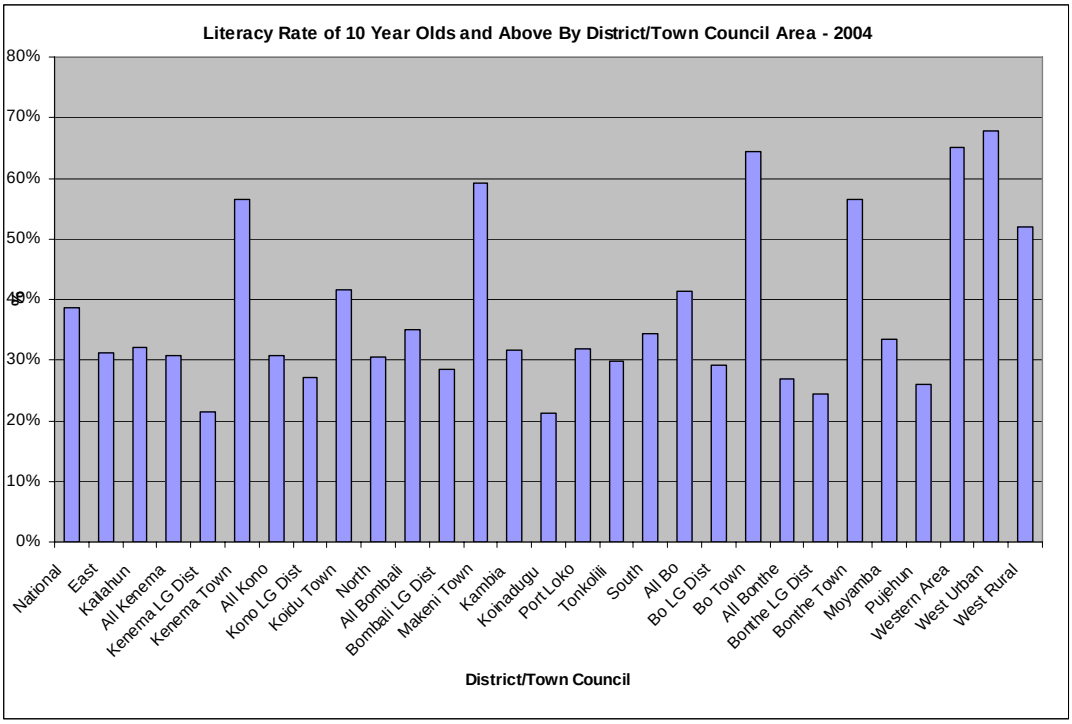


The trend is similar for all the regions and local council areas as shown in the table 6 overleaf.

Table 6 – Census Literacy Rates By Region and Local Government (LG) Areas/Districts

Region/Local Govt. Area	All	Males	Females
National	39%	49%	29%
Eastern Region	31%	40%	22%
Kailahun District	32%	43%	22%
Kenema LG District	21%	30%	13%
Kenema Town	56%	67%	46%
Kono LG District	27%	35%	19%
Koidu Town	42%	49%	32%
Northern Region	31%	43%	20%
Bombali LG District	29%	40%	18%
Makeni Town	59%	71%	48%
Kambia District	32%	48%	18%
Koinadugu District	21%	30%	14%
Port Loko District	32%	45%	21%
Tonkolili District	30%	41%	21%
Southern Region	34%	45%	25%
Bo LG District	29%	40%	19%
Bo Town	64%	74%	55%
Bonthe LG District	24%	34%	16%
Bonthe Town	56%	65%	49%
Moyamba District	33%	45%	24%
Pujehun District	26%	36%	17%
Western Area	65%	62%	57%
West Urban Area	68%	76%	60%
West Rural Area	52%	62%	42%

Chart 4: Literacy Rates of 10 Year Olds and Above By Region and Local Government Area



That the literacy rates of women in Kenema LG District, Koinadugu, Bonthe LG District, Pujehun and Kambia are as low as 13%, 14%, 16%, 17% and 18% respectively and that only five local government areas/districts have literacy rates for women of 25% and above is disheartening.

In addition to the foregoing, it was noted that for the great majority of the districts outside the Western Area, the literacy rate of <u>older</u> women is appallingly low, in some cases as low as 2%. This observation is that the education of girls outside of the Western Area was not given much premium.

The writers of this report are continuously optimistic that the male – female literacy rate difference will decrease with time because of the observation that male – female difference was greatest for the oldest age range and least for the youngest measured. Thus, whilst the national literacy rate for the 65 year old and above males was 22% and that for females was 5%, giving a difference of 17 percentage points, the rate for 10 to 14 year old boys was 62% and that for girls was 55%, giving a difference of just 7 percentage points.

Another worrying observation is the disparity in the literacy rates for the different local government areas/districts. Whilst Western Urban Area and Bo Town are having literacy rates of 68% and 64% respectively, Koinadugu and Pujehun and Bonthe District are having literacy rates of 21%, 26% and 27% respectively. The disparity is noteworthy not only in terms of the combined literacy rates but also in terms of the rates for the single sexes. It is worth noting that the literacy rates are highest for the towns and Western Urban than for the other more rural areas. Only in the case of Koidu Town does the Western Rural Area possess a higher

percentage which is not surprising as the latter has a number of large urban settlements. The suggestion from the foregoing is that the disparity in literacy rates is more of an urban rural disparity than one that is regional. Notwithstanding this statement, the data shows that all districts/local government areas need attention but that some need more attention than others. In particular, the local governments of Koinadugu, Bonthe, Pujehun, Tonkolili and all other districts with literacy rates below the national average of 39% are advised to take urgent remedial action.

Through the interventions of government using projects such as the Sababu Education Project, an attempt is being made to address some of the regional and district disparities in provision of quality schooling. This it is hoped, would not only improve access to education but also improve the literacy rate and lessen the difference between the districts and regions.

Overall, whilst improving the literacy rate of all Sierra Leoneans is a necessity, improving the literacy rate of women is an imperative. The writers of this report make bold to state that unless the literacy rate of women is significantly improved the development goals of Sierra Leone will remain nothing more than pipe dreams.

3.2.2 Summary

The findings on literacy in the 2004 Census can be summarized as follows:

- The literacy rate for Sierra Leone is 39%.
- The younger age groups and ranges possess significantly higher literacy rates than the older.
- At 66.0% the literacy rate of 14 year olds is higher than that for any single age group. This contributes to the observation that the 12-14 age range group has a higher literacy rate than all other age range groups.
- The literacy rate of men is higher than that for women nationally and by local government areas/districts. The national literacy rate for men is 49% whilst that for women is 29%. The literacy rate of the women of Koinadugu is just 14% whilst those for Pujehun and Kambia are 17% and 18%, respectively.
- The gender difference in literacy rate is decreasing. The difference is least for the youngest age range measured and greatest for the oldest age range
- At 68% and 64%, the literacy rates of Western Urban Area and Bo Town respectively are the only local government areas/districts with literacy rates above 60%.

- With a literacy rate of 21%, Koinadugu District has the lowest literacy rate of all local government areas.

- Access to education is contributing significantly to increasing the literacy rate

- The findings from the census suggest that the literacy rate will continue to increase in the coming years since the literacy rates of the younger age groups are higher than those of the older

SECTION IV

The Schooling / Education Situation

4.1 School Attendance

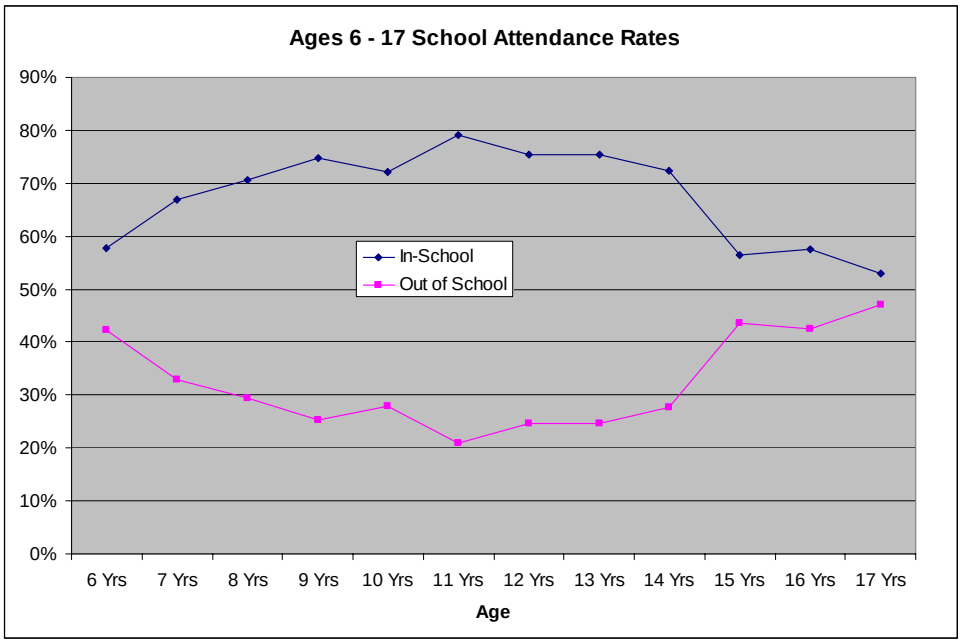
In 1985, the then Census figures indicated that approximately 71% of Sierra Leoneans aged 5 and above had never attended school whilst 16% were still at school and 13% had left school.

The 2004 Census figures illustrated in Table 7 and chart 4 below indicate that 40% of Sierra Leoneans aged 6 to 29 years have never attended school / received formal education, whilst 46% were still at school and 14% had left school/formal education. This is a vast improvement on the 1985 figures and confirms that significantly more students are now accessing education than in 1985. Further, given that percentage of students who have never accessed schooling is lower for the lower age ranges than the upper, the clear inference is that access to education is on the increase and will be aided by interventions such as the Sababu Education Project.

Table 7: Percentage of 6 – 29 Year Olds in School, Left School or Never Attended School

Ages	Total	% In School	% Left School	% Never Attended School
TOTAL	**2,495,821**	**46%**	**14%**	**40%**
6	152,708	58%	1%	42%
7	147,568	67%	1%	32%
8	152,787	71%	1%	28%
9	121,217	75%	1%	24%
10	158,183	72%	2%	26%
11	81,822	79%	2%	19%
12	130,580	75%	2%	22%
13	97,643	75%	3%	22%
14	97,935	72%	4%	24%
15	155,393	56%	6%	37%
16	89,783	57%	8%	34%
17	76,991	53%	10%	37%
18	132,858	42%	13%	45%
19	81,482	41%	17%	43%
20	153,451	22%	18%	60%
21	60,277	21%	30%	50%
22	83,254	16%	31%	53%
23	57,922	10%	39%	51%
24	59,213	9%	41%	50%
25	165,562	4%	28%	68%
26	57,309	2%	42%	56%
27	61,906	2%	43%	55%
28	74,961	1%	39%	60%
29	45,016	2%	45%	53%

Chart 5–Age Specific Enrolment Rates and Percentage Out of School for Ages 6-17



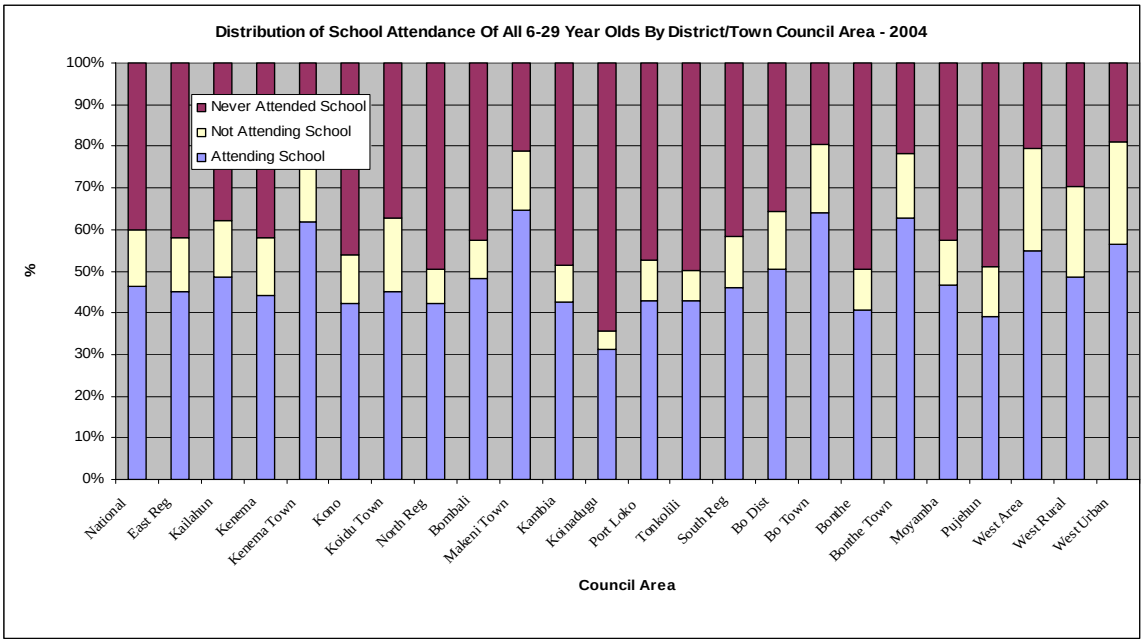
Something noticeable from the above table and chart above is that the percentage of students who have never attended school is not lowest for 6 year olds but for 11 year olds. It suggests that if someone is not in school by age 11 years, the chances of his/her ever attending school starts decreasing. The age (11 years) for which the highest percentage school attendance is recorded (81%) is less than the 13 years (81%) obtained from an analysis of the SLIHS data. There are many possible reasons for this observation. One suggestion is that many children do not start schooling at the official age of 6 years but later. This accounts for the significant percentage of over-aged children to be found in primary schools and contributes to the large primary level Gross Enrolment Ratio associated with Sierra Leone. The reasons for children starting schooling late are many but it is anticipated that the number of late starters will soon drop significantly.

As in the case of the literacy situation, analyses of the census responses reveal significant and worrying differences between the local government areas/districts in school attendance. The national picture is that 40 % of those interviewed during the census have never attended school. (See Table 8 below).

Table 8 – School Attendance by Region and Local Government Area / Districts

	Attending School	Not Attending School	Never Attended School
National	46.4%	13.6%	40.0%
Eastern Region	45.0%	13.1%	41.9%
Kailahun	48.7%	13.5%	37.8%
Kenema	44.2%	13.7%	42.1%
Kenema Town	61.9%	16.3%	21.8%
Kono	42.3%	11.7%	46.0%
Koidu Town	45.2%	17.6%	37.2%
Northern Region	42.2%	8.2%	49.6%
Bombali	48.2%	9.1%	42.7%
Makeni Town	64.6%	14.3%	21.1%
Kambia	42.5%	8.9%	48.6%
Koinadugu	31.2%	4.3%	64.5%
Port Loko	42.8%	9.9%	47.2%
Tonkolili	42.8%	7.4%	49.9%
Southern Region	46.0%	12.3%	41.6%
Bo Dist	50.5%	13.9%	35.6%
Bo Town	64.2%	16.3%	19.6%
Bonthe	40.8%	9.8%	49.4%
Bonthe Town	62.7%	15.7%	21.6%
Moyamba	46.6%	10.9%	42.5%
Pujehun	39.0%	12.2%	48.8%
Western Area	55.0%	24.3%	20.6%
West Rural	48.6%	21.7%	29.7%
West Urban	56.3%	24.9%	18.8%

Chart 6: Distribution of School Attendance of 6 – 29 Year Olds By Region and Local Government Areas



That much work has to be done by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in Koinadugu is indicated by the fact that 64.5% of 6-29 year olds have never attended school. That nine local government areas have over 40% of those interviewed not attending school is a matter of concern. What is noticeable is that with the exception of Koidu Town, the towns and Western Urban Area possess the smallest percentage of 6-29 year olds who have never attended school. This strongly suggests that an urban – rural divide is being revealed by the data.

The national picture for the sexes illustrated in Chart 5 below is that whilst only 33 % of males aged 6 to 29 years have never attended school, the figure for females is 47%, a difference of 12 percentage points. Tables 9 and 10 below show the school attendance profile for 6 to 29 year olds in the various local government areas.

Chart 7 – Percentage of 6 – 29 Year Old Males and Females Who Have Never Attended School

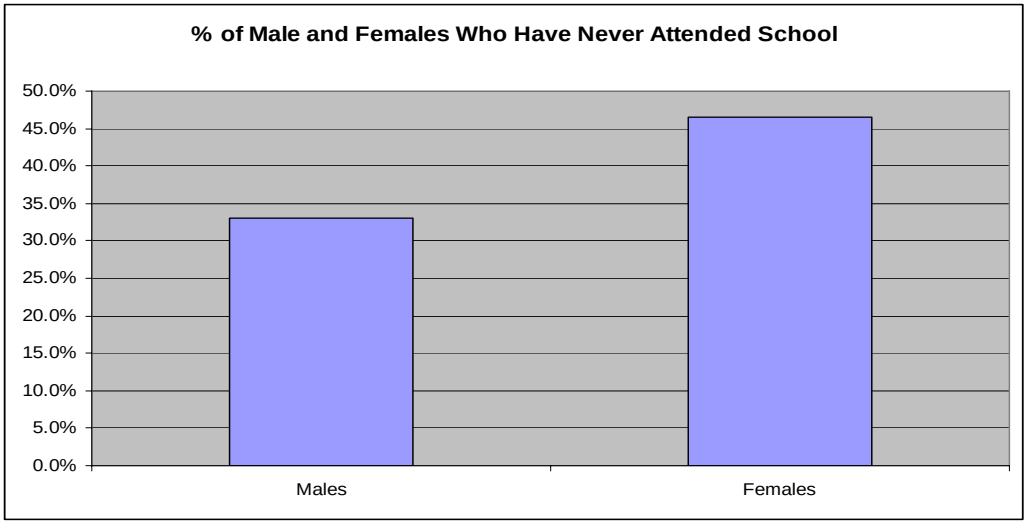


Table 9 – % Distribution of 6 – 29 Year Old Male School Attendance by District/Town Council Area

	Attending School	Not Attending School	Never Attended School
National	52.6%	14.4%	33.0%
East Region	50.2%	14.2%	35.6%
Kailahun	55.8%	14.1%	30.1%
Kenema	49.1%	14.9%	36.0%
Kenema Town	67.4%	16.3%	16.2%
Kono	45.7%	13.3%	41.0%
Koidu Town	47.3%	19.0%	33.7%
North Region	50.9%	9.0%	40.1%
Bombali	55.9%	9.8%	34.3%
Makeni Town	72.1%	13.3%	14.6%
Kambia	53.4%	10.5%	36.1%
Koinadugu	37.7%	5.1%	57.2%
Port Loko	52.5%	10.7%	36.8%
Tonkolili	51.0%	7.6%	41.4%
South Region	51.8%	12.4%	35.8%
Bo District	56.7%	14.1%	29.2%
Bo Town	69.7%	15.5%	14.7%
Bonthe District	45.2%	9.2%	45.6%
Bonthe Town	65.2%	15.8%	19.1%
Moyamba	53.7%	10.7%	35.6%
Pujehun	43.5%	12.4%	44.1%
West Area	58.8%	25.4%	15.8%
West Rural	55.2%	21.9%	23.0%
West Urban	59.6%	26.0%	14.4%

That the percentages of males between the ages of 6 and 29 year old attending school in Bo Town, Bonthe Town, Kenema Town and Makeni Town are higher than for Western Urban (Freetown) is a heartening indication of the importance being given to education nation-wide. This trend is also observed for women the table 10 below shows. The seeming belief that educated people are only to be found in Freetown is rapidly becoming a thing of the past. The responses further reinforce the impression that the divide in accessing schooling is no longer one that is regional (i.e. one of the Western Area being far above the other regions), but one that is rural – urban. **Both tables** clearly show for example that Bonthe Town (largely urban) and Bonthe District (largely rural although with some urban centres) differ significantly in those attending and those who have never attended school. Similar observations are made for Bo Town and Bo District, Makeni Town and Bombali District and Kenema Town and Kenema District.

Table10 – % Distribution of 6 – 29 Year Old Female School Attendance by District/Town Council Area

	Attending School	Not Attending School	Never Attended School
National	40.6%	12.9%	46.5%
Eastern Region	40.1%	12.0%	47.9%
Kailahun	41.9%	12.9%	45.1%
Kenema	39.5%	12.5%	48.0%
Kenema Town	56.6%	16.4%	27.0%
Kono	39.0%	10.2%	50.8%
Koidu Town	43.2%	16.2%	40.6%
Northern Region	34.3%	7.5%	58.2%
Bombali	40.6%	8.5%	50.9%
Makeni Town	57.6%	15.2%	27.2%
Kambia	32.4%	7.4%	60.2%
Koinadugu	25.5%	3.6%	70.9%
Port Loko	34.2%	9.2%	56.6%
Tonkolili	35.5%	7.1%	57.3%
Southern Region	40.6%	12.3%	47.1%
Bo Dist	44.7%	13.6%	41.6%
Bo Town	59.0%	16.9%	24.1%
Bonthe Dist	36.6%	10.4%	53.0%
Bonthe Town	60.6%	15.6%	23.9%
Moyamba	39.9%	11.1%	49.0%
Pujehun	34.6%	12.1%	53.3%
Western Area	51.5%	23.4%	25.2%
West Rural	42.6%	21.6%	35.8%
West Urban	53.3%	23.7%	23.0%

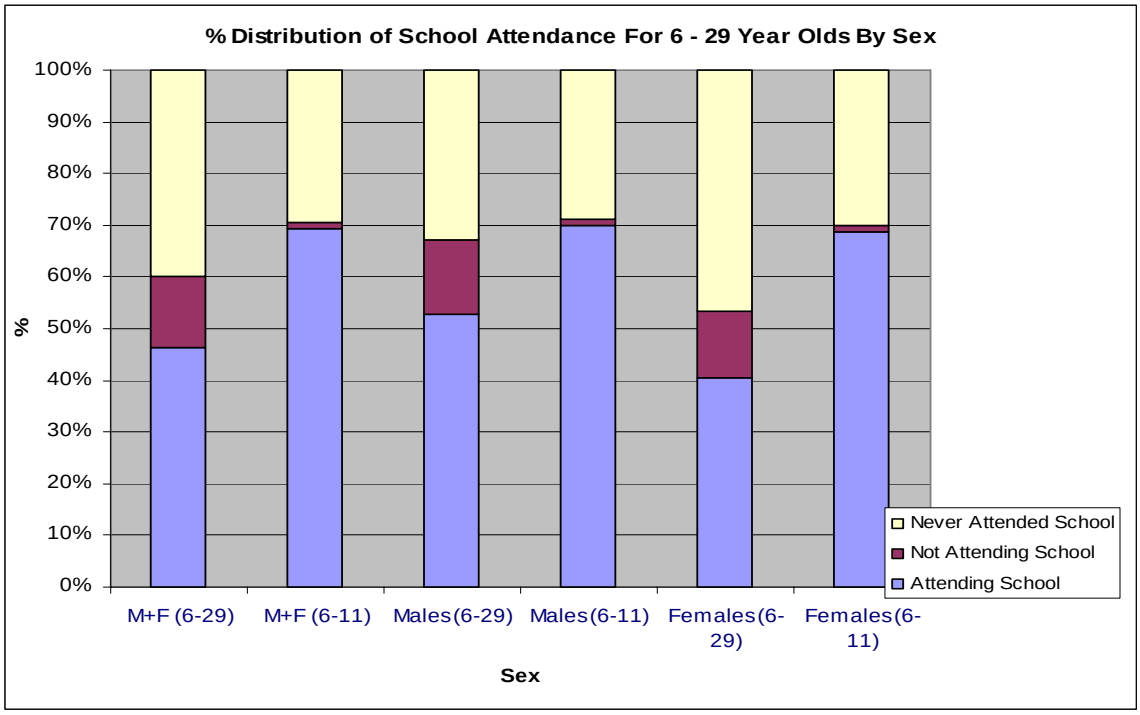
The high percentage of women who have never attended school in most districts is alarming and confirms the need for interventions to get the 'girl-child' to school. The fact that 47% of all females between ages 6 to 29 years reported never attending school is not only a cause for national concern but for urgent and immediate action by MEST.

That interventions have been meeting with some success is suggested by the fact that more 6 to 11 year old are in school than their older counterparts as table 11 and chart 6 below show.

Table 11 – School Attendance profiles of 6 – 11 and 6 – 29 Year Olds By Sex

	Attending School	Not Attending School	Never Attended School
Male + Female (6-29)	46%	14%	40%
Male +Female (6-11)	69%	1%	30%
Males (6-29)	53%	14%	33%
Males (6-11)	70%	1%	29%
Females (6-29)	41%	13%	47%
Females (6-11)	69%	1%	30%

Chart 8 - School Attendance profiles of 6 – 11 and 6 – 29 Year Olds By Sex



The overall picture of attendance in educational institutions painted by the census is one indicating that much work still has to be done but with every reason for optimism for the future. The poor school attendance profile of the older generation is not unexpected given the history of education provisions in Sierra Leone, but the very large disparity between male and female attendance and the very high percentage of women that have never attended school in many local government areas is surprising and alarming. The heartening note is that the school attendance profile of youths and children is encouraging. The suggestion is that should the government continue to invest in increasing access to education school enrolment and hence school attendance would continue to increase until it reaches the ceiling determined by the population or the policy.

SECTION V

Enrolment at School Level

5.1 Introduction

In the preceding few Sections, reference has been made to the numbers and percentages accessing schooling but not the different levels in which they are to be found. In the next few paragraphs details on enrolment, Gross Intake, Enrolment and Net Enrolment Ratios (GIR, GER and NER) etc. are provided.

Assumptions made for analysis of the education data have been reported earlier and are not repeated here.

5.2 The Pre-School Level

The census shows a surprising number of respondents, 84,979, stating that they were in kindergarten in 2003/04. This is quite obviously only those in the final grade of kindergarten. It is reasonable to assume that each of the two earlier grades of kindergarten would contain at least an equal number of children and probably more. The foregoing being the case, if the numbers from the census are correct, the number of children in pre-school are very much larger than earlier surveys have indicated. The numbers are definitely significantly higher than the 19,068 from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology for 2003/04. The very large difference and related issues require investigation.

Table 12 – Numbers of Individuals in Primary School in 2004/05 but in Kindergarten or Not in School in 2003/04

2004/05 Ages	*2003/04 Ages*	*Not In School 2003/04*	*Kindergarten 2003/04*
6	5	3,779	33,213
7	6	2,266	21,365
8	7	1,420	12,919
9	8	717	6,171
10	9	606	4,981
11	10	221	1,615
12	11	233	1,699
13	12	152	812
14	13	113	500
15	14	148	654
16	15	76	361
17	16	66	214
18	17	90	267
19	18	52	113
20	19	107	95
TOTAL		***10,046***	***84,979***

Key: Yellow markers denote individual totals corresponding to less than 5% of total i.e. non-significant

The sum of those not in primary school and those in kindergarten in 2003/04 should be approximately equal to those in 2004/05, the difference being in terms of the repeaters of Class/Grade 1 and those who may not have been in primary school in 2003/04 but enter at a higher class than Class/Grade 1. The difference should not be too great and so if the census numbers are correct, approximately, 95,025 should be in Class 1 in 2004/05. This is significantly smaller than the 188,285 in Class 1 in the 2003/04 academic year.

All of the foregoing indicate that the kindergarten and 'not in primary school' in 2003/04 academic year numbers should be treated with caution hence the lack of detailed analysis in this sub-section.

5.3 The Primary Level

5.3.1 Enrolment at the Primary Level

The 1985 Census figures give 316,158 (181,143 boys and 134,745 girls) children of age 5 years and above as being in primary school. According to data from the Inspectorate Directorate of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 1,068,762 Government and 56,741 Government-assisted private pupils were enrolled in primary schools nation-wide in the 2003/2004 academic year. The present census gives ***the number of 5 year olds and above enrolled in primary school in the 2003/04 academic year as 823,435***. This number is likely to be an underestimate of the total primary school enrolment in 2003/04 academic year for reasons stated earlier and not repeated here.

Although the question on education was asked of those declaring themselves to be 6 years of age and above at the time of the census, because the question referred to the previous academic year, it refers to a time when some of the respondents were 5 years old. In fact approximately 6% of the respondents in primary school in 2003/04 were 5 year olds as Table 13 below shows.

Table 13 – Enrolment at Primary School and Percentage Distribution by Age

2004/05 Ages	2003/04 Ages	Primary Total	% of Diff Ages at Primary
6	5	49,953	6%
7	6	73,997	9%
8	7	91,927	11%
9	8	82,420	10%
10	9	106,079	13%
11	10	60,634	7%
12	11	90,117	11%
13	12	63,619	8%
14	13	55,013	7%
15	14	62,173	8%
16	15	28,260	3%
17	16	17,608	2%
18	17	23,241	3%
19	18	9,724	1%
20	19	8,670	1%

The Table shows that whilst approximately 6% of those in primary school are below the official primary school age (6 – 11 years), 33% are above. This is not surprising as many in the rural areas start school late because of, amongst other things, the distance to the nearest school. The percentage below age in primary school can be largely explained in terms of the ever growing number of nursery schools / kindergartens.

From the census, the total number of pupils in primary school in the 2003/04 academic year was 823,435. The number of 6 to 11 year olds in 2003/04 i.e. the 7 – 12 year olds in 2004/05 is 505,174. Given that the population of 6 to 11 year olds in 2003/04 i.e. the 7 – 12 year olds in 2004/05 is 792,157, the Primary Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) and Primary Net Enrolment Rate (NER) have been calculated and the results are shown in the Table 14 below.

Table 14 – The Gross and Net Enrolment Rates of the Primary Level

National	***Numbers***	***NER***	***GER***
All in Primary	823,435		104%
6-11 years – 2003/04 (7-12yrs – 2004/05) in Primary	505,174	64%	
Population of 6-11 years – 2003/04 (7-12yrs – 2004/05)	792,157		

The formulae employed were as follows:

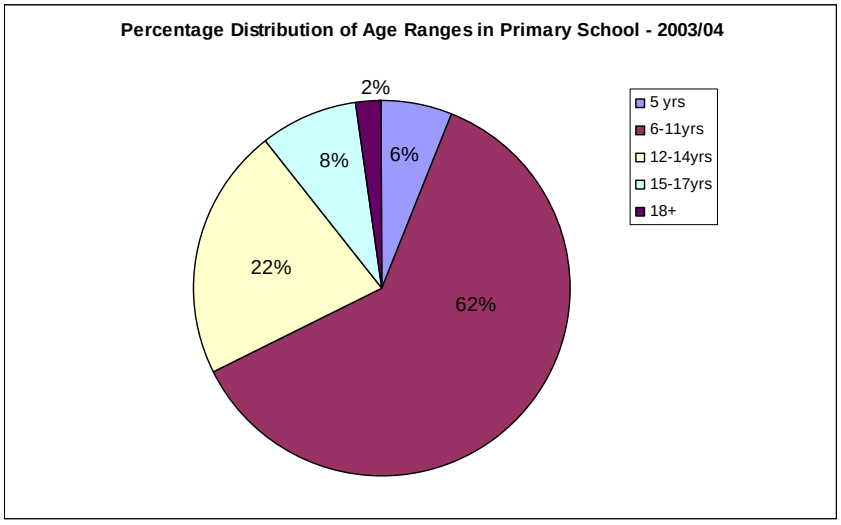
GER = Total Number of Primary School Pupils in 2003/04 / Population of 6 – 11 year olds in 2003/04;

NER = Total Number of 6- 11 year olds in Primary School in 2003/04 / Population of 6 – 11 year olds in 2003/04.

At 104%, the GER indicates that primary schools contain more than those of official primary school age. This is clearly shown by Table 12 above. The calculated GER is larger than the 63% in the MICS Report of 2002 but smaller than the primary level GERs often quoted by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and the 123% computed from the 2003/04 SLIHS data. Compared to that of other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, Sierra Leone has quite a high GER. It is higher than that of all other countries in the sub-region.

The age distribution of those in primary school in the 2003/04 academic year is shown graphically in the chart below:

Chart 9 – Percentage Distribution of Age Ranges in Primary School



It is worth noting that of those in primary school in 2003/04 only 61.3% were of the official primary school age and approximately 6% were 5 years old.

The above chart shows the age distribution for the total primary school population in 2003/04, whilst Table 15 below shows the class (grade) by class (grade) age distribution.

Table 15 - Percentage Age Distribution by Class (Grade) of 2003/04 Enrolled Primary School Pupils

03/04 Ages	04/05 Ages	Primary 1	Primary 2	Primary 3	Primary 4	Primary 5	Primary 6
5	6	19%					
6	7	23%	12%	4%	2%	1%	0%
7	8	20%	18%	9%	4%	1%	1%
8	9	12%	16%	13%	7%	3%	1%
9	10	11%	17%	18%	14%	8%	4%
10	11	4%	8%	10%	11%	8%	4%
11	12	4%	9%	14%	16%	15%	11%
12	13	2%	5%	9%	12%	13%	11%
13	14	1%	3%	7%	10%	13%	14%
14	15	2%	4%	7%	11%	15%	17%
15	16	1%	1%	2%	4%	7%	11%
16	17	0%	1%	1%	3%	5%	7%
17	18	1%	1%	2%	3%	6%	10%
18	19	0%	0%	1%	1%	2%	5%
19	20	0%	0%	1%	1%	2%	4%

The table clearly shows that for each class, pupils of the official age (6 to 11 years) constitute less than 25% of those enrolled. This distribution explains the large difference between the GER and NER and indicates that getting both to be equal will require some time and effort.

The NER of 64 percent given in Table 16 below indicates that much work still has to be done to get all 6 to 11 year old children in school and completing school by 2015. This is not surprising since it was noted earlier that 40% of 6 to 11 year olds in the 2004/2005 academic year stated that they had never attended school. This NER is less than the 75% computed using SLIHS data. As can be seen from Table 15 above, a significant percentage of those at the primary level are over-aged. This observation is not surprising given that geographical and distance barriers prevent pupils starting school at the official age in many rural areas.

With regard to the sexes, the GERs and NERs are as shown in the table below:

Table 16 – National Primary Level NERs and GERs

Sex	*NER*	*GER*
Both Males and Females	64%	104%
Males	65%	110%
Females	63%	98%

A slightly greater number of boys than girls of the official primary school age are in school. Interestingly however, a much lower percentage of over-aged girls than boys are in school. This suggests that getting girls in to school at the right age is important as they may be less likely than boys to come back into primary school at an older age.

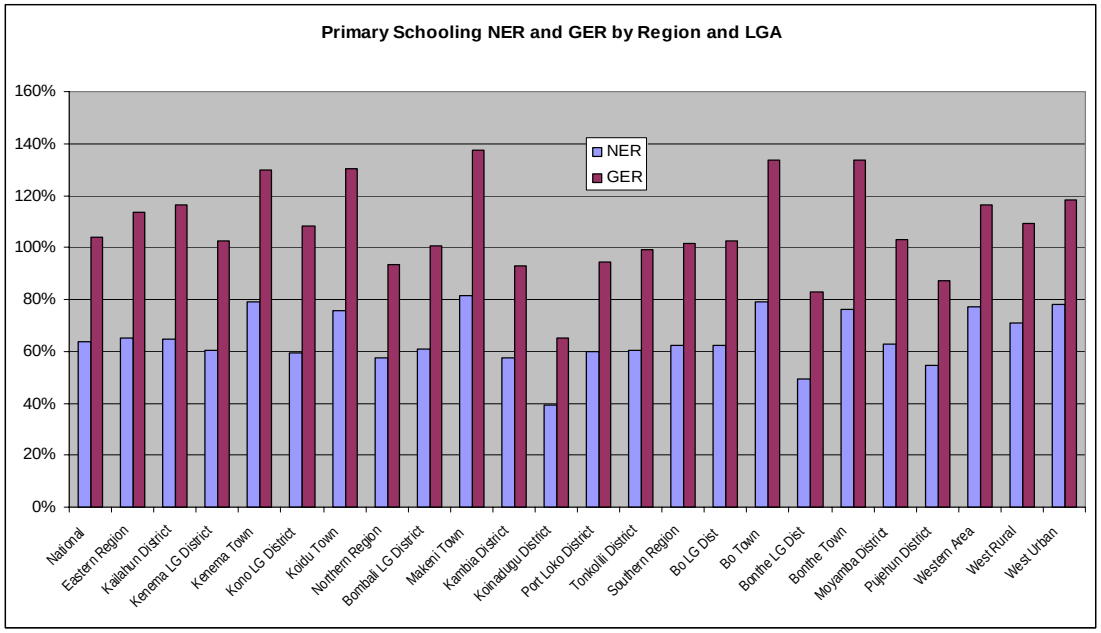
The NERs and GERs given in Table 16 below for the local government areas and regions suggest that within each area, the towns have higher NER and GERs than the districts within which they are situated. Since the large towns are more urban than the districts within which they are situated, even though the rest of the districts contain some small towns, it is probable that a rural – urban divide in school attendance is being seen.

The difference in NER and GER is not surprising since access to schools is easier in the towns than in the rural areas. What is surprising and very heartening is the extent to which Sierra Leoneans out of the Western Area are committed to educating their children. The table below shows Bo Town, Bonthe Town, Kenema Town, Koidu Town, and Makeni Town to have comparable or better NERs and GERs than Western Urban i.e. Freetown. Unfortunately, the 1985 Census Report does not give a comparison of how the NERs and GERs have changed since 1985 but interested scholars can obtain the raw data from 1985 and do the comparison.

Table 17 – Primary Level NER and GER by Region and Local Government Areas

	NER	GER
National	64%	104%
Eastern Region	65%	114%
Kailahun District	65%	117%
Kenema LG District	60%	102%
Kenema Town	79%	130%
Kono LG District	60%	108%
Koidu Town	76%	130%
Northern Region	57%	94%
Bombali LG District	61%	101%
Makeni Town	81%	137%
Kambia District	58%	93%
Koinadugu District	39%	65%
Port Loko District	60%	94%
Tonkolili District	60%	99%
Southern Region	62%	102%
Bo LG Dist	62%	103%
Bo Town	79%	134%
Bonthe LG Dist	49%	83%
Bonthe Town	76%	134%
Moyamba District	63%	103%
Pujehun District	54%	87%
Western Area	77%	116%
West Rural	71%	109%
West Urban	78%	118%

Chart 10: Primary Schooling NER and GER by Region and LGA



The fact that only Makeni Town has an NER above 80% is of concern but even more worrying are the number of local government areas with NERs below 60%. Koinadugu District in particular, with an NER of 39% needs urgent attention.

The fact that the GERs are so much larger than the NERs further indicates that a large percentage of those in primary school are outside of the official age of 6 to 11 years. Most are over-aged. In fact for all of the local government areas, except Pujehun District (38%), the percentage of over-aged children in primary school is over 40%.

Census data indicates that the majority of children enter Class 1 above the official school entry age. This is clearly shown by Table 18 below which gives the age distribution of those reporting Class 1 as the last class they completed.

Table 18 – Age Distribution of Pupils Completing Class 1 in 2003/04

2004/05 Ages	2003/04 Ages	Class 1	% of Diff Ages at Primary
6	5	35780	19.0%
7	6	42426	22.5%
8	7	37909	20.1%
9	8	22404	11.9%
10	9	20008	10.6%
11	10	7132	3.8%
12	11	8430	4.5%
13	12	4113	2.2%
14	13	2754	1.5%
15	14	3200	1.7%
16	15	1331	0.7%
17	16	849	0.5%
18	17	1054	0.6%
19	18	463	0.2%
20	19	432	0.2%

Note that 6 year olds accounted for 22.5% of those successfully completing Class 1 in 2003/04. The other 77.5% were not of the official entry age.

Because the question posed by the enumerators was on pupils completing a class, the numbers reported for each class in the census would be less by those who did not complete a class. This means that the total enrolment for each would be under-reported. This also means the Net Intake Rate (NIR) and Gross Intake Rate (GIR) computed for the census numbers would be under-estimates. The national NIR and GIR for the combined and separate sexes are given in Table 19 below.

Table 19 – National NIR and GIR for Class 1

Intake Rates	Combined	Male	Female
NIR	29%	28%	29%
GIR	128%	126%	130%

The NIR is usually computed using the number of new entrants into Class 1 but because this could not be obtained directly from the census data, it was computed by dividing the number at the official entry age of 6 years in 2003/04 in Class 1, by the number of 6 year olds in the population in 2003/04. For the GIR, the enumerator used was the total number of pupils reporting completing Class 1 in 2003/04 but the denominator was the same as for the NIR. For both the NIR and GIR the enumerator terms were less than they should be because the number of those in Class 1 who did not complete the class is not known. The computed combined NIR and GIR compare favourably with those from the Sierra Leone Integrated Household Survey (SLIHS) of 2003/04 with NIR – 35% and GIR – 151%. The numbers from the census are less for reasons already given.

That the NIR and GIR for females is greater than that for males is very pleasing as it suggests that Sierra Leone can achieve gender parity in attendance at the primary level by 2015. More is said on the matter later.

5.3.2 Sex Differences in Enrolment at the Primary Level

The Census data tells us that out of the 823,435 students in primary school in 2003/04, 384,515 were females. This means that there were approximately 1.1 males for every female (i.e. a ratio of 1.1:1) in primary school in 2003/04. This is a little higher than the expected ratio of almost 1:1 on the basis of the population distribution but it is worth noting that the census data shows Class 1 to have more female pupils than male and so a 1:1 ratio at the primary school level is quite possible within the next few years.

An examination of the NER and GER for the sexes shows that the difference between males and females in terms of primary school attendance of the official age group is relatively small. The difference is larger for the GER thus suggesting that larger number of boys than girls at the primary level is due mainly to boys outside the official age range of 6 to 11 years. In Table 20 below is presented the primary school NER and GER for males and females in the regions and local government areas. That there is greater parity between the sexes in terms of attendance of those of official primary school age is clearly indicated by the higher parity indices for the NER than for the GER. The fact that for a few LGAs the parity index is greater than 1 indicates that girls have surpassed boys in terms of relative school attendance in those areas. Overall, the parity indices confirm that Sierra Leone is not far from achieving national parity in school attendance by the sexes at primary level.

Table 20 – Primary Level NER and GER by Sex, Region and Local Government Area – 2003/04

	Male NER	Female NER	Parity Index	Male GER	Female GER	Parity Index
National	***65%***	***63%***	***0.97***	***110%***	***98%***	***0.90***
Eastern Region	66%	64%	***0.98***	119%	107%	***0.90***
Kailahun District	65%	65%	***1.00***	122%	111%	***0.91***
Kenema LG District	61%	60%	***0.98***	108%	96%	***0.89***
Kenema Town	81%	78%	***0.96***	136%	124%	***0.92***
Kono LG District	64%	58%	***0.90***	116%	100%	***0.86***
Koidu Town	61%	75%	***1.23***	135%	126%	***0.94***
Northern Region	60%	55%	***0.90***	102%	84%	***0.82***
Bombali LG District	64%	57%	***0.89***	112%	89%	***0.79***
Makeni Town	83%	80%	***0.97***	143%	132%	***0.92***
Kambia District	62%	53%	***0.85***	105%	80%	***0.76***
Koinadugu District	41%	38%	***0.92***	71%	59%	***0.82***
Port Loko District	63%	56%	***0.89***	103%	84%	***0.82***
Tonkolili District	62%	59%	***0.95***	106%	92%	***0.87***
Southern Region	61%	64%	***1.05***	103%	100%	***0.97***
Bo LG Dist	63%	62%	***0.99***	107%	97%	***0.91***
Bo Town	81%	78%	***0.97***	134%	121%	***0.90***
Bonthe LG Dist	46%	53%	***1.15***	81%	85%	***1.06***
Bonthe Town	77%	76%	***0.98***	142%	128%	***0.90***
Moyamba District	62%	64%	***1.02***	106%	100%	***0.94***
Pujehun District	52%	58%	***1.12***	85%	90%	***1.06***
Western Area	78%	76%	***0.97***	120%	113%	***0.94***
West Rural	73%	69%	***0.95***	116%	103%	***0.89***
West Urban	80%	77%	***0.97***	122%	115%	***0.95***

As stated earlier, a greater access to education in the more urban areas is suggested by the table as the NER and GER are larger for the towns than the districts in which the towns are located. The fact that urban areas outside of Freetown have caught up and in some cases gone past the capital in children accessing primary education is also suggested by the table. No NER is as high as 85% and that is an issue of concern as it means that a great deal of work has to be done for Sierra Leone to meet the MDG target of all children of primary school age accessing and completing primary school by 2015.

The national NERs support the earlier finding that approximately 30% of children of official primary school age were not in school for one reason or another in 2003/04. This is devastating considering all the efforts being made by the government to get children to school and to stay in school. If the MDG Goal 2 is to be met, government may need to consider establishing a unit in the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology to monitor, advice and recommend necessary actions.

The above table also shows that there are Local Government Areas with access problems. The NERs for Koinadugu, Pujehun and Bonthe Districts are particularly worrying even though the NERs for females are higher than that for

males in Pujehun and Bonthe Districts. This is further evidence that a number of districts in the Northern and Southern Regions need urgent intervention to address education access and retention problems.

5.3.3 Primary Completion Rate

The Census data allows the computation of a proxy Gross Completion Rate (GCR) because the question posed by enumerators to interviewees was on highest class completed. The equation for computing the GCR is:

GCR = All Completing Final Year of Level / Population of Expected/Official Completion Age for Level

The 2003/04 primary level GCR is equal to all the pupils who completed Class 6 divided by the 11 year old population of 2003/04. The figures used in this computation are under-estimates for reasons given earlier in the data analysis limitation section of this report even so however, the computed GCR of 56% is not far removed from the GCR of 60% obtained from an analysis of the SLIHS 2003/04 data. Because of the assumptions that have had to be made, it is likely that the true primary level GCR is somewhere between 56% and 62%. This would place Sierra Leone above many sub-Saharan countries but below its Anglophone sub-regional sisters/brothers of Ghana and Nigeria.

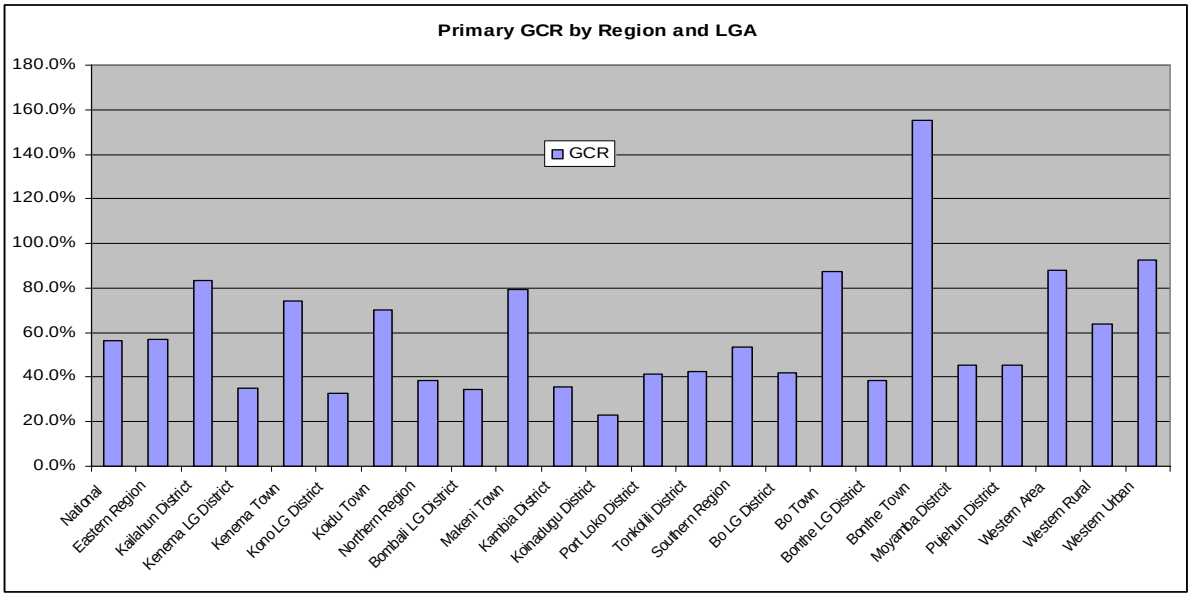
Millennium Development Goal (MDG) No.2 is for a 100% primary school completion rate by 2015. The GCR of between 56% and 62% is unlikely to have changed much since the 2003/04 academic year. This means that Sierra Leone has a great deal of work to do if it is to meet MDG No.2. With a significant percentage of domestically generated revenue already given to education, Sierra Leone's only hope of meeting this goal appears to be the fulfillment of the commitment made by the international community regarding funding for a credible plan. It is now for Sierra Leone to come up with a credible plan very quickly.

As usual the national figures do not tell the whole story, even the regional picture can be misleading as the Table 21 below shows.

Table 21 – Primary Level Gross Completion Rates by Region, Local Government Area and Sex

	GCR	Male GCR	Female GCR	Parity Index
National	56.2%	63.9%	47.6%	0.74
Eastern Region	56.8%	67.2%	45.3%	0.67
Kailahun District	83.4%	98.7%	65.8%	0.67
Kenema LG District	35.2%	42.3%	26.8%	0.63
Kenema Town	74.1%	82.6%	65.4%	0.79
Kono LG District	32.7%	42.7%	22.1%	0.52
Koidu Town	69.9%	80.5%	60.1%	0.75
Northern Region	38.8%	47.2%	29.1%	0.62
Bombali LG District	34.6%	43.6%	23.8%	0.55
Makeni Town	79.6%	91.5%	67.9%	0.74
Kambia District	35.6%	46.3%	22.4%	0.48
Koinadugu District	23.3%	29.0%	17.5%	0.60
Port Loko District	41.3%	50.3%	30.7%	0.61
Tonkolili District	42.6%	49.8%	34.5%	0.69
Southern Region	53.4%	59.9%	45.8%	0.76
Bo LG District	42.2%	50.7%	31.5%	0.62
Bo Town	87.2%	103.5%	72.1%	0.70
Bonthe LG District	38.4%	40.0%	36.2%	0.90
Bonthe Town	155.0%	180.9%	135.6%	0.75
Moyamba Distrcit	45.2%	51.6%	37.4%	0.72
Pujehun District	45.6%	49.0%	41.1%	0.84
Western Area	87.7%	95.9%	80.0%	0.83
Western Rural	63.6%	75.6%	51.7%	0.68
Western Urban	92.7%	100.3%	85.7%	0.86

Chart 11: Primary Schooling Gross Completion Rate by Region and LGA



The table shows significant differences in the GCR across the regions, Local Government Areas (LGAs) and sexes. Koinadugu District continues to stand out as an area of concern for education. At 17.5%, the primary level GCR for girls is alarming and that for boys is little better. The large differences between male and female GCRs tell the MEST that there is still a great deal to do in order to achieve gender parity in retention and completion of primary schooling. This is confirmed by the parity indices which are less than 0.75 for most of the LGAs and which are less than the parity indices for the GER. The latter suggests that proportionally fewer girls than boys enrolled at the primary level go on to complete primary schooling.

Whilst some LGAs are doing well, the great majority have much work to do if a 100% completion rate for primary schooling is to be achieved by 2015. In line with earlier trends observed, the more urban areas have much higher GCRs than the more rural areas. The GCRs for Bonthe Town, Bo Town and Western Urban deserve special mention as does Kailahun District which should serve as an example to other more rural areas. Overall, there is more to worry about than to be happy about. In particular, the authors of this chapter wish the government to note that unless urgent and immediate action is taken, Sierra Leone might not achieve MDG Goal No.2.

The census data does not allow the calculation of repetition rates. Had this been possible then the efficiency of the system could have been probed and further explanations obtained for the country's high GER and moderate primary school GCR.

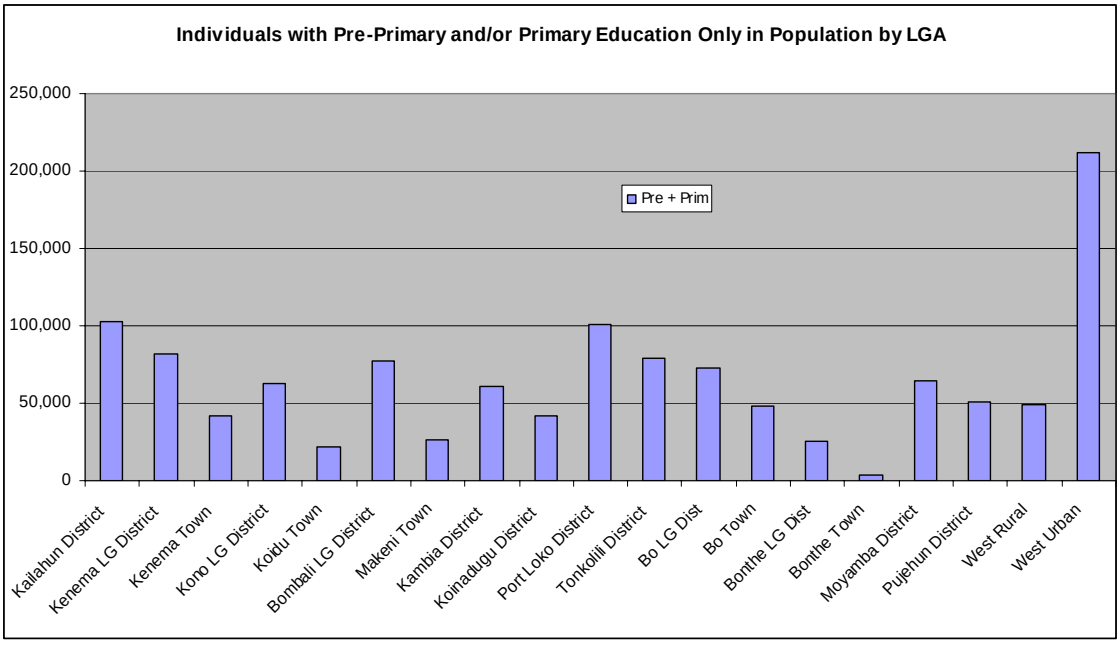
5.3.4 Individuals with Pre-Primary and/or Primary Education as Highest Level Completed

Respondents reporting the primary level as the highest level completed but who were not pursuing educational courses in 2004 numbered 305,745. When this is added to the number still pursuing educational programmes, a total of 1,224,204 individuals is obtained. The distribution of these individuals across the nation is shown in the table below.

Table22: Numbers and Percentages of Individuals with Pre-Primary and/or Primary Education as Highest Level Completed

	Pre + Primary	***%Pre + Prim***
National	***1,224,204***	
Eastern Region	***311,361***	25%
Kailahun District	102,973	8%
Kenema LG District	81,513	7%
Kenema Town	42,204	3%
Kono LG District	62,401	5%
Koidu Town	22,270	2%
Northern Region	***387,275***	32%
Bombali LG District	77,163	6%
Makeni Town	26,502	2%
Kambia District	61,209	5%
Koinadugu District	42,212	3%
Port Loko District	100,837	8%
Tonkolili District	79,352	6%
Southern Region	***264,569***	22%
Bo LG Dist	72,280	6%
Bo Town	47,787	4%
Bonthe LG Dist	25,496	2%
Bonthe Town	3,552	0.3%
Moyamba District	64,690	5%
Pujehun District	50,764	4%
Western Area	***260,999***	21%
West Rural	48,956	4%
West Urban	212,043	17%
	24.6%	

Chart 12: Individuals with Pre-Primary and Primary Education Only by LGA



The table and chart show that Sierra Leone has 1,224,204 individuals (24.6% of the national population) with pre-primary or primary education as the highest level they have completed. 32% of these are to be found in the Northern Region. The fact that all the regions have a higher number of individuals reporting accessing some form of kindergarten or primary education than the Western Area bodes well for the spread of education across the nation. The challenge is now to similarly spread access to education above the primary level.

5.4 Secondary Education

5.4.1 The Junior Secondary Level Enrolment

Data from the Inspectorate Directorate of MEST gives Junior Secondary School enrolment for 2003/2004 as approximately 133,401. ***According to the 2004 Census, enrolment at the Junior Secondary School level was 143,407, given the many assumptions stated earlier.*** This number is made up of 87,787 males and 55,620 females and gives a male to female ratio of approximately 1.6:1 i.e. 16 boys for every 10 girls. This is significantly higher than the primary school male to female ratio of 1.1:1.

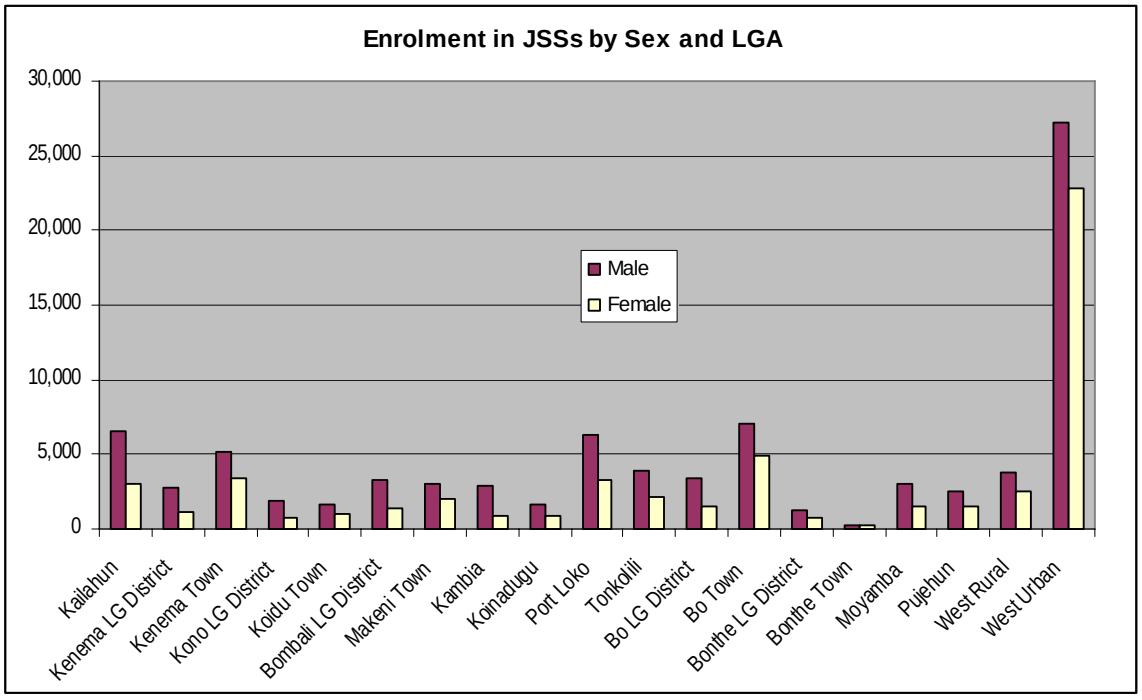
The total JSS enrolment excludes the 2,437 students given as 6 to 10 year old in 2004/05 who would have been 5 to 9 years old in 2003/04 and very unlikely to have been in JSS. Further, because the enrolment figure quoted are for the 2003/04 academic year but are based on the responses of those still at school in 2004/05, the enrolment is an under-estimate of the real 2003/04 enrolment. For this reason, the advice given for future censuses in the primary education section of this report holds true also for secondary education.

Table 23 below shows the enrolment at JSS by sex nation-wide in the 2003/04 academic year. They should be seen and used in the context of the shortcomings indicated in the preceding paragraph.

Table 23: JSS Total Enrolment by Sex, Region and Local Government Area

	Total	Male	Female	M:F Ratio
National	143,407	87,787	55,620	1.6
Eastern Region	27,397	18,025	9,372	1.9
Kailahun	9,616	6,603	3,013	2.2
Kenema LG District	3,935	2,773	1,162	2.4
Kenema Town	8,512	5,117	3,395	1.5
Kono LG District	2,703	1,900	803	2.4
Koidu Town	2,631	1,632	999	1.6
Northern Region	31,699	21,164	10,535	2.0
Bombali LG District	4,622	3,271	1,351	2.4
Makeni Town	4,969	3,015	1,954	1.5
Kambia	3,859	2,922	937	3.1
Koinadugu	2,492	1,644	848	1.9
Port Loko	9,681	6,342	3,339	1.9
Tonkolili	6,076	3,970	2,106	1.9
Southern Region	27,976	17,554	10,422	1.7
Bo LG District	4,998	3,432	1,566	2.2
Bo Town	11,979	7,085	4,894	1.4
Bonthe LG District	2,088	1,305	783	1.7
Bonthe Town	427	232	195	1.2
Moyamba	4,484	2,964	1,520	2.0
Pujehun	4,000	2,536	1,464	1.7
Western Area	56,335	31,044	25,291	1.2
West Rural	6,346	3,842	2,504	1.5
West Urban	49,989	27,202	22,787	1.2

Chart 13: Enrolments in Junior Secondary Schools by Sex and Local Government Area



The table and chart clearly show boys to have higher enrolments than girls at the JSS level in every LGA and hence regionally and nationally. Alarmingly high ratios are noted for Kambia and all districts from which the contribution of the main towns have been subtracted i.e. Kenema LG, Kono LG, Bombali LG and Bo LG Districts. Even with the intervention being made by government in terms of free JSS education for girls in the Eastern and Northern Regions, school attendance by girls appears to still be poorer than in the Southern Region and Western Area. A study on the reasons for the continued under enrolment of girls in the Northern and Eastern Regions would be useful.

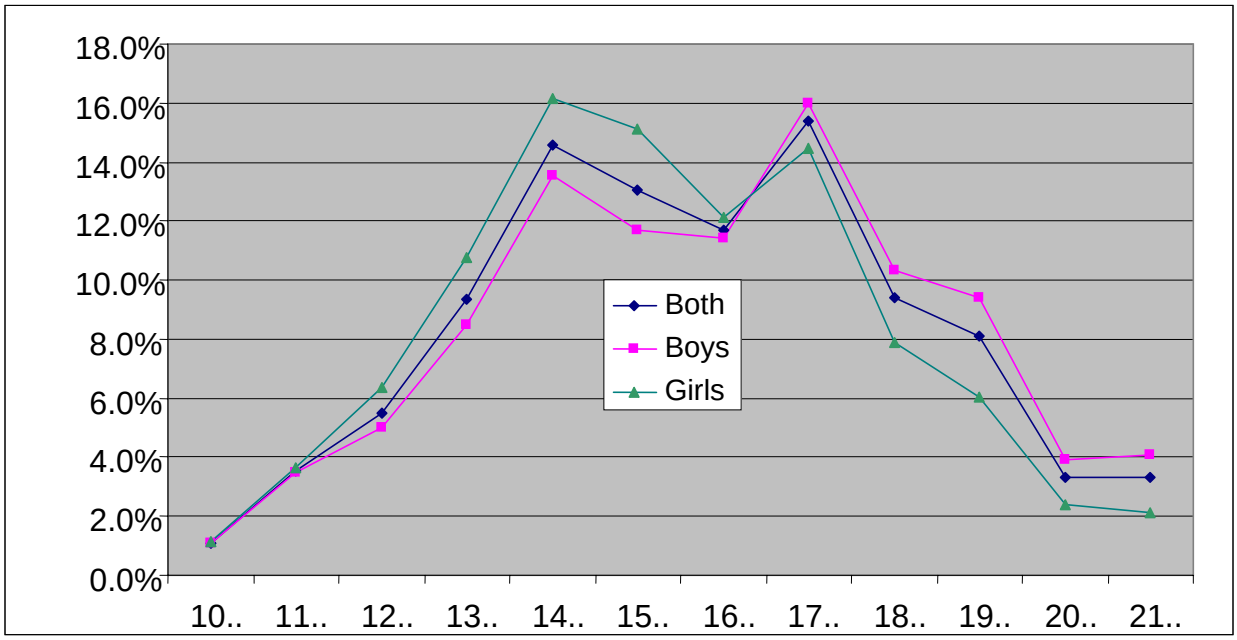
The percentage age distribution of students at junior secondary school in the 2003/04 academic year is as shown in the Table 24 below.

Table 24 – Age Distribution of JSS Students 2003/04

2004/05 AGES	2003/04 AGES	% of All at JSS	% of Boys at JSS	% of Girls at JSS
6	5	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
7	6	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
8	7	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%
9	8	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
10	9	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%
11	10	1.1%	1.1%	1.1%
12	11	3.5%	3.5%	3.6%
13	12	5.5%	5.0%	6.3%
14	13	9.4%	8.5%	10.7%
15	14	14.6%	13.5%	16.2%
16	15	13.0%	11.7%	15.1%
17	16	11.7%	11.4%	12.1%
18	17	15.4%	16.0%	14.5%
19	18	9.4%	10.4%	7.9%
20	19	8.1%	9.4%	6.0%
21	20	3.3%	3.9%	2.4%
22	21	3.3%	4.1%	2.1%
23	22			

Pupils in the age range 6 to 10 years yellow were believed to be too young to be in JSS and so were excluded in arriving at total enrolment at that level. The Chart 14 below, without the excluded students, shows the situation clearly.

Chart 14 - % Distribution of JSS Students by Age and Sex



Both Table 24 and Chart 14 show above that the majority of JSS students (63.4%) were over-aged i.e. aged 15 years and above. Only 29.5% were of the 'official' age. When disaggregated into separate boys and girls, the picture is that 66.9% of boys and 60.2% of girls at JSS were over-aged and only 27.0% boys and 33.2% girls were of the 'official' age. That fewer girls are over-aged at JSS is not surprising given marriage / cultural practices that are still ongoing in Sierra Leone. Even so however, the percentage of over-aged boys and girls at JSS are still very high.

Given the late start of many students and the extent of repetition in Sierra Leone schools, these findings are not particularly surprising. Unless there is a policy change that would result in a smaller repetition rate, the picture will continue to be the same in the years to come even though the reduction of cost to parents and the construction of more schools in rural areas should mean that more pupils would start school at the right age.

5.4.2 Enrolment Rates

The national Junior Secondary School GER and NER calculated from the census data are a disappointing 41% and 12% respectively. This GER figure is higher than the 16% of the 2002 MICS. The NER is 1 percentage point lower than that calculated from the SLIHS data. Given the relatively high NER and GER for the primary level, the corresponding figures for the JSS level are very disappointing and suggest that much of those who start at the primary school do not continue on to the JSS level. This is an issue of concern that needs the immediate attention of the MEST if the goal of providing basic education for all is to be achieved within a reasonable time. Given that presently there are barely

300 secondary schools whilst primary schools number in excess of 4,000, and given that some chiefdoms are only receiving JSSs for the first time now under the Sababu Education Project, the task ahead is tremendous.

Table 25 below shows the NER and GER for local government areas by sex. The parity indices are also shown.

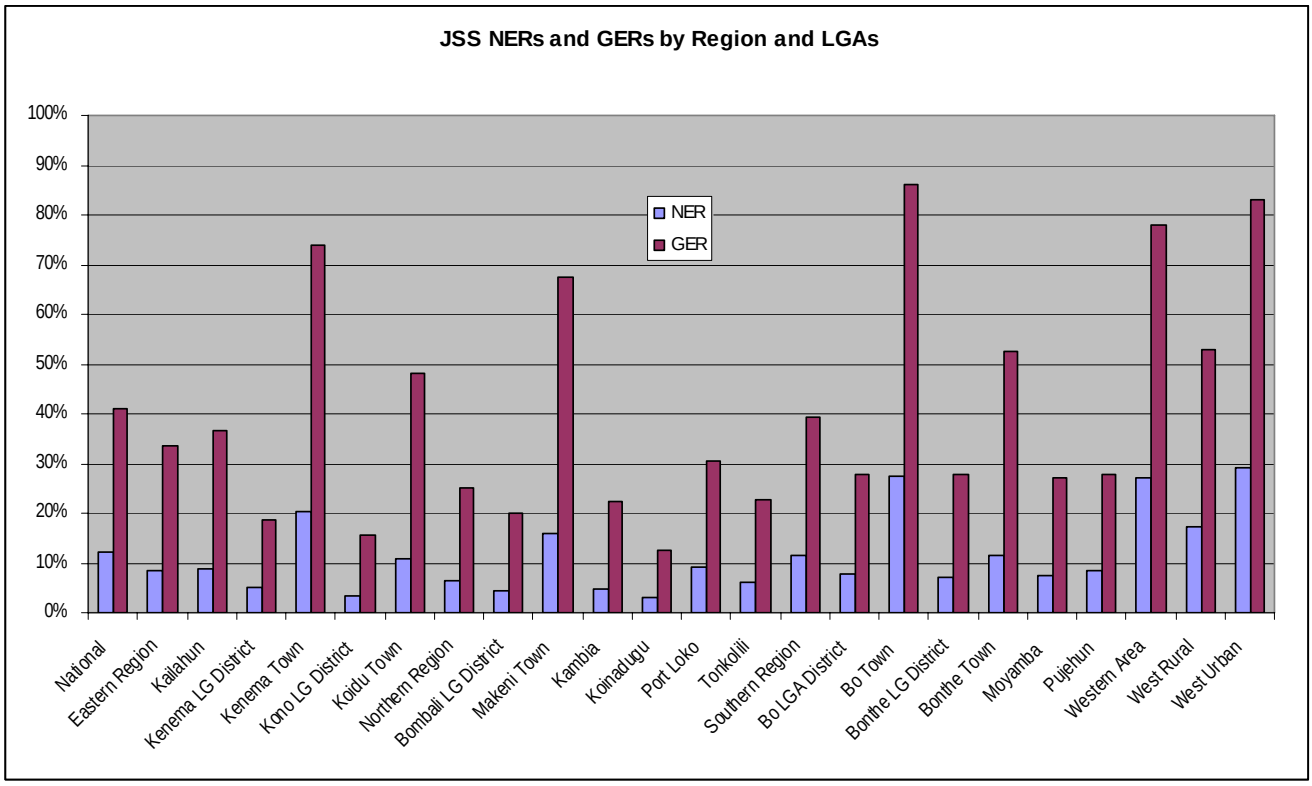
Table 25 – JSS NER, GER and Parity Indices by Sex and Local Government Area

	NER	Male NER	Female NER	Parity Index	GER	Male GER	Female GER	Parity Index
National	***12%***	***13%***	***11%***	***0.81***	***41%***	***49%***	***32%***	***0.66***
Eastern Region	***8%***	***10%***	***7%***	***0.65***	***34%***	***43%***	***24%***	***0.56***
Kailahun	9%	11%	6%	***0.58***	37%	48%	24%	***0.51***
Kenema LG District	5%	6%	4%	***0.57***	19%	25%	12%	***0.47***
Kenema Town	20%	23%	18%	***0.75***	74%	90%	58%	***0.65***
Kono LG District	4%	5%	2%	***0.54***	16%	21%	10%	***0.45***
Koidu Town	11%	13%	9%	***0.65***	48%	63%	35%	***0.55***
Northern Region	***6%***	***8%***	***5%***	***0.67***	***25%***	***32%***	***17%***	***0.54***
Bombali LG District	4%	5%	3%	***0.68***	20%	26%	13%	***0.48***
Makeni Town	16%	18%	14%	***0.77***	68%	81%	54%	***0.66***
Kambia	5%	6%	3%	***0.53***	22%	32%	11%	***0.35***
Koinadugu	3%	4%	3%	***0.69***	13%	16%	9%	***0.54***
Port Loko	9%	11%	7%	***0.67***	31%	39%	22%	***0.56***
Tonkolili	6%	8%	5%	***0.62***	23%	29%	16%	***0.56***
Southern Region	***12%***	***13%***	***10%***	***0.80***	***39%***	***47%***	***31%***	***0.65***
Bo LG District	8%	30%	27%	***0.88***	28%	36%	19%	***0.52***
Bo Town	27%	31%	24%	***0.77***	86%	107%	67%	***0.63***
Bonthe LG District	7%	8%	6%	***0.74***	28%	32%	23%	***0.70***
Bonthe Town	12%	13%	10%	***0.79***	52%	56%	49%	***0.88***
Moyamba	7%	8%	6%	***0.77***	27%	33%	20%	***0.59***
Pujehun	9%	9%	8%	***0.81***	28%	33%	22%	***0.65***
Western Area	***27%***	***29%***	***25%***	***0.87***	***78%***	***90%***	***67%***	***0.74***
West Rural	17%	20%	15%	***0.76***	53%	64%	42%	***0.65***
West Urban	29%	31%	27%	***0.88***	83%	96%	71%	***0.75***

From the table above, it is apparent that the parity indices for the NER are greater than for the GER, except for Bonthe Town. The overall picture is that earlier indicated i.e. as girls get older the tendency for them to start and/or stay in school gets less relative to boys. All the parity indices clearly show that much work has to be done to get more girls into school. The fact that the Eastern and Northern Regions still have lower female NERs and GERs than the Southern and Western Regions and the appallingly low female NER of some of the LGAs in the former regions suggest that returns from the MEST Girl-child programme are still limited. Something additional to providing free schooling for girls in the Eastern and Northern Regions need to be done. The authors suspect that traditional practices in these regions may be at the heart of the problem. Rather than being

disheartened, this finding should strengthen the resolve of government to address the disparity in male and female access to secondary level education nation-wide.

Chart 15: Junior Secondary School NERs and GERs by Region and Local Government Area



The very low NER and significantly larger GER for every LGA suggest that the pattern of school attendance in Sierra Leone is different from that in Western countries and confirm that many delay or get their education delayed. The cause of this are many and complex – they include late starting, class repetition, delays caused by the decade long civil conflict, delays caused by migration, delays caused by distance to nearest school and terrain (geographical), delays caused by poverty, etc. In the case of the JSS, the low NER and GER can also be attributed to the requirement that an examination hurdle, the NPSE, must be cleared before movement from the primary to JSS is allowed. Changes in the artificially determined pass score have impact on the NER and GER.

5.4.3 Individuals with JSS Education as Highest Level Completed

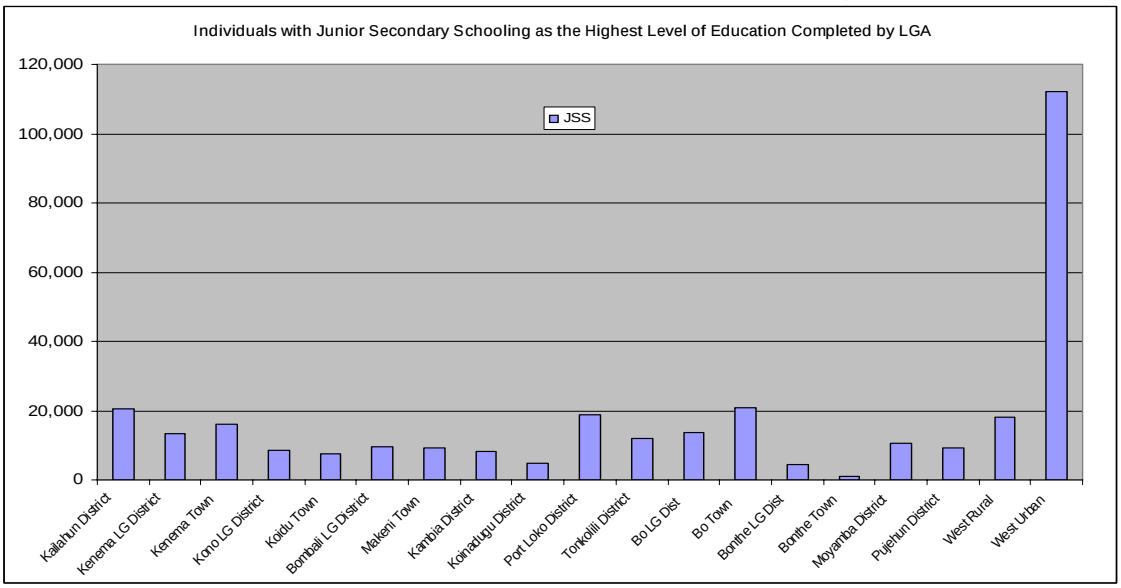
Respondents reporting the JSS education as the highest level completed but who were not pursuing educational courses in 2004 numbered 172,426. When this is added to the number still pursuing educational programmes, a total of 318,269 individuals is obtained. The distribution of these individuals across the nation is shown in the table below.

Table26: Numbers and Percentage with JSS Education as Highest Level Completed

	JSS	***%JSS***
National	***318,269***	
Eastern Region	***65,859***	21%
Kailahun District	20,405	6%
Kenema LG District	13,340	4%
Kenema Town	15,952	5%
Kono LG District	8,612	3%
Koidu Town	7,550	2%
Northern Region	***62,227***	20%
Bombali LG District	9,687	3%
Makeni Town	9,167	3%
Kambia District	8,081	3%
Koinadugu District	4,660	1%
Port Loko District	18,822	6%
Tonkolili District	11,810	4%
Southern Region	***60,023***	19%
Bo LG Dist	13,627	4%
Bo Town	20,997	7%
Bonthe LG Dist	4,610	1%
Bonthe Town	868	0.3%
Moyamba District	10,697	3%
Pujehun District	9,224	3%
Western Area	***130,160***	41%
West Rural	17,979	6%
West Urban	112,181	35%
	6.4%	

The table indicates that Sierra Leone has 318,269 individuals (6.4% of the national population) with JSS education as the highest level they have completed. 41% of these are to be found in the Western Area.

Chart 16: Individuals with Education up to Junior Secondary School Level Only



The fact that the Western Area has more individuals giving JSS education as the highest level completed than the other regions is not in line with the pattern observed for primary level education and suggests that access to JSS education may be limited in the other regions. This is confirmed by the known fact that some chiefdoms are only getting junior secondary schools for the first time under the on-going Sababu Education Project. This has implications about the achievement of Universal Basic Education (UBE) as required by the Constitution and Education Act.

5.5 The Senior Secondary School (SSS) Level

Data from the Inspectorate Directorate of MEST gives Senior Secondary School (SSS) enrolment for 2003/2004 as approximately 38,324. ***The 2004 Census data gives the enrolment at Senior Secondary School as approximately 65,141 in 2003/04 given the assumptions stated earlier. Of the enrolment of 65,141, 22,483 (35%) are girls and 42,658 (65%) are boys i.e. two-thirds of the students at SSS are boys***. This gives a male to female ratio of approximately 1.9:1.(See Chart 17 below).

Chart 17 - Proportion of Males and Females Enrolled at SSS

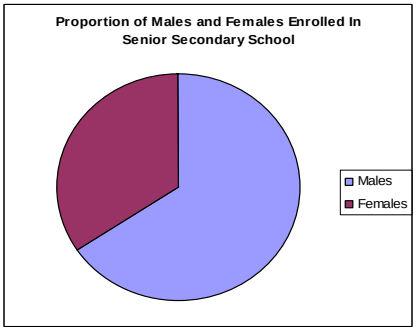


Table27: Enrolment at Senior Secondary School by Sex, Region and LGA

	Total	Male	Female	M:F Ratio
National	65,141	42,658	22,483	1.9
Eastern Region	8,107	5,977	2,130	2.8
Kailahun	2,114	1,644	470	3.5
Kenema LG District	1,093	830	263	3.2
Kenema Town	3,870	2,780	1,090	2.6
Kono LG District	414	303	111	2.7
Koidu Town	616	420	196	2.1
Northern Region	10,324	7,395	2,929	2.5
Bombali LG District	1,090	821	269	3.1
Makeni Town	2,345	1,639	706	2.3
Kambia	943	771	172	4.5
Koinadugu	1,027	702	325	2.2
Port Loko	3,551	2,453	1,098	2.2
Tonkolili	1,368	1,009	359	2.8
Southern Region	10,235	7,070	3,165	2.2
Bo LG District	1,299	929	370	2.5
Bo Town	6,039	4,115	1,924	2.1
Bonthe LG District	646	470	176	2.7
Bonthe Town	181	116	65	1.8
Moyamba	942	667	275	2.4
Pujehun	1,128	773	355	2.2
Western Area	36,475	22,216	14,259	1.6
West Rural	2,610	1,695	915	1.9
West Urban	33,865	20,521	13,344	1.5

Table 27 above confirms that there are significantly more boys than girls at SSS. For most LGAs boys in SSS outnumber girls by more than 2 to 1. In the case of Kambia, there are 4.5 times as much boys as girls in SSS. MEST and all LGAs have much work to do to increase the number of girls in SSS. The difference between the sex ratio for the primary level (1.1:1) and that for the SSS level (1.9:1) suggests that, for whatever reasons, girls are staying in education. A study on this phenomenon is needed so that appropriate action can be taken to address the problem.

The large difference between the MEST and Census enrolment figures is hard to explain and warrants a confirmatory survey.

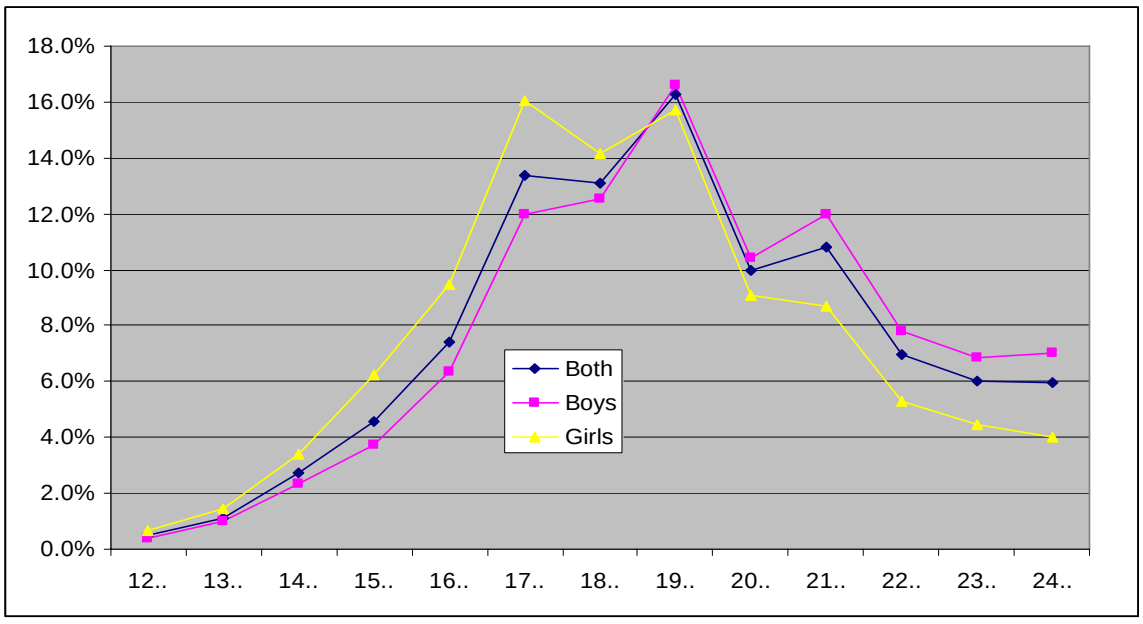
The significant differences in enrolment between the different regions are worth noting. The Western Area caters for 56% of those attending SSS. This uneven distribution suggests that there are underlying problems which MEST needs to address in terms of accessibility and quality of SSSs across the country.

Table28: Age Distribution of Students at Senior Secondary School

2004/05 AGES	2003/04 AGES	% of Diff Ages at SSS	% of Boys of Diff Ages at SSS	% of Girls of Diff Ages at SSS
6	5..	0.0%	0%	0%
7	6..	0.0%	0%	0%
8	7..	0.0%	0%	0%
9	8..	0.0%	0%	0%
10	9..	0.3%	0%	0%
11	10..	0.3%	0%	0%
12	11..	0.5%	0%	1%
13	12..	0.5%	0%	1%
14	13..	1.1%	1%	1%
15	14..	2.7%	2%	3%
16	15..	4.6%	4%	6%
17	16..	7.4%	6%	9%
18	17..	13.4%	12%	16%
19	18..	13.1%	13%	14%
20	19..	16.3%	17%	16%
21	20..	10.0%	10%	9%
22	21..	10.8%	12%	9%
23	22..	6.9%	8%	5%
24	23..	6.0%	7%	4%
25	24..	6.0%	7%	4%

Table 28 above shows the cumulative effect of starting school late and/or class repetition. The official age of SSS students should be 15 to 17 years given the starting age of primary school at 6 and no class repetition but the table shows that there are more students at SSS aged between 17 and 19 years. Chart 10 below clearly shows the situation.

Chart 18: Percentage Age Distribution of Students at SSS



Although the national picture, as shown in the chart above, indicates that many SSS students are aged between 17 and 19, when the data for the LGAs is examined, it is noted that a number of LGAs have the majority of their SSS students in the age range of 18 to 20 and 19 to 21. One suggestion is therefore that in many LGAs, students enter SSS well above the official age.

The chart provides further confirmation of earlier observations that boys tend to stay in school until older than girls. This means that in order to complete their education, girls should be encouraged to start on time and to complete quickly. It also suggests that given the age distribution of Sierra Leone's school going population, Gross Enrolment Ratios are more meaningful than Net Enrolment Ratios.

The veracity of the above statement is confirmed by the table 26 below which shows that the GERs for all regions and LGAs are significantly higher than their NERs. This is not necessarily a bad thing for a country like Sierra Leone in which the main priority is to get all into school and to provide education for as many as possible irrespective of age.

5.5.1 Enrolment Ratios

The national Senior Secondary School GER and NER calculated from the census data are a disappointing 22% and 6% respectively. Whilst the GER is lower than the 32% calculated using the SLIHS data, the NER is close to its 7%. The fact that the SLIHS and Census data are yielding GERs that are significantly higher than that obtainable using the MEST enrolment figure suggest that there is a need for data verification.

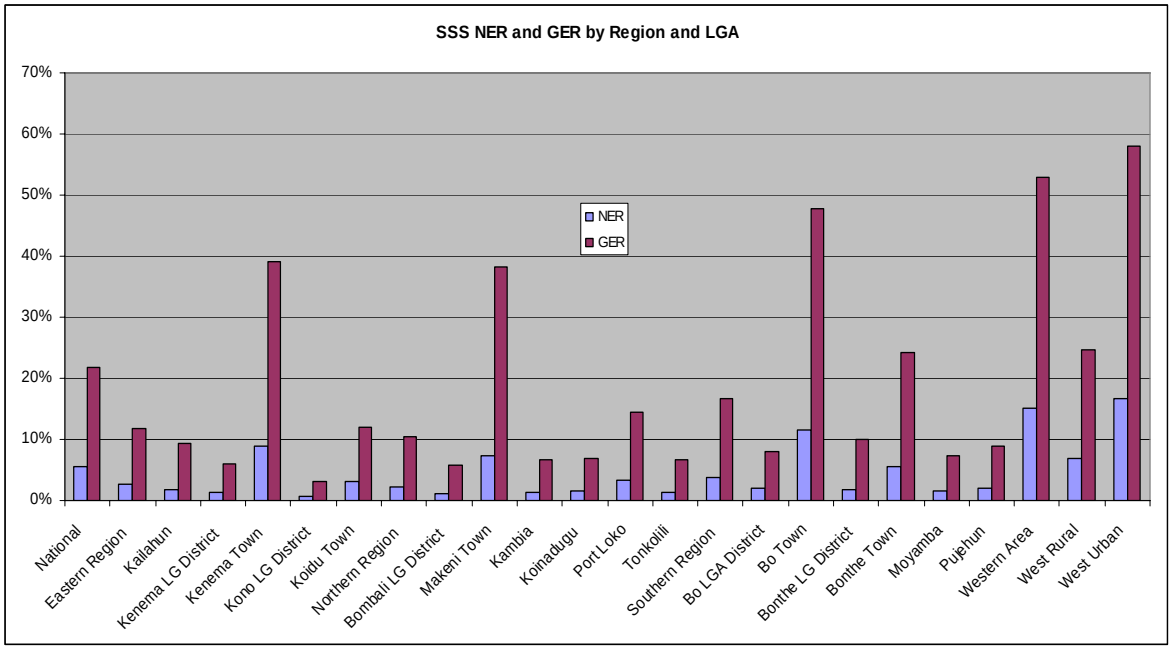
Table29: Net Enrolment, Gross Enrolment and Parity Indices by Region and LGAs

	NER	Male NER	Female NER	Parity Index	GER	Male GER	Female GER	Parity Index
National	***6%***	***7%***	***5%***	***0.69***	***22%***	***30%***	***14%***	***0.48***
Eastern Region	***3%***	***4%***	***2%***	***0.48***	***12%***	***18%***	***6%***	***0.33***
Kailahun	2%	3%	1%	***0.43***	9%	15%	4%	***0.28***
Kenema LG District	1%	2%	1%	***0.35***	6%	10%	3%	***0.27***
Kenema Town	9%	11%	6%	***0.56***	39%	57%	22%	***0.39***
Kono LG District	1%	1%	0%	***0.50***	3%	5%	2%	***0.34***
Koidu Town	3%	4%	2%	***0.60***	12%	17%	7%	***0.42***
Northern Region	***2%***	***2%***	***1%***	***0.55***	***10%***	***7%***	***3%***	***0.40***
Bombali LG District	1%	2%	1%	***0.43***	6%	9%	3%	***0.33***
Makeni Town	7%	10%	5%	***0.52***	38%	54%	23%	***0.43***
Kambia	1%	2%	1%	***0.26***	7%	11%	2%	***0.20***
Koinadugu	1%	2%	1%	***0.57***	7%	10%	4%	***0.38***
Port Loko	3%	4%	3%	***0.56***	14%	22%	8%	***0.39***
Tonkolili	1%	2%	1%	***0.44***	7%	11%	3%	***0.30***
Southern Region	***4%***	***5%***	***3%***	***0.62***	***17%***	***24%***	***10%***	***0.41***
Bo LG District	2%	3%	1%	***0.41***	8%	12%	4%	***0.36***
Bo Town	12%	13%	10%	***0.79***	48%	64%	31%	***0.49***
Bonthe LG District	2%	3%	1%	***0.34***	10%	15%	5%	***0.34***
Bonthe Town	6%	8%	3%	***0.41***	24%	35%	16%	***0.45***
Moyamba	1%	2%	1%	***0.68***	7%	11%	4%	***0.38***
Pujehun	2%	2%	1%	***0.57***	9%	13%	5%	***0.39***
Western Area	***15%***	***17%***	***14%***	***0.82***	***53%***	***67%***	***40%***	***0.59***
West Rural	7%	9%	5%	***0.62***	25%	34%	16%	***0.48***
West Urban	17%	18%	15%	***0.84***	58%	73%	44%	***0.60***

It is worth noting that whilst the NER difference between males and females is small (7% and 5% respectively), the GER difference is large (Males – 30%, Females – 14%). The suggestion from this observation is that there are less over-aged females than males in SSS.

As already indicated above, the significant differences between the GERs and NERs are a consequence of the fact that many start education late and/or repeat classes. Until school is started on time and/or class repetition is minimised or abolished the difference between the GER and NER will remain.

Chart 19: Senior Secondary School NERs and GERs by Region and Local Government Area



The appallingly low NERs and GERs are causes for concern as they suggest that Sierra Leone is heading for a dearth of needed educated manpower. The noticeably large disparities between the LGAs relative to the disparities between the sexes suggest that although it is important to address both, the geographical disparities may require even more urgent attention.

The table and chart confirm that in terms of accessing SSS, students from urban areas, i.e. towns and Western Urban, are more advantaged than their rural partners. A seeming suggestion is that an able student in a rural area may need to move to a town if his potential is to be realised. This movement to town could partly explain the significantly higher enrolment in towns.

5.5.2 Individuals with SSS Education as Highest Level Completed

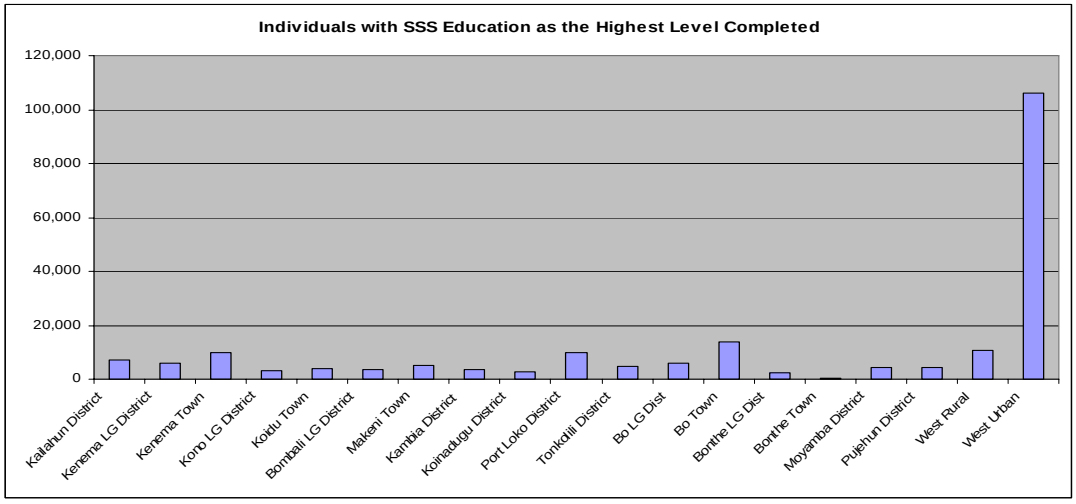
Respondents reporting the JSS education as the highest level completed but who were not pursuing educational courses in 2004 numbered 141,341. When this is added to the number still pursuing educational programmes, a total of 207,228 individuals is obtained. The distribution of these individuals across the nation is shown in the table below.

Table30: Numbers and Percentage with SSS Education as Highest Level Completed

	SSS	***%SSS***
National	***207,228***	
Eastern Region	***29,930***	14%
Kailahun District	7,242	3%
Kenema LG District	5,879	3%
Kenema Town	9,834	5%
Kono LG District	3,103	1%
Koidu Town	3,872	2%
Northern Region	***29,511***	14%
Bombali LG District	3,581	2%
Makeni Town	5,039	2%
Kambia District	3,419	2%
Koinadugu District	2,765	1%
Port Loko District	9,856	5%
Tonkolili District	4,851	2%
Southern Region	***30,944***	15%
Bo LG Dist	5,764	3%
Bo Town	13,922	7%
Bonthe LG Dist	2,197	1%
Bonthe Town	429	0.3%
Moyamba District	4,399	2%
Pujehun District	4,233	2%
Western Area	***116,843***	56%
West Rural	10,681	5%
West Urban	106,162	51%
	4.2%	

The table indicates that Sierra Leone has 207,228 individuals (4.2% of the national population) with SSS education as the highest level they have completed. 56% of these are to be found in the Western Area.

Chart 20: Individuals with Education up to Senior Secondary School Level Only



The fact that the Western Area has more individuals giving SSS education as the highest level completed than the other regions is not in line with the pattern observed for primary level education and suggests that access to SSS education is limited in the other regions. Urban Western Area (Freetown) alone has more individuals giving SSS education as the highest level completed than all the regions, other than the Western Area, put together. This has implications for available human capital in the regions other than the Western Area that requires urgent attention.

5.6 School Level Comparisons

Table 31 below shows that almost three-quarters of children in school are in primary school. It also shows that more respondents claimed to have accessed Kindergarten than were in SSS in 2003/04.

Table31: Distribution of Enrolment at School Level

	Kind Total	Prim Total	JSS Total*	SSS Total*	School Level Tot
Enrolment	84,979	823,435	143,407	65,141	1,116,962
% of Total School Enrolment	7.6%	73.7%	12.8%	5.8%	100.0%
% of Primary Enrolment			17%	8%	

Excludes those deemed to be entry errors because of their reported very young ages.

Given the high National Primary School Examination pass rate (over 70%) the fact that the JSS enrolment is only 17% of primary school enrolment suggests that many who start primary school do not get to Class 6 and do not proceed to JSS even though dropping out at JSS cannot be totally discounted. Given the JSS picture, the fact that enrolment at SSS is only 8% of that at primary does not come as a surprise. What is of concern is the small percentage of those who start at primary school that are likely to make it to SSS. The distribution of enrolment is presented pictorially in chart below.

Chart 21: Distribution of Enrolment at the Various School Levels

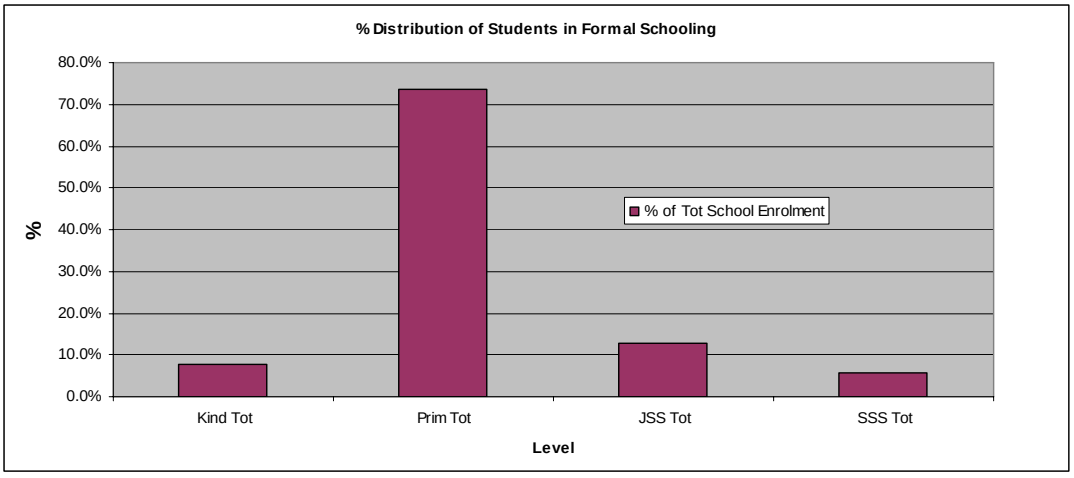


Table32: NERs and GERs of Primary, JSS and SSS Levels

Sex	Prim NER	JSS NER	SSS NER	Prim GER	JSS GER	SSS GER
Both Males and Females	64%	12%	6%	104%	41%	22%
Males	65%	13%	7%	110%	49%	30%
Females	63%	11%	5%	98%	32%	14%

The decrease in NER and GER as the schooling ladder is ascended is indicative of the lower enrolments at the different levels. It also clearly indicates that much work still has to be done if universal basic education as spelt out in the national Constitution and Education Act is to be achieved. The enrolment rate comparisons across the different levels of schooling are showed in the table below.

Table 33: Net and Gross Enrolment Rates Comparisons Across LGAs

AREA	PNER	JSSNER	SSSNER	PGER	JSSGER	SSSGER
National	**64%**	**12%**	**6%**	**104%**	**41%**	**22%**
Eastern Region	**65%**	**8%**	**3%**	**114%**	**34%**	**12%**
Kailahun District	65%	9%	2%	117%	37%	9%
Kenema LG District	60%	5%	1%	102%	19%	6%
Kenema Town	79%	20%	9%	130%	74%	39%
Kono LG District	60%	4%	1%	108%	16%	3%
Koidu Town	76%	11%	3%	130%	48%	12%
Northern Region	**57%**	**6%**	**2%**	**94%**	**25%**	**10%**
Bombali LG District	61%	4%	1%	101%	20%	6%
Makeni Town	81%	16%	7%	137%	68%	38%
Kambia District	58%	5%	1%	93%	22%	7%
Koinadugu District	39%	3%	1%	65%	13%	7%
Port Loko District	60%	9%	3%	94%	31%	14%
Tonkolili District	60%	6%	1%	99%	23%	7%
Southern Region	**62%**	**12%**	**4%**	**102%**	**39%**	**17%**
Bo LG Dist	62%	8%	2%	103%	28%	8%
Bo Town	79%	27%	12%	134%	86%	48%
Bonthe LG Dist	49%	7%	2%	83%	28%	10%
Bonthe Town	76%	12%	6%	134%	52%	24%
Moyamba District	63%	7%	1%	103%	27%	7%
Pujehun District	54%	9%	2%	87%	28%	9%
Western Area	**77%**	**27%**	**15%**	**116%**	**78%**	**53%**
West Rural	71%	17%	7%	109%	53%	25%
West Urban	78%	29%	17%	118%	83%	58%

Chart22: School Level Net and Gross Enrolment Rates by Region and LGA

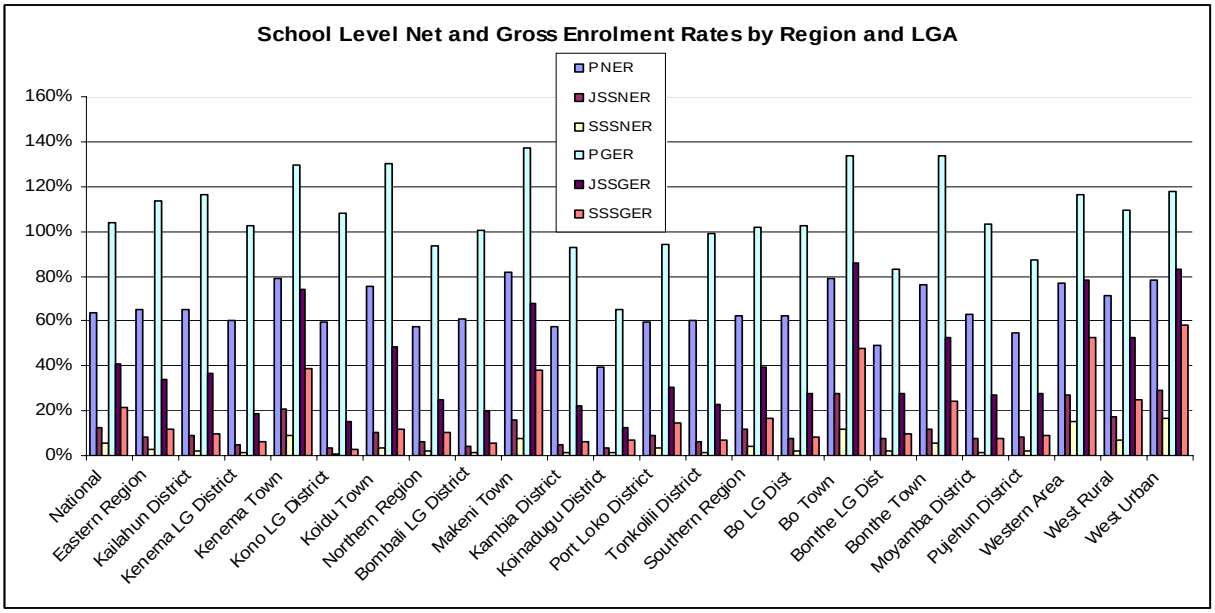


Table 34: Male and Female Net Enrolment Rates by Region and LGA

	Male PNER	Male JNER	Male SNER	Fem PNER	Fem JNER	Fem SNER
National	**65%**	**13%**	**7%**	**63%**	**11%**	**5%**
Eastern Region	**66%**	**10%**	**4%**	**64%**	**7%**	**2%**
Kailahun District	65%	11%	3%	65%	6%	1%
Kenema LG District	61%	6%	2%	60%	4%	1%
Kenema Town	81%	23%	11%	78%	18%	6%
Kono LG District	64%	5%	1%	58%	2%	0%
Koidu Town	61%	13%	4%	75%	9%	2%
Northern Region	**60%**	**8%**	**3%**	**55%**	**5%**	**1%**
Bombali LG District	64%	5%	2%	57%	3%	1%
Makeni Town	83%	18%	10%	80%	14%	5%
Kambia District	62%	6%	2%	53%	3%	1%
Koinadugu District	41%	4%	2%	38%	3%	1%
Port Loko District	63%	11%	4%	56%	7%	3%
Tonkolili District	62%	8%	2%	59%	5%	1%
Southern Region	**61%**	**13%**	**5%**	**64%**	**10%**	**3%**
Bo LG Dist	63%	30%	3%	62%	27%	1%
Bo Town	81%	31%	13%	78%	24%	10%
Bonthe LG Dist	46%	8%	3%	53%	6%	1%
Bonthe Town	77%	13%	8%	76%	10%	3%
Moyamba District	62%	8%	2%	64%	6%	1%
Pujehun District	52%	9%	2%	58%	8%	1%
Western Area	**78%**	**29%**	**17%**	**76%**	**25%**	**14%**
West Rural	73%	20%	9%	69%	15%	5%
West Urban	80%	31%	18%	77%	27%	15%

Table 35: Male and Female Gross Enrolment Rates by Region and LGA

	Male PGER	Male JGER	Male SGER	Fem PGER	Fem JGER	Fem SGER
National	**110%**	**49%**	**30%**	**98%**	**32%**	**14%**
Eastern Region	**119%**	**43%**	**18%**	**107%**	**24%**	**6%**
Kailahun District	122%	48%	15%	111%	24%	4%
Kenema LG District	108%	25%	10%	96%	12%	3%
Kenema Town	136%	90%	57%	124%	58%	22%
Kono LG District	116%	21%	5%	100%	10%	2%
Koidu Town	135%	63%	17%	126%	35%	7%
Northern Region	**102%**	**32%**	**16%**	**84%**	**17%**	**6%**
Bombali LG District	112%	26%	9%	89%	13%	3%
Makeni Town	143%	81%	54%	132%	54%	23%
Kambia District	105%	32%	11%	80%	11%	2%
Koinadugu District	71%	16%	10%	59%	9%	4%
Port Loko District	103%	39%	22%	84%	22%	8%
Tonkolili District	106%	29%	11%	92%	16%	3%
Southern Region	**103%**	**47%**	**24%**	**100%**	**31%**	**10%**
Bo LG Dist	107%	36%	12%	97%	19%	4%
Bo Town	134%	107%	64%	121%	67%	31%
Bonthe LG Dist	81%	32%	15%	85%	23%	5%
Bonthe Town	142%	56%	35%	128%	49%	16%
Moyamba District	106%	33%	11%	100%	20%	4%
Pujehun District	85%	33%	13%	90%	22%	5%
Western Area	**120%**	**90%**	**67%**	**113%**	**67%**	**40%**
West Rural	116%	64%	34%	103%	42%	16%
West Urban	122%	96%	73%	115%	71%	44%

The sets of tables and chart above all confirm that enrolment rates decrease with an increase in school level i.e. enrolment rates at the primary level are higher than that at the JSS level which in turn are higher than that at the SSS level. They also show that with very few exceptions, male enrolment rates are higher than those of females. Further, they show that the Northern Region tends to have the lowest enrolment rates of all the regions and that the large towns (urban areas) have higher enrolment rates than the more rural parts of a district.

Table 36: Difference in Male and Female Enrolment at the Different School Levels

Enrolment	Primary	JSS	SSS
% Male : Female Difference	7%	22%	31%

The disparity between male and female enrolment increases as the educational ladder is ascended. This is clearly shown by Table 36 which shows just a small gender difference of 7% at the primary level, but one in excess of 30% at the SSS level. The message appears to be that MEST still has much to do to address gender differences in access and retention at the school level.

SECTION VI

Post Secondary Education

6.1 Vocational and Commercial Education

Sierra Leone suffers from a dearth of well trained commercial and 'blue collar' workers. The nation's development is however largely dependent on the number and quality of blue collar workers it is able to produce.

School level data collected through the census clearly show that a substantial number of individuals never attend school and of those that do many do not make it beyond the primary and junior secondary levels. The great majority of those who do not access or drop out prematurely from school do not go on to acquire any economically worthwhile or saleable skills. The consequence of the foregoing has been a large number of unemployed and unemployable youths. To fill in the vacuum and meet a very obvious need, many vocational/commercial institutions have sprung into existence. These vocational/commercial institutions together with their vocational/technical counterparts now produce a significant proportion of Sierra Leone's blue collar workers. The 2004 Census attempts to capture information on the enrolments in vocational/commercial institutions.

According to the census, ***approximately 5,818 respondents had completed vocational/ commercial courses below the OND and HND levels by 2004 and were still in education. If those completing the latter courses are included then the number rises to 7,512***. The latter are treated separately later. If the ***57,083*** who had completed these course but are no longer in education are added, then graduates of vocational / commercial courses rise up to ***64,595***.

With the increased attention being given to technical/vocational education by the Government of Sierra Leone and with the exploding demand for this type of education, the enrolment and hence graduates from vocational / commercial institutions are expected to increase rapidly over the next few years.

It is interesting to note that the great majority of respondents completing vocational / commercial programmes/courses and still in education, were in the age range 12 – 40. The inference from this is that vocational / commercial institutions take in students from primarily two levels of schooling - the JSS and SSS and cater primarily for the group referred to as "youths".

A large number of vocational / commercial institutions cater for females and unlike the findings of the 10% analysis, more females (64%) still in education reported completing vocational/commercial programmes than males (36%). The female to male respondents completion ratio of 1.8:1 is the best for all levels of education and confirms the interest of females in the vocational / commercial courses on offer in Community Education Centres and Technical/Vocational Centres.

In terms of regional distribution, there are more vocational / commercial students who claimed to have completed vocational/commercial courses in institutions in the Western Area and are still in education than any other single region as the table below shows.

Table 37: Number and Percentage of Respondents with Vocational/Commercial Completion up to HND as Highest Level Completed by 2004 and Still in Education

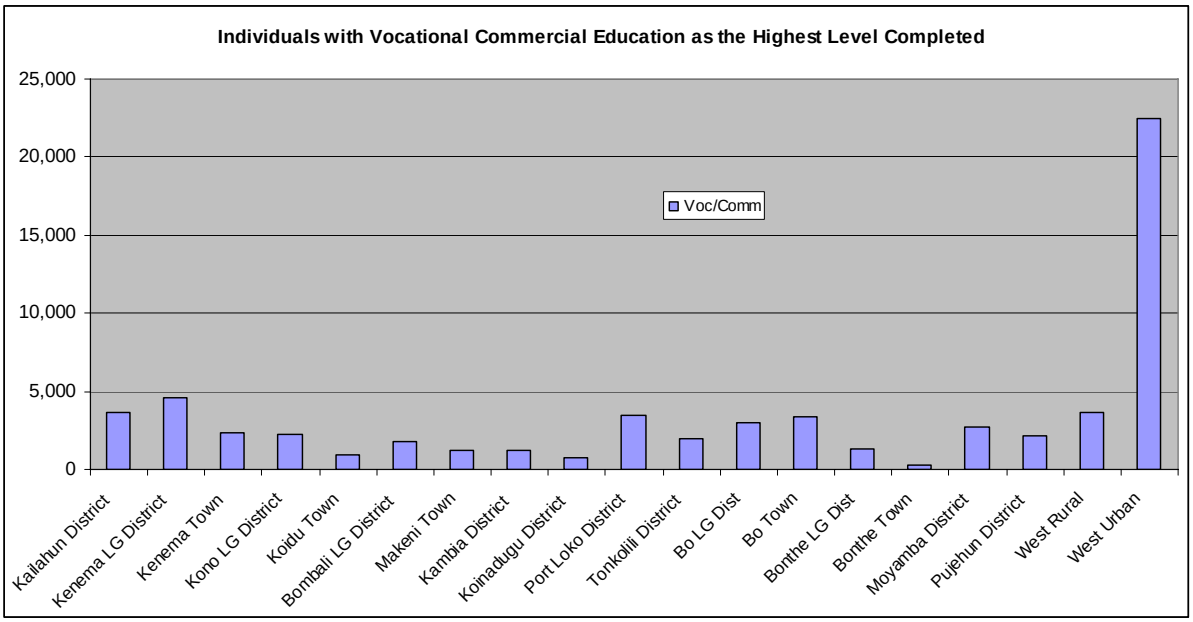
	Vocational/ Commercial	***% Vocational/ Commercial***
National	5,818	
Eastern Region	865	15%
Kailahun District	196	3%
Kenema LG District	154	3%
Kenema Town	389	7%
Kono LG District	0	0%
Koidu Town	126	2%
Northern Region	1,123	19%
Bombali LG District	151	3%
Makeni Town	138	2%
Kambia District	146	3%
Koinadugu District	84	1%
Port Loko District	449	8%
Tonkolili District	155	3%
Southern Region	1,176	20%
Bo LG Dist	191	3%
Bo Town	643	11%
Bonthe LG Dist	60	1%
Bonthe Town	29	0%
Moyamba District	85	1%
Pujehun District	168	3%
Western Area	2,654	46%
West Rural	256	4%
West Urban	2,398	41%

When the numbers who were not pursuing educational courses in 2004 but had completed vocational / commercial courses are taken into account, the picture is as shown in the table below:

Table38: Number and Percentage of All Respondents with Vocational/Commercial Completion up to HND as Highest Level Completed by 2004

	Vocational/ Commercial	***Vocational/ Commercial***
National	***62,901***	
Eastern Region	***13,658***	22%
Kailahun District	3,634	6%
Kenema LG District	4,553	7%
Kenema Town	2,321	4%
Kono LG District	2,148	3%
Koidu Town	1,002	2%
Northern Region	***10,278***	16%
Bombali LG District	1,782	3%
Makeni Town	1,186	2%
Kambia District	1,222	2%
Koinadugu District	715	1%
Port Loko District	3,428	5%
Tonkolili District	1,945	3%
Southern Region	***12,900***	21%
Bo LG Dist	2,996	5%
Bo Town	3,412	5%
Bonthe LG Dist	1,337	2%
Bonthe Town	277	0.4%
Moyamba District	2,696	4%
Pujehun District	2,182	3%
Western Area	***26,065***	41%
West Rural	3,627	6%
West Urban	22,438	36%

Chart 23: Individuals in the Population with Vocational/Commercial Education as the Highest Level Completed



The table and chart above indicate that Sierra Leone has 62,901 individuals (1.3% of the national population) with vocational / commercial qualifications up to HND level as their highest level of qualification. 41% of these are to be found in the Western Area. Bonthe Town surprisingly has only 0.4% of these individuals even though it has a Government Technical institution situated on Bonthe Island.

6.2 Teacher Training (TC and HTC) Completion

The quality of schooling provided is to a large extent dependent on the quality of the teachers. Studies such as the Status of Education[1] indicate that a significant percentage of teachers at the primary level and outside the Western Area are untrained and unqualified. A brave attempt has been made by the Government to address the situation by increasing access to teacher training colleges and by introducing pre-service distance education for teachers. This has resulted in a tremendous increase in the number of teachers under training according to statistics from the MEST.

The census attempts to count the teachers in training using a combination of two of the questions on education. According to the table generated from the Census data, ***approximately 4,920 respondents still in education gave Teachers Certificate (TC) and Higher Teachers' Certificate (HTC) as the highest level attained by 2004***. If as indicated in their manual, enumerators asked respondents about the highest level completed, then the numbers could be referring not only to those who had completed / graduated from teacher training college in 2003/04 but some who could have completed much earlier but were now pursuing other programmes/courses.

Because the given numbers is for those who had completed TC and HTC programmes, it is not possible to info from the census about those still in teacher training. Unlike the case for the school going students, it is much more difficult to be certain that the great majority of respondents had completed their courses in 2003/04 and to compute education indices based on approximate enrolment in 2003/04.

Of the 4,920 who were still pursuing education programmes at the time of the census and who gave TC and HTC as their highest level attained, 3,167 (64%) were male and 1,753 (36%) were female. The great majority were in the age range 18 to 50 years of age.

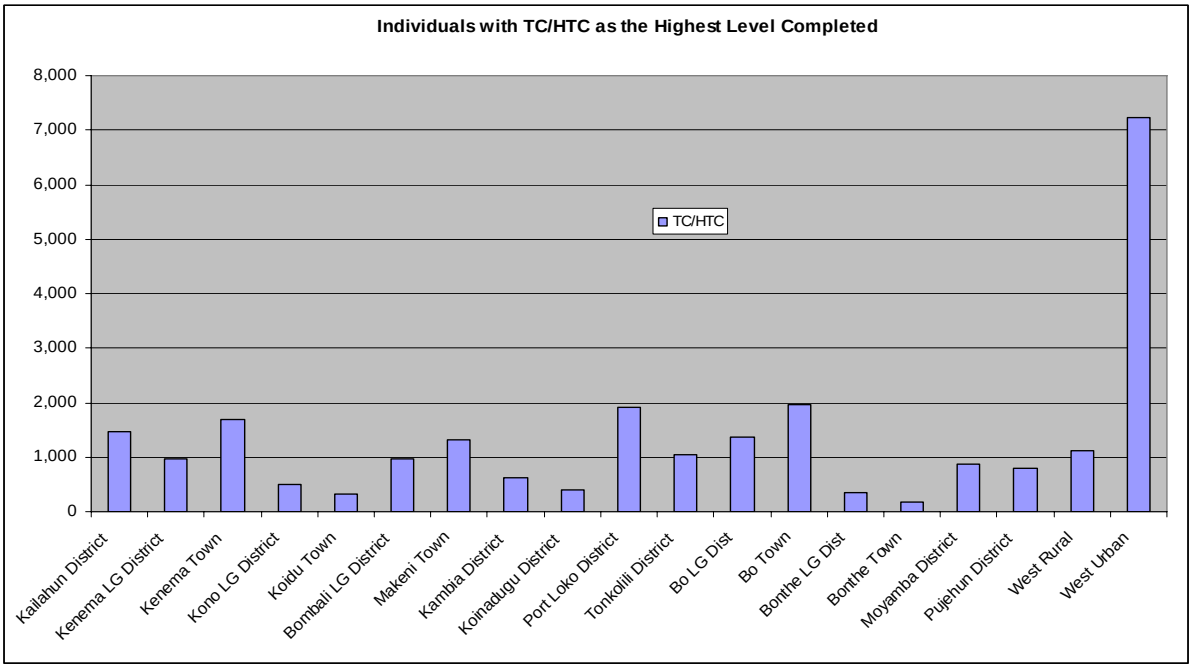
The census gives 20,156 as the number of respondents giving TC / HTC as their highest level completed but who were not pursuing educational courses in 2004. When the number still pursuing educational courses is added, a total of 25,076 is obtained as the number of respondents stating TC/HTC to be the highest level completed. A table giving the national picture is presented below.

[1] Musker, P. et al, 2001, World Bank

Table 39: Number and Percentage of Respondents with TC/HTC as Highest Level Completed by 2004

	TC/HTC	***TC/HTC***
National	***25,076***	
Eastern Region	***4,960***	20%
Kailahun District	1,468	6%
Kenema LG District	974	4%
Kenema Town	1,700	7%
Kono LG District	417	2%
Koidu Town	401	2%
Northern Region	***6,246***	25%
Bombali LG District	972	4%
Makeni Town	1,323	5%
Kambia District	609	2%
Koinadugu District	403	2%
Port Loko District	1,906	8%
Tonkolili District	1,033	4%
Southern Region	***5,521***	22%
Bo LG Dist	1,357	5%
Bo Town	1,968	8%
Bonthe LG Dist	346	1%
Bonthe Town	163	1%
Moyamba District	881	4%
Pujehun District	806	3%
Western Area	***8,349***	33%
West Rural	1,117	4%
West Urban	7,232	29%
	0.5%	

Chart 24: Individuals in the Population with TC/HTC as their Highest Qualification



The table and chart indicate that Sierra Leone has 25,076 individuals (0.5% of the national population) with TC/HTC as their highest level of qualification. 33% of these are to be found in the Western Area. Bonthe District and Town are the LGAs with the lowest percentage of these individuals at just 1%.

6.3 Technical Training (OND and HND) Completion

Like vocational / commercial education, technical education is increasingly being perceived as a means of developing much needed educated technicians, entrepreneurs and middle level manpower. In trying to promote technical education, the MEST has had to constantly battle against the widely held belief that technical education is inferior education. One success achieved in the battle has been the very gradual positive change in attitude towards technical education that started with the introduction of polytechnics.

Unlike the case of teacher training, enrolment for OND and HND courses has not exploded but small increases have been noted. From the census data, ***respondents reporting completion of OND and HND programmes/courses in 2004 numbered 1,694. This number is approximately 0.1% of those responding that they were still pursuing education programmes in 2004/05***. It is not only lower than those reporting completion of TC and HTC programmes and still pursuing educational courses, but also those of the same category completing diplomas courses and first degree programmes at the University of Sierra Leone. As indicated earlier however demand for this type of education is growing and a significant increase in enrolment and graduates is expected within the next few years.

Of the 1,694 still pursuing educational courses and giving OND and HND as their highest level attained, 1,207 (71%) were male and 487 (29%) were female. The great majority were in the age range 18 to 40 years of age.

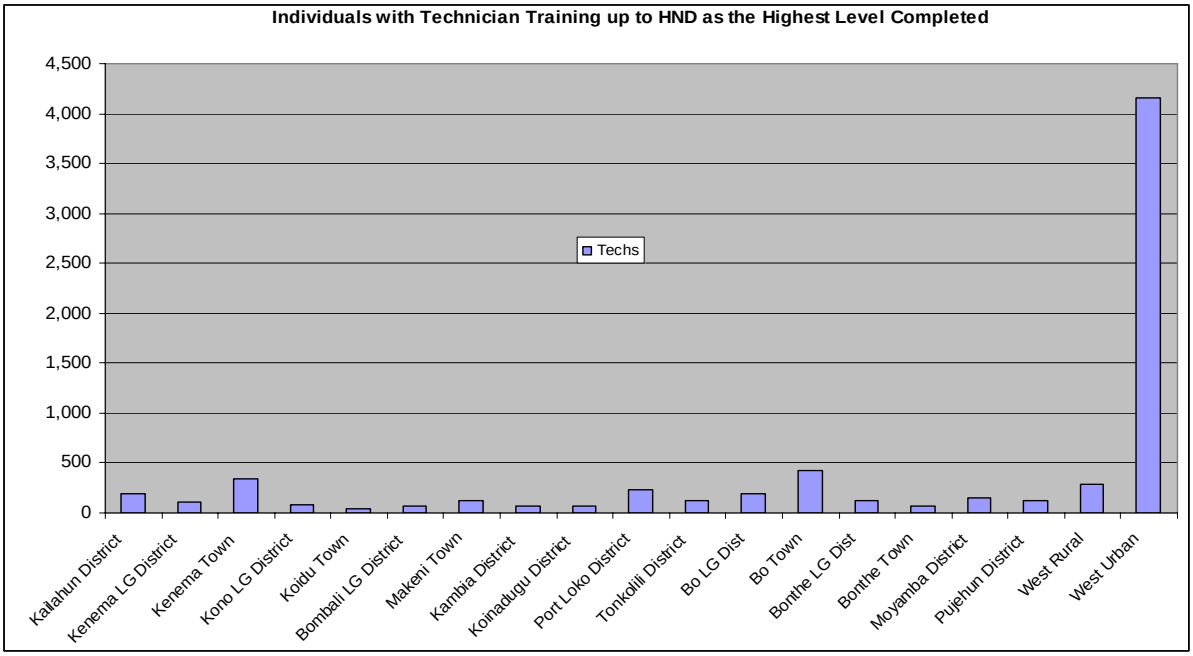
The fact that many more males than females reported that they had completed technical training but still continuing with educational courses suggests that this field is still largely male dominated

When those giving completion of technical training up to HND as the highest level of education completed but who were not pursuing educational programmes in 2004 are added to those still pursuing courses a total of 6,995 individuals is obtained. The national distribution of these individuals is given in the table below.

Table 40: Number and Percentage of Respondents with Technicians Training up to HND Level as Highest Level Completed by 2004

	Techs	***Techs***
National	***6,995***	
Eastern Region	***758***	11%
Kailahun District	189	3%
Kenema LG District	106	2%
Kenema Town	337	5%
Kono LG District	62	1%
Koidu Town	64	1%
Northern Region	***697***	10%
Bombali LG District	74	1%
Makeni Town	127	2%
Kambia District	65	1%
Koinadugu District	67	1%
Port Loko District	237	3%
Tonkolili District	127	2%
Southern Region	***1,084***	15%
Bo LG Dist	193	3%
Bo Town	418	6%
Bonthe LG Dist	118	2%
Bonthe Town	75	1%
Moyamba District	154	2%
Pujehun District	126	2%
Western Area	***4,456***	64%
West Rural	294	4%
West Urban	4,162	59%

Chart 25: Individuals in the Population with Technician Training up to HND Level as their Highest Qualification



The table and chart indicate that Sierra Leone has 6,995 individuals (0.1% of the national population) with technical training up to HND level as their highest level of qualification. 64% of these are to be found in the Western Area. Bonthe Town surprisingly has only 1% of these individuals even though it has a Government Technical institution situated on Bonthe Island. The disproportionate number of technicians in Western Area (64%), and Urban Western Area (Freetown) (59%) in particular is a course for concern. The low number of trained and qualified technicians available nationally has serious implications about our hopes for development and requires urgent government action.

6.4 Nursing Programme / Course Completion

Health and education go together. An individual learns best when he/she is well and healthy. The quality of our heath-care is dependent to a large extent on those who provide the services. In our communities, nurses are often the most accessible health workers. The quality of the health-care they provide to the community is very much dependent on the quality of training they receive. According to the census ***approximately 658 respondents still pursuing educational courses reported nursing qualifications up to that of State Registered Nurse (SRN) as the highest level attained/completed***. They constitute approximately 5% of those still in education and reporting completion of courses at the post-secondary and tertiary levels.

That Sierra Leone provides quality of training for its nurses is suggested by the fact that those moving to other countries find little difficulty in securing employment.

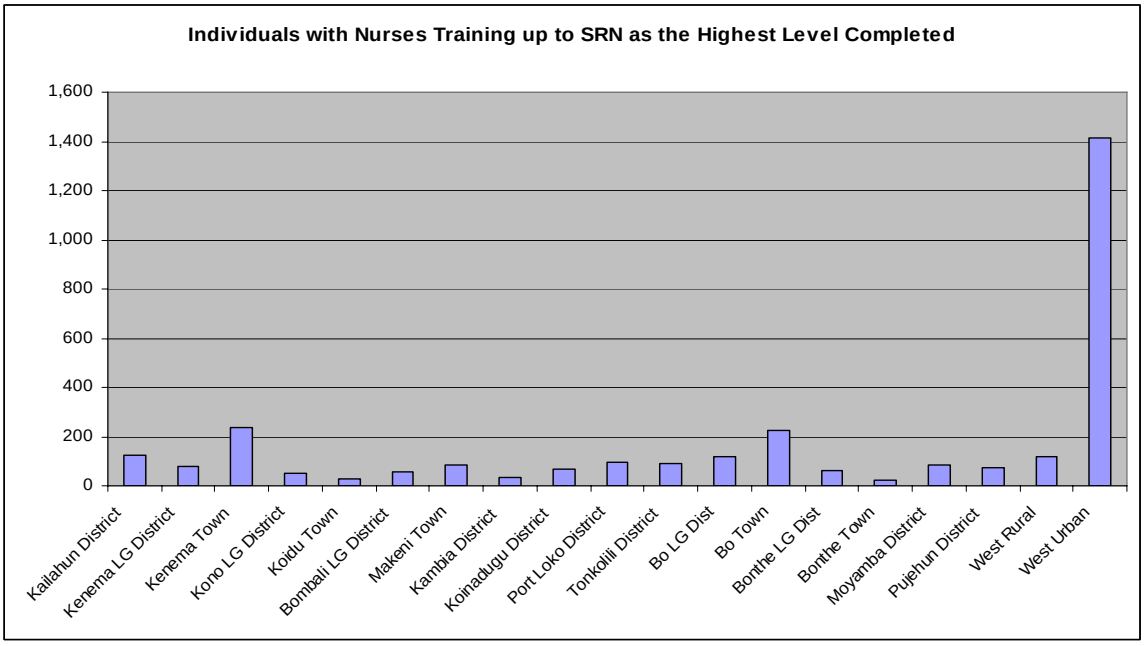
Of the 658 still in education and reporting attainment/completion of nursing programmes up to SRN level, 164 (25%) were male and 494 (75%) were female. This suggests that nursing is a female dominated profession in Sierra Leone.

Respondents reporting completion of nursing courses up to SRN level but who were not pursuing educational courses in 2004 number 2,409. When this is added to the number still pursuing educational programmes (658), a total of 3,067 individuals is obtained. The distribution of these individuals across the nation is shown in the table below.

Table 41: Number and Percentage of Respondents with Nursing Qualifications up to SRN as Highest Level Completed by 2004

	SRN	***SRN***
National	***3,067***	
Eastern Region	***518***	17%
Kailahun District	125	4%
Kenema LG District	79	3%
Kenema Town	237	8%
Kono LG District	43	1%
Koidu Town	34	1%
Northern Region	***429***	14%
Bombali LG District	54	2%
Makeni Town	87	3%
Kambia District	33	1%
Koinadugu District	69	2%
Port Loko District	96	3%
Tonkolili District	90	3%
Southern Region	***589***	19%
Bo LG Dist	118	4%
Bo Town	225	7%
Bonthe LG Dist	62	2%
Bonthe Town	24	1%
Moyamba District	86	3%
Pujehun District	74	2%
Western Area	***1,531***	50%
West Rural	116	4%
West Urban	1,415	46%

Chart 26: Individuals in the Population with Nurses Training up to SRN Level as their Highest Qualification



The table and chart indicate that Sierra Leone has 3,067 individuals (0.06% of the national population) with nursing training up to SRN level as their highest level of qualification. 50% of these are to be found in the Western Area. Bonthe Town surprisingly has only 1% of these individuals. The disproportionate number of trained nurses in the Western Area (50%), and Urban Western Area (Freetown) (46%) in particular is a cause for concern. The low number of trained and qualified nurses available nationally has serious implications about our hopes for addressing our low life expectancy, extremely high infant and maternal mortality rates and the large number of individuals that die from readily treatable and curable diseases. The overall suggestion from the table is that living in some LGAs is hazardous health-wise.

6.5 Tertiary Education

The development of Sierra Leone society requires our tertiary institutions to produce graduates of quality. In order to meet the demand for certain types of graduates, expansion has been taking place at the tertiary education level and new legislations have been enacted. Amongst the new legislations are the following:

- The Polytechnics Act (2001)
- The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) Act (2001)
- The National Council for Technical, Vocational, and other Academic Awards (NCTVA) Act (2001)
- The University Act (2004)

Together, these acts are transforming tertiary education in Sierra Leone by, amongst other things, establishing institutions that never existed before in Sierra Leone and ensuring the production of graduates needed for development.

The census options appear to categorise teacher training and technical training resulting in the award of the OND and HND as non tertiary education courses. Only education provided at the university appears to be categorised as tertiary education even though many university students are pursuing certificates and diplomas at a level lower than or barely equal to HTC courses at teacher training colleges and/or OND and HND courses offered in polytechnics.

According to the census, there were ***approximately 6,068 respondents still pursuing educational courses reported completing tertiary level programmes up to post-graduate level when asked in 2004***.

Of the 6,068 still pursuing educational courses and reporting completion of tertiary level programmes up to post-graduate level, 4362 (74%) were male and 1706 (28%) were female. The great majority were in the age range 18 to 50 years of age but like those reporting TC and HTC as the highest level attained, respondents up to 61 years and above who reported the tertiary level as the highest level attained were still pursuing education courses when questioned in 2004.

When disaggregated into Certificates/Diplomas, First Degree and Post-graduate, the numbers reporting completion and still pursuing educational programmes were as shown in the table below.

Table 42: Distribution of Respondents Still Pursuing Educational Courses and Reporting Completion of Tertiary Level Courses/Programmes

Certificate/Diploma	First Degree	Post-Graduate
3,106	2,614	348
51%	43%	6%

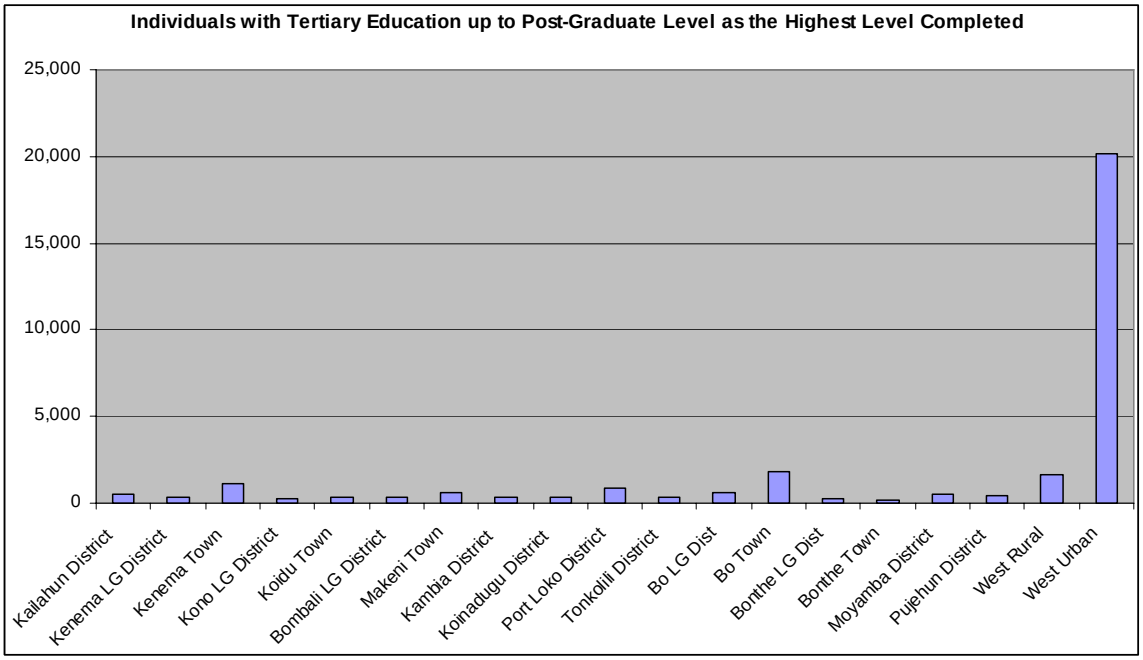
The table shows that majority of those still pursuing educational courses but reporting completion of tertiary level programmes are certificate/diploma holders with only 6% being post-graduates. This observation is not unexpected as many use certificate and/or diploma courses as a means to enter degree programmes.

Respondents reporting completion of tertiary level courses up to post-graduate level but who were not pursuing educational courses in 2004, number 25,099. When this is added to the number still pursuing educational programmes (6,068), a total of 31,167 individuals is obtained. The distribution of these individuals across the nation is shown in the table below.

Table 43: Number and Percentage of Respondents with Nursing Qualifications up to SRN as Highest Level Completed by 2004

	Tertiary	***Tertiary***
National	***31,167***	
Eastern Region	***2,693***	9%
Kailahun District	551	2%
Kenema LG District	378	1%
Kenema Town	1,118	4%
Kono LG District	248	1%
Koidu Town	398	1%
Northern Region	***2,864***	9%
Bombali LG District	314	1%
Makeni Town	602	2%
Kambia District	347	1%
Koinadugu District	377	1%
Port Loko District	860	3%
Tonkolili District	364	1%
Southern Region	***3,794***	12%
Bo LG Dist	640	2%
Bo Town	1,786	6%
Bonthe LG Dist	235	1%
Bonthe Town	134	0.4%
Moyamba District	532	2%
Pujehun District	467	1%
Western Area	***21,816***	70%
West Rural	1,676	5%
West Urban	20,140	65%

Chart 27: Individuals with Tertiary Education up to Post-Graduate Level as their Highest Completed



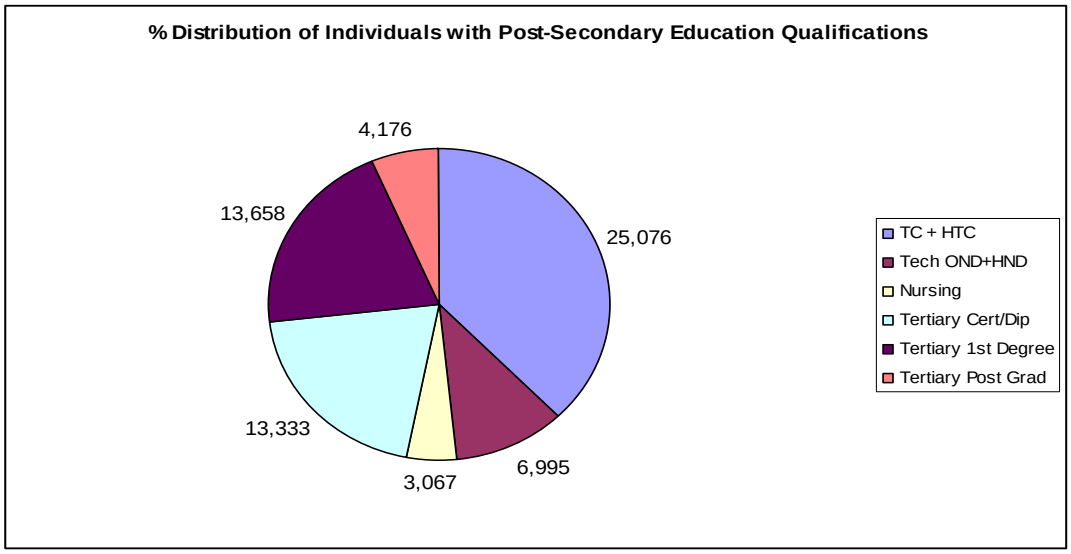
The table and chart indicate that Sierra Leone has 31,167 individuals (0.6% of the national population) with completion of tertiary level courses up to post-graduate level as their highest level of education. 70% of these are to be found in the Western Area. Bonthe Town surprisingly has only 0.4% of these individuals. The disproportionate number of individuals with post-graduate programmes as their highest level of completion in the Western Area (70%), and Urban Western Area (Freetown) (65%) in particular, is a cause for concern. The relatively small number percentage of individuals who have completed tertiary level courses has serious implications about our developmental hopes.

6.6 Post-Secondary Education

Table 44: Number and Percentage of Respondents with Listed Post-Secondary Qualifications by 2004

TC/HTC	Tech OND+HND	Nursing (Up to SRN)	Tertiary Cert/Dip	Tertiary 1st Degree	Tertiary Post Grad	All Tertiary
26%	7%	3%	14%	14%	4%	32%
25,076	6,995	3,067	13,333	13,658	4,176	31,167

Chart28: Distribution of Individuals with Listed Post-Secondary Qualifications By 2004



The table and chart above show that individuals with TC and/or HTC form the largest percentage of those with post-secondary qualifications in Sierra Leone. These are followed by individuals with first degrees who are even more plentiful than those with certificates and diplomas from tertiary level institutions. This is not too surprising as many use their certificates and diplomas as a route to the first degree courses at the university, the suggestion is that the university is now generating students for itself. This reflects a little negatively on schools as it appears that many students now depend on teaching received in certificate and diploma courses rather than teaching at school in order to gain entry to first degree courses. This in turn suggests that the quality of teaching/learning and teachers in our senior secondary schools needs to receive attention. That the latter suggestion may be in place is suggested by the very unsatisfactory performance of the great majority of students at WASSCE. Considering the large amount of money spent by the Government in paying SSS teachers, paying WASSCE fees etc., action has to be taken by MEST to improve the quality of teaching/learning in all senior secondary schools.

Overall, the analysis indicates that for every 364 of the population there is one first degree holder. This is heartening but at the same time with access to tertiary education increasing, the potential future graduate employment problem has to receive attention now.

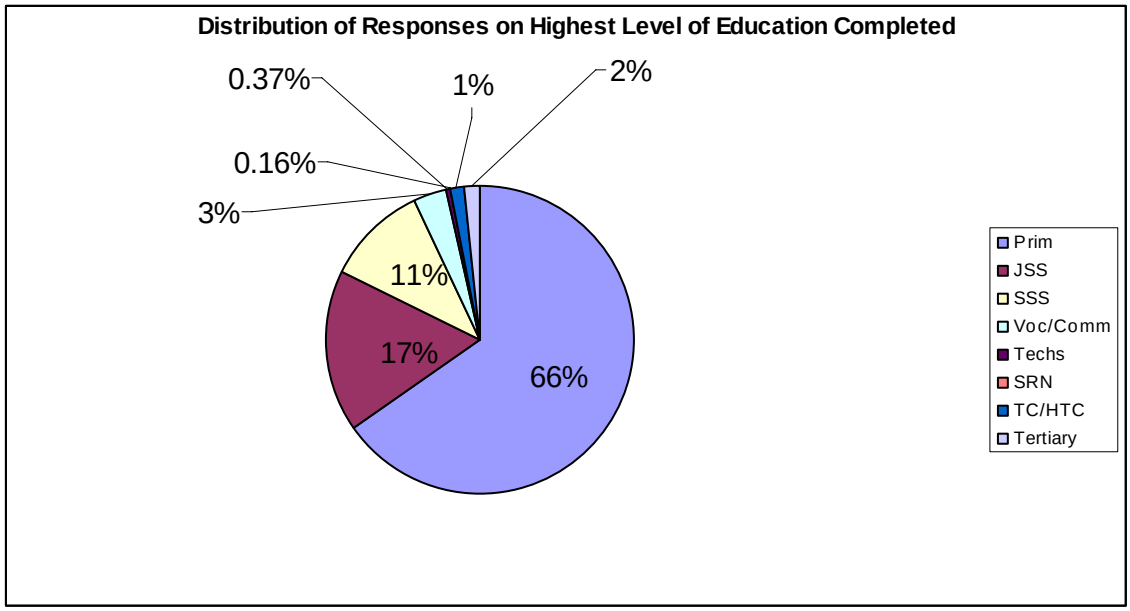
The alarming observation yielded by the analysis is the small number of individuals giving nursing qualifications up to SRN as their highest level of education completed. The writers of this report believe that many more than 3,067 nurses have been trained to a high level over the years but that a substantial number have moved and been employed out of Sierra Leone. This problem needs to be addressed.

As the educational ladder is ascended so the number of students staying in the system and graduating gets smaller and smaller.

Table45: Highest Level of Education Completed Numbers by 2004

Prim	*JSS*	*SSS*	*Voc/Comm*	*Techs*	*SRN*	*TC/HTC*	*Tertiary*	*Other*
1,224,204	318,269	207,228	62,901	6,995	3,067	25,076	31,167	3,097,964
24.60%	6.39%	4.16%	1.26%	0.14%	0.06%	0.50%	0.63%	62.25%

Chart29: Distribution of Responses on Highest Level of Education Completed



The table above clearly show that most individuals in the population give the primary level as the highest level of education completed. This is not a totally unexpected situation. The relatively small number of qualified nurses and technicians clearly need to be addressed by the Government of Sierra Leone.

SECTION VII

Policy Implications and Recommandations

7.1 Census Questionnaire

1. Problems were experienced with enrolment data because some of the education questions made reference to 'highest level completed'. This invariably meant an earlier academic year. Which year was difficult to determine. If enrolment analysis is required a sub-item on present class should be included.

2. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology should be required to give the various categories and levels for which census information is desired. How each is defined should be clearly stated.

3. Ambiguity in items/questions should be kept to a minimum

4. Tables with smoothed data should be given alongside tables with unsmoothed data

7.2 Literacy

1. National literacy programmes are impacting positively on the literacy situation of the country but not seemingly to the same extent that increased access to education appears to be having. The exact impact of our present literacy programmes on our literacy rate needs to be fully assessed.

2. Increased access to schooling is increasing the literacy rate. It follows that those Local Government Areas with low literacy rate can be helped by increasing access to schooling and ensuring that the population takes advantage of the increased provisions made.

3. The school going age populations have significantly higher literacy rates than the older generation. This suggests that literacy rates will increase with time as the older generation exits. For a more immediate and rapid increase in the national literacy rate the older generation needs to be targeted.

4. Literacy rate appears to peak around the age range corresponding to the official Junior Secondary School age range. This suggests that the GOSL should focus even more strongly on providing all of its citizens with Basic Education.

5. The literacy rate of women is significantly smaller than that of men. In some Local Government Areas the literacy rate of women is unacceptably small. A literacy campaign, medium term action plan and activities that

specifically focuses on women and girls is necessary if a significant and sustained increase in the national literacy rate is to be achieved.

7.3 School Attendance

1. 40% of those interviewed claimed to have never attended school. To be able to achieve our Universal Primary Education and Completion and Universal Basic Education goals, Sierra Leone needs to get all of those of basic education age into schools. Action must be taken immediately as the 2015 target date for the achievement of UPE/C is only nine years away.

2. The analysis shows that school attendance peaks at approximately 11 years. The suggestion is that many start school late. Local Governments should be encouraged to ensure that children start school at the right age as over-aged students appear to encounter more completion problems than those of the right age.

3. Significant differences exist between LGAs in terms of school attendance. The causes for the low attendance rate of many LGAs need to be investigated and urgent appropriate action taken in order to avoid having a country divided along educational lines.

4. At the time of the Census in 2004, approximately 40% of 6 to 29 year olds were found to have never attended school. Many will never make it into 'school'. Little educational provisions presently exist for this category of individuals. They can become a breeding ground for discontent. The GOSL is urged to make suitable educational and other provisions for these individuals as a matter of urgency.

5. The difference between males and females in terms of school attendance increases with age. Programmes which focus on getting the girl-child into school on time and retaining her there until completion are recommended. At the same time, social issues which effect the education of the girl-child such as early marriage, teenage pregnancy, home and younger sibling care, should receive greater attention from traditional leaders and the GOSL.

7.4 Kindergarten/Pre-School Education

1. The data on Kindergartens appeared inaccurate. For future Censuses, enumerators understanding of questions on the questionnaire should be better assessed.

7.5 Primary School Education

1. Whilst some pupils apparently start primary schooling before being 6 years old, the great majority start at much later ages. This contributes to having Gross Intake and Enrolment Rates (GIR and GER) in excess of

100%. The construction of additional schools in areas previously without should contribute to children accessing school earlier and hence increasing the Net Enrolment Rate (NER) whilst decreasing the GIR and GER. The latter should help to increase the NER in LGAs where it is low.

2. At 64%, the primary school NER is low. Achieving MDG No. 2 i.e. Universal Primary Completion (UPC) will be all but impossible unless immediate action is taken to address the issues preventing primary school aged children from accessing school. For LGAs with NERs below 60% and those with very low female NER, the situation is critical for without immediate action they will prevent Sierra Leone from achieving UPC by 2015.

3. The national ratio of girls to boys in primary schools is very good but some LGAs have parity indices that are unacceptably low. LGAs with low primary level gender parity indices should embark on campaigns and take actions necessary to get more girls into school and to help Sierra Leone achieve gender parity in primary enrolment nation-wide.

4. The national primary school Gross Completion Rate of 56% is a cause for concern as it places Sierra Leone far away from its target of UPC by 2015. When the picture is examined at the LGA level, it quickly becomes apparent that primary school completion is a big problem in some areas. All LGAs with low GCRs must be made to take immediate action or the achievement of UPC by 2015 will be little more than a dream. Achieving UPC involves more than constructing more schools. It involves making schools accessible, affordable to all / free of all costs to parents, attractive and relevant. Unless the GOSL is able to do the foregoing quickly and to create the necessary environment that would want all parents to send their children to school and all children to want to go to school, the achievement of UPC within the given time-frame will be difficult but not impossible.

5. A significant percentage of the population have no schooling or just primary level schooling. This is impacting negatively on Sierra Leone's developmental aspirations. It is recommended that the GOSL designs programmes that would address the educational need of the large numbers without any or only primary schooling.

7.6 Junior Secondary School Education

1. The Junior Secondary School (JSS) population is very small relative to the primary school population. Universal Basic Education (UBE) cannot be achieved without a significant increase in access and hence enrolment at the JSS level. Keeping in mind that achieving UBE involves more than school construction, the GOSL should seriously consider the cost and sustainability implications of attempting UPC and UBE at the same time.

2. The male to female ratios at the JSS level are significantly higher than that at the primary level. The public is aware that the GOSL has embarked on free JSS education for girls in the Eastern and Northern Regions and that this is having a positive effect on the enrolment of girls in these regions even though the boys to girls ratio is still high. It would appear however from the census analysis that this intervention not only needs to be maintained but also to be extended to other regions in order to increase the number of girls accessing education at the JSS level.

3. Approximately 17% of students at JSS are 20 years of age and above when the official age for JSS is 12 to 14 years. This is a knock-on effect from the late start at the primary level. Given that in a number of communities many girls marry before being 20 years of age a late start is a distinct disadvantage to girls. In this regard therefore it is recommended that everything be done to get girls to start schooling on time.

4. The JSS NER and GER are much lower than those for the primary level. This provides further evidence that many in primary school do not go on to secondary. Further with a national NER of just 12% and most LGAs with NERs below 10%, Sierra Leone is far away from UBE and efforts to increase access, retention and completion must start now if this is to be possible in fifteen years. Whilst the low NERs are partly due to the fact that many of the official JSS age are still in primary school, the low GER suggests that the problem is more than just a late start matter.

5. The maintaining of the barrier created by a 'pass' requirement at the NPSE needs to be closely examined of the GOSL is serious about UBE.

6. The percentage of the population with JSS education as the highest level achieved is small. For a more literate population with a greater potential to bring about meaningful development of the society it is recommended that more be done to increase enrolment at the JSS level.

7.7 Senior Secondary School Education

1. The 2003/04 Senior Secondary School (SSS) population was less than half that of the JSS population. This indicates that the majority of JSS students do not make it to SSS. Almost all the students that enter university and the HTC (Secondary) programme come from SSS. Only a small percentage of SSS students pass WASCCE and qualify for entry to the programmes indicated. With the numbers accessing SSS being so small the high level manpower needs of the country may not be met. It is recommended that the cause for the small numbers in SSS be investigated by MEST and that appropriate actions be taken to address the problems discovered.

2. Girls are under-represented in SSSs. They are just a third of the numbers nationally. In some LGAs, girls are less than a quarter of their SSS

enrolment. Having significantly fewer girls than boys in SSSs has implications for women in leadership positions. It is recommended that proactive measures be taken to increase the number of girls in SSSs.

3. More than 40% of the students in SSSs are over 20 years of age when the official SSS age range is 15 to 17 years. It is obvious that the official age means little in Sierra Leone situation but exceeding it to such a large extent has implications for the proportion of females that will tend to be at SSS and also has implications for the working life-time of Sierra Leone's high level men and women. The recommendations on starting school at the right age are reinforced by this finding. Additionally, Sierra Leone's class repetition policy would need to be re-visited if it is contributing significantly to the present situation.

4. More than 55% of the individuals with SSS education as the highest level attained are to be found in the Western Area. None of the other regions have more than 15% of such individuals. At the LGA level, more than 50% of the individuals with SSS education are to be found in Urban Western Area, whilst all other LGAs have less than 5% of these individuals each. This marked disparity between Western Area and the other regions needs to be addressed as it indicates an uneven spread of academic talent across the nation. This is possibly due to an uneven distribution of SSSs amongst the LGAs. It is recommended that each LGA be allocated an equitable number of SSSs of quality based on the size of its school going population and that incentives be provided for SSS attendance in LGAs where enrolment has been abnormally low.

7.8 Across School Level Situation

1. As the school level is ascended so school level enrolment decreases. Alternative educational provisions for those who do not make it from the lower to the higher level are limited and the majority are unable to secure employment. In the light of the foregoing it is recommended that a quick study be conducted to obtain details on the situation and to recommend corrective measures.

2. Irrespective of the school level, significant gender and geographical (regional, LGA, rural-urban) disparities have been noted in terms of enrolment. It is recommended that action be taken to address these disparities which have the potential of causing future social upheavals.

7.9 Vocational and Commercial Education

1. Individuals with qualifications in Vocational and Commercial Education are unevenly distributed across the nation with Western Area having the largest number. It is recommended that provisions be expanded and made

more available in those LGAs with abnormally small numbers of individuals with vocational and commercial qualifications.

7.10 TC and HTC Holders

1. Individuals with TC and/or HTC as their highest qualifications are unevenly distributed across the nation with Western Area having the largest number partly as a consequence of the concentration of schools. It is known that many schools outside the Western Area lack trained and qualified staff. It is therefore recommended that action be taken by MEST to provide incentives for qualified teachers to teach in areas where they are low in numbers and that the distance education programme targets those areas that they know to be lacking in trained and qualified staff.

7.11 Trained Technicians

1. Trained technicians with qualifications up to HND level are very unevenly distributed across the nation with Western Area possessing approximately 64% of these individuals. Whilst the Western Area is the most urbanised region of the nation, it is not the only place needing trained technician. The lack of trained technicians in many LGAs is causing unnecessary problems and wastage. It is recommended that a scheme be devised that would require technicians receiving grant-in-aid for their training to render service in designated areas. At the same time, technician training should be expanded to not only produce more technicians but individuals with skills in short supply.

7.12 Trained Nurses

1. Nurses trained up to SRN level are extremely small in number. They are so few in some LGAs that the authors of this report have genuine concerns about the availability/possibility of quality of health care in these areas. It is possible that many nurses trained in Sierra Leone have been attracted by better salaries and moved on to ‘greener pastures’ in other countries. The foregoing being the case, it is recommended that the nurses training programme be expanded, that the salary situation of health care workers receive further scrutiny and that a system requiring nurses trained in Sierra Leone to give a pre-specified number of years of service after qualification be introduced. At the same time a system involving a nursing training allocation per LGA could be introduced together with the requirement that each trainee should give service to the LGA nominating him/her after qualification.

7.13 Tertiary Institutions Products

1. Individuals with qualifications from tertiary level institutions in Sierra Leone number in excess of 31,000. Just below 50% however have qualifications below first degree level. The relevance of the degrees possessed by the

17,834 with first degrees and above to the needs of the society has to be determined. It is recommended that a study be conducted to resolve the aforementioned issue and that action be taken to ensure that Sierra Leone's tertiary level products not only meet the needs of the society in terms of numbers but also in terms of quality and relevance.

2. Many of the students in Sierra Leone's tertiary level institutions pursuing certificate and diploma programmes are doing so a means of obtaining the entry requirements for first degree programmes. This suggests problems with accessing first degree programmes through success in the WASSCE. The foregoing being the case, it is recommended that a study be conduct to identify the major factors responsible for the change from WASSCE to 'access course' and to recommend appropriate remedial actions.

7.14 General Manpower Situation

1. Analysis of the census data suggests that not only is Sierra Leone in very short supply of much needed middle level manpower but that what exists is very unevenly distributed. The number of trained nurses and technicians available is alarmingly low for Sierra Leone's developmental and health needs. The nation's low life expectancy and unacceptably high infant and maternal mortality rates cannot be totally unrelated to the fact that some LGAs have so few nurses trained up to SRN level. In the case of the technicians, medium and large scale industries would find it difficult to be established in the country because our trained technician base, although improving, is so low. In the light of the foregoing, it is recommended that the GOSL looks seriously into the measures that it needs to take to significantly boost the middle level manpower of the nation.

SECTION VIII

Conclusion

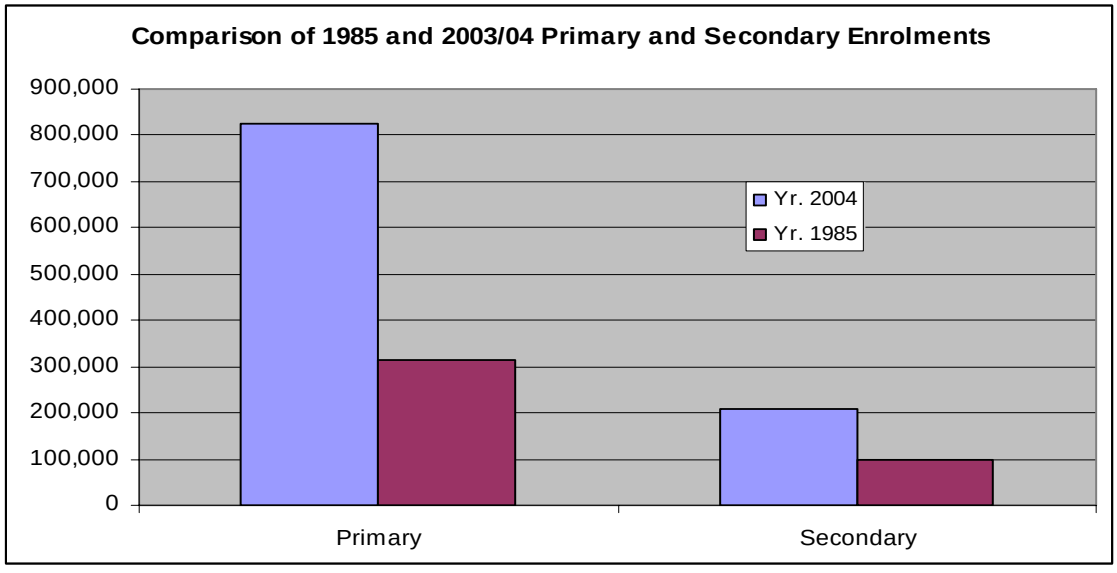
In the preceding paragraphs, an attempt has been made to analyse the data on education collected through the National Census in 2004. An attempt has been made to carry out as comprehensive an analysis as possible given the nature of the questionnaire and the data collected. Where it has been possible and necessary, analysis has been carried out on a national, regional and Local Government Area level.

The fact that the data was not smoothed before generating the tables caused a little concern but this did not in anyway hinder the analysis of the raw/original data. There were obvious data errors but these were only of concern where the numbers were significant or totally ridiculous.

Table 46: Comparison of 2004 and 1985 Census Enrolment Numbers for Primary and Secondary School

Census	Primary	Secondary
Yr. 2004	823,435	208,548
Yr. 1985	316,158	98,016

Chart30: Comparison of 1985 and 2003/04 Primary and Secondary Enrolments



In comparing the numbers in this report with other reports covering the same or similar period some care should be taken to ensure that the same thing is being measured. Care is most necessary for the numbers associated with literacy, tertiary education and teacher training.

The overall picture of education painted by the census is one of ongoing progress and improvement but with a tremendous amount of work still to be done to improve quality at all levels, to improve net enrolment and completion rates, to make education less pyramidal and minimise academic elitism and to provide quality vocational / commercial education for the hundreds of thousands whose education may otherwise end at the junior secondary level in the future. The challenges are huge but invigorating. The writers of this report are however certain that with a dynamic and willing government, education will be the key that unlocks the door to a bright and prosperous Sierra Leone.

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