

**National Assessment of Achievement of Students  
Completing Grade 04 in Year 2013**

# **National Report**

**National Education Research and Evaluation Centre (NEREC)  
Faculty of Education  
University of Colombo  
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## Executive Summary

National Assessment of learning outcomes has become an important component of education policy analysis and programme monitoring in Sri Lanka. The National Education Research and Evaluation Centre (NEREC) of the Faculty of Education, University of Colombo has been the forerunner in conducting these assessments.

NEREC has conducted National Assessment of Learning Outcomes both at primary as well as at secondary level. At primary level National Assessment of learning outcomes was conducted at Grade 4 in 2003, 2007 and 2009 respectively. This report presents the findings of the national assessment conducted in grade 4 for first language – Sinhala and Tamil, the second language – English and mathematics in the year 2013.

The national assessment of learning outcomes of 2013 used new instruments to test cognitive skills in the three subjects. Hence, it is not possible to compare the findings of this assessment with the previous assessments as new test items have been constructed. Instead, the 2013 national assessment will serve as the baseline for monitoring the level of achievement of learning outcomes overtime.

The national assessment covered the entire country and the sample was drawn to enable analysis by province, type of schools, gender, medium of instruction and location. The final sample consisted of 11305 students from 449 schools.

Data gathered through the achievement tests were analyzed on a national and provincial basis in relation to school type, gender, medium of instruction and location. Patterns in learning achievement were discussed using measures of central tendency-mean and median, skewness values of the distribution, cumulative percentages and percentile ranks. In addition, graphs, frequency polygon and boxplots were also used.

The findings revealed that there is disparity in achievement in all three subjects in relation to provincial performance, school type, gender and medium of instruction.

Some provinces performed well in most of the subjects. Yet, there were disparity in achievement within the province in relation to school type, gender and location. With respect to school types, even though there was not much over all variation, there was still disparity in achievement with respect to different subjects. Girls performed better than boys. However, it was revealed that there was a percentage of very high achievers among the boys even though the percentage is not very high. On the other hand, among girls there was more homogeneity in achievement. In terms of medium of instruction, performance of Sinhala medium students was better than the Tamil medium students, except in the first language performance. Performance of urban council area schools was better than the municipal council and pradeshiyasaba schools. However, there was less disparity in the performance of municipal council area schools.

It was also revealed that skill wise, the writing and syntax were the weakest skills in all three languages. On the other hand, in mathematics achievement in problem solving was the weakest. It was also revealed that there is an imbalance in the identified Essential Learning Competencies (ELCs). Further, there is a mismatch between the ELCs and the syllabuses and textbooks.

The findings revealed that there are disparities in achievement at all levels – provincial, school wise, gender, medium wise and location wise. As a result students are at different levels. Developing standards for each key stage and linking them with the ELCs could be a solution to this issue. Further, there is a need to upgrade the ELCs.