

# GREEN PAPERS

NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY REVIEW PROCESS

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NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY REVIEW TEAM

**CONTENTS**

<b>VISION AND PURPOSE OF EDUCATION .....</b>	<b>4</b>
CONTEXT .....	4
<b>ACCESS.....</b>	<b>6</b>
BACKGROUND.....	6
SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS.....	6
KEY QUESTIONS.....	7
<b>ASSESSMENTS.....</b>	<b>8</b>
BACKGROUND.....	8
SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS.....	8
KEY QUESTIONS.....	9
<b>EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN PAKISTAN.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>EDUCATION STATISTICS.....</b>	<b>11</b>
BACKGROUND.....	11
SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS.....	11
KEY CONCERNS .....	12
<b>EQUITY IN EDUCATION.....</b>	<b>13</b>
BACKGROUND.....	13
SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS.....	14
<b>EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES-PROVISIONS IN THE UPCOMING NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY.....</b>	<b>15</b>
BACKGROUND.....	15
SITUATION ANALYSIS: .....	16
KEY QUESTIONS:.....	17
BIBLIOGRAPHY: .....	17
<b>FINANCING EDUCATION (SCHOOLS).....</b>	<b>21</b>
BACKGROUND.....	21
SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS.....	21
KEY QUESTIONS.....	22
<b>GENDER AND EDUCATION .....</b>	<b>23</b>
BACKGROUND.....	23
SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS.....	23
KEY QUESTIONS.....	24
<b>HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION.....</b>	<b>25</b>
BACKGROUND.....	25
SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS .....	25
KEY ISSUES:.....	26
FACULTY DEVELOPMENT .....	26
IMPROVING ACCESS .....	27
PROMOTING EXCELLENCE IN LEARNING AND RESEARCH .....	27
QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION .....	27
RELEVANCE TO THE ECONOMY: INDUSTRIAL LINKAGES .....	28

<b>ICT INTEGRATION IN EDUCATION.....</b>	<b>29</b>
BACKGROUND.....	29
HOW CAN ICTS HELP EXPAND ACCESS TO EDUCATION? .....	29
SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS.....	29
KEY QUESTIONS:.....	30
<b>INTER TIER RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR.....</b>	<b>31</b>
BACKGROUND.....	31
SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS.....	31
KEY QUESTIONS.....	32
<b>LITERACY AND NON FORMAL EDUCATION.....</b>	<b>33</b>
EVOLVING DEFINITIONS OF LITERACY .....	33
DEFINITIONS OF LITERATE PERSON IN PAKISTAN .....	33
SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS.....	34
LITERACY TRENDS IN PAKISTAN .....	34
AGE THRESHOLD & LITERACY TRENDS IN PAKISTAN SINCE 1951 .....	34
LITERACY RATE (10 +) IN PAKISTAN & ITS PROVINCES BY SEX SINCE 1998 .....	35
LITERACY PROGRAMMES.....	35
KEY ISSUES/ QUESTIONS.....	36
<b>PRIMARY EDUCATION.....</b>	<b>37</b>
BACKGROUND.....	37
SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS.....	37
KEY QUESTIONS.....	37
<b>ROLE OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN EDUCATION .....</b>	<b>39</b>
BACKGROUND.....	39
SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS.....	40
KEY QUESTIONS.....	41
<b>DEFINING EDUCATION QUALITY .....</b>	<b>42</b>
BACKGROUND.....	42
SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS.....	42
KEY QUESTIONS.....	43
<b>SCHOOL MANAGEMENT .....</b>	<b>44</b>
BACKGROUND.....	44
SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS.....	44
KEY QUESTIONS.....	44
<b>SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT.....</b>	<b>45</b>
BACKGROUND.....	45
SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS.....	45
KEY QUESTIONS .....	46
<b>SECONDARY EDUCATION.....</b>	<b>47</b>
BACKGROUND.....	47
SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS.....	47
KEY QUESTIONS.....	48
<b>SECTOR PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT.....</b>	<b>49</b>
BACKGROUND.....	49
SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS.....	49
KEY QUESTIONS.....	49

**SCIENCE EDUCATION .....50**  
SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS ..... 50  
    *Key Questions:*..... 50

**TEACHERS..... 51**  
BACKGROUND ..... 51  
SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS ..... 51  
KEY QUESTIONS..... 52

**TEXTBOOKS AND LEARNING MATERIALS .....53**  
BACKGROUND ..... 53  
SITUATION ANALYSIS ..... 54  
KEY QUESTIONS ..... 54

## VISION AND PURPOSE OF EDUCATION

### *Context*

Vision, as abstract philosophical driver, and purpose as intention of a nation, determine the outlook of any public policy. However, their role magnifies in the case of national education policy. Education is an agreed universal catalyst for individual and collective accomplishment and progress and these two intrinsically shape and define the efficacy of both the system and process of education.

Vision and Purpose relate to and influence each another. Between them, they characterize, as well as limit, the educational phenomenon and the outcomes. If we could learn how to define one in juxtaposition to the other, we could adeptly articulate the both.

**This Green Paper intends to excite imagination and provoke fervent national debate on these two, expecting to arrive at more informed perspectives of the consultees in general and those of the review team in particular. We believe that issues, however sensitive and tabooed, that are confronted and thrashed are likely to lead to solutions. Issues that are swept under the carpet would remain festering wounds. And that is something the people of Pakistan do not deserve anymore.**

**Vision**, if taken to be the ‘ability to think about or plan the future with great imagination and intelligence’, demands a careful articulation which must associate cognizance of the societal realities and understanding of the global dynamics. It must be relevant to the learning traditions<sup>1</sup> rooted in the soil, and owned by the leadership of the country. To ensure these, Vision must evolve through inclusive and interactive dialogue among plural political and other interests so that it could truly reflect the collective aspirations of the people of Pakistan.

A vision which is defined ignoring the above factors is very likely to result in a blurred vision incapable of concretization. However, vision per se is not an independent variable. It is greatly influenced by the ‘purpose of education’, which therefore becomes an even more important determinant of the educational outcomes.

The purpose can be defined as *the intention* in the minds of all actors<sup>2</sup> in the education system, as to what they, individually and collectively, envisage the *essence* of education. This *essence* manifests both in terms of a) the type of product (citizens, pupils, learners) and b) the nature of outcomes (knowledge, skills, learning) the education system generates.

If the purpose is broad, imaginative, clearly understood and shared, it will healthily inform the Vision and phenomenon of education. If it is undefined, unclear and therefore narrow and rigid, it will curb the vision, distort the product and curtail the outcomes.

For example, if the policy makers primarily respond to the *economics* only, they will end up producing pupils with great earning abilities. However, this does not ensure the pupils thus trained would have sufficient other human attributes like integrity, moral values, compassion, imagination, creativity, critical thinking and understanding.

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<sup>1</sup> For instance, in Pakistan, the oral tradition to learning and the tradition of dialogue to investigation and articulation ought to be seriously considered to provide insights to a relevant education policy and system.

<sup>2</sup> That includes the policy makers, implementers, managers, teachers; parents, beneficiaries and other providers.

Defining the Purpose of education can be termed as *balancing act* between competing demands, interests, needs, extremes, aspirations and expectations.

For example, in the over all realm of faith and beliefs, the exercise will pose a three pronged inquisitive proposition, that is: how to i) combine tradition, reason, culture and mysticism; ii) coalesce the social, political and religious with physical, psychological, intellectual and the spiritual; and iii) blend the analytical, intuitive and creative faculties.

An open, honest debate on this *balancing act* will help the practitioners (parents, teachers, role models, curriculum developers and the policy implementers) to understand and deliver in small yet far reaching steps. It will guide teachers on how to inculcate basic values and behavioral skills in pupils viz. telling the truth, faith, honesty, humanity, amiability, pluralism, respect for the other, active and associative citizenship and love for the country.

It will also educate if pedagogy is a clinical technique or a moral, value and personality, development process; if the style of teaching should be punitive or counseling; and how to nurture fine minds with healthy bodies and positive lifestyle!

**As it is evident from the aforementioned, Vision and Purpose have huge importance and implications vis-à-vis education and the intended outcomes, therefore, they become a collective responsibility; hence this exercise.**

## ACCESS

### *Background*

It is an obligation of the state to provide equal opportunity to all its citizens for improving their status in life. In education, the basic objective should be access to quality education for all, irrespective of family income, geographic reach, gender, religion and ethnicity. This would mean that not only all school going children have schools physically available for them but there are no cultural and economic factors hindering their pursuit to education. While access is an issue at all levels, access to primary education, also a gateway to education has always remained a fundamental concern. Infact this concern is shared by all developing countries and therefore, is the cornerstone of international initiatives like the Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Lack of access itself is a consequence of demand and supply factors. On the supply side, lack of schools and provision of inadequate facilities discourage the female students to enroll in schools. On the demand side, the biggest constraint is opportunity cost for the poor, the higher the level of education the higher the opportunity cost. Moreover, certain cultural taboos also hinder girls' education. Normally the approach for increased access would address both these factors.

### *Situational Analysis*

Pakistan's inability to increase enrolment, at all levels, continues to place pressure on the already low literacy rate. The higher the level, the lower the enrolment, with access a mere 2.5 % of the relevant age group at the tertiary levels.

Pakistan faces a problem of large number of out of school children, both at primary and secondary levels besides a high number of drop outs. The population age group between 5-9 years is 19 million in Pakistan. Out of these 19 million, 6 million children of this age group are out of school. The drop out rate in primary level is 45% and at the middle level, 30%. Given a population growth rate of 1.9%, attainment of EFA goals within the stipulated period would require huge investments. Even if resources could be mobilized towards this end, the capacity to build and operationalise such a large number of schools, in such a short time may not be easy.

Under the Millennium Development Goals and the Education for All (EFA) Dakar Framework, Pakistan must reach universal primary education by 2015. This would require major increase in enrolment rates and reduction in drop outs. Consequently this would put pressure on the supply side where schools and facilities for the huge intake would be required. An increase in access and completion at primary level would place a pressure on the middle/secondary schools to increase numbers to cater to the larger number of passing out students at the primary level. This again calls for vast resources and management abilities.

A key casualty of accelerated access is quality and world over there is always a trade off and debate. Pakistan is confronted with this problem and it would not be so easy to overcome it quickly. It is always a difficult trade off as poor quality of education in itself is a major cause of drop outs from the system, therefore excessive emphasis on access may prove counterproductive in the long run.

***Key Questions***

1. Why after 58 years of independence, Pakistan faces the problem of access to education?
2. What are the factors responsible for keeping children out of education at primary secondary and tertiary levels?
  - a) On Supply side
  - b) On Demand side
3. What are the main causes of drop outs at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels?
4. How can access to education be improved?
5. How can the number of dropouts be reduced?
6. How to address the issue of out-of-school population?
7. Could the legislation on compulsory education assist the process?
8. How could access to education be increased without compromising quality?
9. What is the size of additional funding needed to achieve access goals and is that size manageable?
10. How can drop-outs be mainstreamed in economic activity?
11. Would implementing primary education as compulsory for children through acts/laws resolve the problem?



## ASSESSMENTS

### *Background*

Efficiency of any system is measured through a set of performance indicators (or outcomes). There are a number of performance indicators of an education system. These may include indicators for expenditure, for spread of facilities, for enrolment, literacy levels, gender balance and many others. Perhaps the most important is the learning achievements of a student who moves through the system. Measurement of these learning achievements is done through various assessments. These assessments are used for various purposes to analyze individual as well as system's ability. A low key assessment would normally be used:

1. To measure the ability of the individual students for designing a plan for improving the learning outcomes,
2. To filter career choices for individuals
3. To assess the performance of a school, group or region
4. To hold accountable the persons in the education system for the learning outcomes

Depending on the purpose assessments can be designed and conducted regionally, nationally and even internationally. A number of countries opt for international assessment systems like TIMMS and PISA to gauge the efficiency of their education systems with other countries.

### *Situational Analysis*

In Pakistan the assessment systems are usually designed to measure individual student ability to move further up the system and there are critical examinations at the matriculate and intermediate levels that determine the career options for students. These examinations are conducted through various boards of examinations. There are at present about 23 boards of examinations in the country. There is a general perception that there are vast differentials in quality. The board examinations have serious outcomes for the career choices of a student and the differentials can create distortions in the eventual uptake by the higher education system. The only exception are the assessments for entrance of medical college where the issue of differentials is mitigated to some extent through conducting standardized tests. The other critical outcome of non-standardization is the vast difference in quality of human resource across within each province as well as across the country. Secondly there is general criticism that these assessment systems encourage rote learning and selective study. This fails to develop critical thinking ability of the students. At present various attempts are being made to develop a system for standardized measurement of students' learning achievements – the most significant being the National Education Assessment System (NEAS) and the Provincial Education Assessment System (PEAS).

On the other end of the spectrum are the foreign based examinations, the 'O' levels and the 'A' levels, catering to the elitist private school systems. These also widen the gap between students of public school systems and the private school systems adding to the income disparities as generally students from these systems have a higher probability of being selected to white collar jobs.

Larger system wide assessment to judge efficiency and introduce accountability has never been undertaken in Pakistan. In some cases the existing examinations have been used to hold some personnel mainly teachers, accountable for poor performance.

***Key Questions***

1. Why is assessment important for the education system?
2. What are the various methods of assessment being currently employed in Pakistan?
3. What are the deficiencies of the existing assessment systems in Pakistan?
4. Why have the assessment systems fail to evolve as per modern requirements?
5. How can assessment be used for accountability of the education system?

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN PAKISTAN

The term 'ECE' or Early Childhood Education is not new to Pakistan anymore. Many private organizations are implementing democratic models of ECE based on an understanding of the Government of Pakistan's basic education needs. All such initiatives have a similar underlying philosophy that is to engender democratic ideals and principles within young children, their families, teachers, school administrators and faculty who train teachers. The teaching methods encourage children to make choices, take responsibility of their decisions, express their ideas with creativity, respect different styles and abilities of their classmates, develop critical and independent thinking skills.

The aim of all such programs is to improve the quality of education through teacher education and training, a crucial element. The Government's Education Sector Reforms (ESR) focuses on:

1. Increased use of child-centered methods in education of pre and primary school children.
2. Increased participation of families in pre & primary school activities.
3. Increased attendance & retention rates of pre & primary school children.
4. Increased access to education among pre & primary school boys & girls.
5. Increased literacy among parents of pre & primary school children.

In order to be effective, any ECE program should be in-sync with the following:

1. Community based
2. Driven by the needs of the families and their strengths
3. Culturally competent and reflective of the needs of individuals with disabilities and of culturally, ethnically, linguistically & economically diverse audience.
4. Flexible and accountable.
5. High quality, developmentally appropriate services.

Many a happenings and series of unfortunate events have elucidated to the world of the deterioration of basic education institutions in Pakistan. The troubling images of religious extremism, madrassas, and civil unrest of religious extremism have demonstrated as never before the need for the educational reforms that the GOP put forward in the ESR since May 2001.

The impediments faced by any organization implementing ECE program are many and diverse. Many questions arise and concerns make the whole implementation a daunting task. Questions may range from achievement of the goal of a project, expansion, budget, capacity building of the government itself, baseline data, to replicability and sustainability of all such programs at the grass root level. The key to success for any ECE program is to involve the community and the government offices in a true spirit of public-private partnership.

## EDUCATION STATISTICS

### *Background*

Education sectors in all countries are resource hungry. The efficient management of inputs and monitoring of outputs requires a reliable set of statistics that can be used by decision makers and stakeholders with confidence. Modern technologies have made the collection, compilation, dissemination and analysis of data at various levels easier and cheaper. The development of Electronic Information Resources usually known as Education Management Information System have enabled planners and policy makers at different tiers of the government to collect and use information on a vast array of variables from the education system, consequently enhancing efficiency, improving governance.

International Agencies like UNESCO and OECD etc are also pressing governments to establish reliable information gathering and dissemination systems for comparisons, analysis and monitoring the progress on various international goals like the EFA, and MDG's.

The Central Bureau of Education (CBE) was responsible for collection, compilation and dissemination of education related statistics from the seventies. This responsibility was shifted to AEPAM in 1992 with the establishment of a project the National Education Management Information System (NEMIS). The Provincial and regional EMIS's also had a some what incongruous development and were established at different times in the provinces and regions mostly through donor support.

### *Situational Analysis*

Reliability of educational information reported by the Federal Ministry of Education to international bodies and to federal decision-makers has always been a key concern of all stakeholders.

The principal source of the reported information at the Federal level is the National Education Management Information System (NEMIS); a database managed by the Policy Planning wing of the Federal Ministry of Education. The NEMIS only compiles the data received from the four provincial EMIS units in Punjab, Sindh, North West Frontier and Balochistan and the four federally administered areas; Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA), Federally Administered Northern Areas (FANA) and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). The provinces and the federally administered areas (except ICT) receive data from the districts where the EMIS cells are to be strengthened or established.

NEMIS itself being a project of the Ministry of Education has no authority over the provinces or federally administered areas (except ICT). The institutional mandate of NEMIS as a central coordinating body is restricted to compiling data; developing and maintaining a website for NEMIS; supporting software development; enhancing data generation capabilities of the Provincial and District EMIS; and developing management capacity of education managers to use data in decision-making.

The devolution process has placed a greater reliance of the provinces on the districts; the districts are expected to finance the collection and compilation of raw data within their respective jurisdictions. Districts are now responsible for using the information in making

planning and resource allocation decisions. However, EMIS cells have yet to be fully established within District Education departments, especially with respect to operational costs.

This multi-tiered, inconsistently funded, poorly managed system impedes timely transmission of data and information products, promotes unpredictable data quality that discourages data use at all levels. Against this backdrop the role of NEMIS as a central coordinating body, to set and enforce standards in consultation with the stakeholders and improve the reliability of data needs to be established and strengthened.

Deficiencies in the reported education statistics in Pakistan are perceived as the key factor for low Human Development Index ranking. The current data needs of the national and international stakeholders are not met by the system. As pointed out by a number of reports the system cannot generate information on 10 out of 18 EFA indicators, the classic case in point is the calculation of the Net Enrollment Ratio (NER), which cannot be calculated from the available data, similarly out of school children is also not available.

### ***Key Concerns***

In the light of the foregoing, the following are the major deficiencies regarding education statistics:

1. Inadequate coverage; failure to capture the complete picture of all the educational institutions in the country, including government, private, religious, technical, vocational, higher education and professional institutions.
2. Low confidence in the accuracy, reliability and relevance of the data due to lack of standards and verification and validation procedures.
3. Low budgetary provisions for efficient and smooth functioning of the system.
4. Data gaps on various essential indicators.
5. Complimentary or sources of Secondary data not incorporated into the system.
6. Lack of policy and legal mandates for the EMIS units to collect data from all the educational institutions in the country.
7. Lack of institutionalized coordination between the provincial/regional and federal EMIS units.

## EQUITY IN EDUCATION

### *Background*

In December 1960 the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization adopted the ‘ Recommendations Against Discriminations in Education’. The document comprehensively defines discrimination as follows:

1. For the purposes of this Recommendation, the term 'discrimination' includes any distinction, exclusion, limitation or preference which, being based on race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, economic condition or birth, has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing equality of treatment in education and in particular:

- (a) Of depriving any person or group of persons of access to education of any type or at any level;
- (b) Of limiting any person or group of persons to education of an inferior standard;
- (c) Subject to the provisions of section II of this Recommendation, of establishing or maintaining separate educational systems or institutions for persons or groups of persons; or
- (d) Of inflicting on any person or group of persons conditions which are incompatible with the dignity of man.

2. For the purposes of this Recommendation, the term 'education' refers to all types and levels of education and includes access to education, the standard and quality of education, and the conditions under which it is given.

When permitted in a State, the following situations shall not be deemed to constitute discrimination, within the meaning of section I of this Recommendation:

- (a) The establishment or maintenance of separate educational systems or institutions for pupils of the two sexes, if these systems or institutions offer equivalent access to education, provide a teaching staff with qualifications of the same standard as well as school premises and equipment of the same quality, and afford the opportunity to take the same or equivalent courses of study;
- (b) The establishment or maintenance, for religious or linguistic reasons, of separate educational systems or institutions offering an education which is in keeping with the wishes of the pupil's parents or legal guardians, if participation in such systems or attendance at such institutions is optional and if the education provided conforms to such standards as may be laid down or approved by the competent authorities, in particular for education of the same level;
- (c) The establishment or maintenance of private educational institutions, if the object of the institutions is not to secure the exclusion of any group but to provide educational facilities in addition to those provided by the public authorities, if the institutions are conducted in accordance with that object, and if the education provided conforms with such standards as may be laid down or approved by the competent authorities, in particular for education of the same level.”

The UNESCO Recommendations further go on to guide policy at various tiers as follows:

- 1. Primary education to be free and compulsory

2. Secondary education to be 'generally available and accessible to all
3. Higher education to be accessible to all on the basis of individual capacity

Most countries of the World factor these recommendations into policy development and implementation. However, it is unfortunate that most inequities in education continue in countries that are less developed and which suffer from high levels of inequalities in all spheres.

### ***Situational Analysis***

In Pakistan, a focused audit of all the above has never taken place. A cursory glance at the above definition and a review of public policy in Pakistan reveals that there is apparently no regulation that violates the precepts of the UNESCO recommendations. Practical manifestations may reveal a different story. It is common knowledge, as well as a proven outcome of many studies that discrimination exists in the education system in various forms. The inequity has been the result of poor implementation and social customs. Over the years, little attention has been paid to rectify the situation.

The girl child is still a victim of customs and taboos which keeps her participation low at school. The state also failed to develop girls education within the limits of these social restrictions (there is a separate Green Paper on Gender). However, there is no discrimination on the basis of gender or religion in all national documents. Rather each individual has the right to study his or her own faith. Non-Muslim students can opt to study Ethics. However there are situations on ground that fail to cater to the matter even as policy does. In some schools, there are no facilities for minority students to study alternate courses to Islamiyat.

Poor children continue to face discrimination in access as well as quality as the state fails to provide adequate facilities and incentives for all to attend school and where public schooling is available the differential vis a vis private schools is vast. In fact, there are differences within the public schools (and also within the private schools). Resultantly most students who enter the schools are doomed to remain below the required level, hence the drop outs.

The issue of equity runs through the entire education system and has serious implications for sustainable and equitable development in the country. Unless the issue is seriously recognized and assessed in all its manifestations, a realistic policy to relieve the situation will not evolve.

## EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES-PROVISIONS IN THE UPCOMING NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY

### *Background*

Often countries of the South Asian region have ignored emergencies, natural disasters and preparedness. There is a cultural denial to social setbacks, which in fact could be an opportunity to positively heal, collaborate, improve and learn. Pakistan since 1947, (including East Pakistan), has witnessed its share of emergencies and natural disasters. However, its education policies, curriculum and training strategies have been silent about such eventualities. A New Education Policy is under preparation by the Ministry of Education through a consultative process. This note is a preparatory Green Paper for consideration by the Ministry of Education for the final national document.

In emergency situations, such as the aftermath of a natural disaster, children, women and the disabled are the most vulnerable (see footnote). Their world suddenly transforms, leaving them with confusion and an uncertain future. Children in these situations may be affected psychologically and/or physically, either by their own personal experiences or indirectly through the stress placed on their families and communities. Many of them would have been injured, threatened by violence, be separated from family and would have lost their homes. Some may face frequent displacement, lack of proper shelter, and sexual harassment including violence and trafficking. Hence, emergencies bring new pressures upon children who might have otherwise attended school, to be drawn into a range of vulnerable possibilities, compromising their rights to protection and education.

*“By vulnerability we mean the characteristics of a person or group and their situation that influence their capacity to anticipate, cope with resist and recovery from the impact of a natural hazard (an extreme natural event or process). It involves a combination of factors that determine the degree to which someone’s life, livelihood, property and other assets are put at risk by a discrete and identifiable event (or series or ‘cascade’ of such events) in nature and in society.”<sup>3</sup>*

**Particular vulnerability** in earthquake affected areas is proposed to be understood as a function of the inability of individuals and families to pursue livelihoods and to mediate risks and insecurity in the social of their communities.

(NPA for the Rehabilitation of the Most Vulnerable Population in Earthquake Affected Areas of Pakistan: MoSW&SE & ERRA, 2006 -: hosted also on [www.itacec.org](http://www.itacec.org))

School serves as a central stability point in a child’s and also their family’s life. Education should, therefore, be seen as a priority component of any emergency assistance, almost equivalent to shelter. Education along with other emergency response such as shelter, water and sanitation, health and food aid, revitalizes and strengthens morale for children affected by

<sup>3</sup> See Weisner, Ben: Tracking Vulnerability: History, Use, Potential and Limitations of a Concept [http://www.vulnerability.se/files/Ben\\_Wisner.pdf](http://www.vulnerability.se/files/Ben_Wisner.pdf)



disaster. Resumption of regular school routines infuses a sense of emotional and social normalcy in the lives of children, their families and indeed teachers themselves. Education, under such circumstances, provides a channel for messages regarding health, hygiene, protection and citizenship to affected communities and teaching them new life skills. Moreover, children in crisis, who have gained useful knowledge and skills through quality education, are better prepared to contribute to the process of rebuilding their own lives, their communities and wider social structures.

Education program in such circumstances more importantly provides an opportunity to train and equip teachers with human, and participatory child centered learning and teaching methods. Similarly, this could also be an opportunity to introduce new techniques in school designs, administration, record keeping, class room management and gender equity. (ERRA's **Build Back Better** initiative is an example {[www.erra.gov.pk](http://www.erra.gov.pk)})

### ***Situation Analysis:***

The devastating earthquake of October 8, 2005 caused unprecedented loss of life and destruction of property in Pakistan and Azad Jammu & Kashmir. The earthquake left widespread destruction in its wake, leaving 73,000 people dead, 70,000 injured, and another 2.8 million without shelter.<sup>4</sup> Education sector has been one of the most severely affected one by this catastrophe. Damage assessments to the education sector indicate large-scale destruction of virtually all educational institutions, at all levels, of the education system within the affected areas. 95% of schools in AJK region were either completely destroyed or damaged to the point that they are dangerous to use. In the five affected districts of NWFP, 53 % of schools were demolished or damaged due to the earthquake. According to conservative estimates, total damage for the fully and partially damaged educational buildings, materials, furniture and equipment is Rs. 19.92 billion (US\$335 million) for both AJK and NWFP.<sup>5</sup> The damage incurred is not confined to the infrastructure; classroom equipment and textbooks have also been destroyed as a result. Even more devastating has been the human loss! An estimated 853 teachers and 18,095 students were lost to the earthquake. Of those who survived, many have been seriously injured and disabled, and are traumatized. The deaths of teachers represent not only losses to the teaching force, but also a loss of government investment in teacher capacity development through training. The existing budgets channeled towards education sector in Pakistan are already insufficient and the sector has been suffering from “under functioning”. In wake of such circumstances, Pakistan cannot afford such high scale of prolonged disruptions and heavy investments.

The region now constituting Pakistan is not unfamiliar with natural disasters such as the tragedy of 8<sup>th</sup> October, 2005. Over the course of time, this area has experienced major earthquakes, annual floods, destructive windstorms etc. (Please refer to Annex 1) resulting in significant economic and human losses. However, despite the recurrence of these calamities and the significance education holds for the survivors, review of the past education policies show that no provisions have ever been made for the restoration of the education system in case of such emergencies. The destruction caused by the catastrophe of 8<sup>th</sup> October has triggered several frameworks for social protection under different ministries. Concurrent and vibrant policies are emerging which are addressing issues pertinent to social protection, the vulnerable and internally displaced people. A great deal of positive and robust work has been

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.pakistan.gov.pk/data/DamageAssessment.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.pakistan.gov.pk/donor/Annex9.pdf>

spearheaded by the government, during the emergency phases (relief, recovery and reconstruction) in the education sector, the Ministry /Departments of Education, and ERRA along with all partners. This precious work needs to be provided space as a policy and operational segment in the upcoming national policy document.

Having similar experiences with natural disasters and other emergencies, several countries in the South Asian regions and around the globe are taking various initiatives aimed at disaster preparedness and mitigation. Inclusion of safety education in case of emergencies in the Indian curriculum framework is one such initiative from the region (Please refer to annex 2)

**Key Questions:**

1. Should there be a formal designated focal officer/focal section in the Ministry, Department of Education who should be trained and equipped to respond fully to such emergencies and can act as a coordination point?
2. What minimum standards should be met in responsive efforts towards emergency situations?(refer to INEE minimum standards and Pakistan adaptation)
3. What changes/inclusions in the new scheme of studies and curriculum (within subjects) are required to ensure preparedness for such circumstances?
4. What action plan should the Ministry/Department of Education and its subsidiary bodies be following in the emergency and subsequent rehabilitation and reconstruction phases?
5. What resources (intellectual, financial and technical) should be tapped into in case of a similar recurrence?
6. What skills and tools are immediately needed in case of such emergencies?
7. To support the action plan of education department, what role do other Ministries/Departments need to play in response to the situation
  - a) Planning Department
  - b) Health Department
  - c) Works Department/Shelter/Infrastructure Rehabilitation
  - d) Social Welfare, Security( including Bait-ul-Maul) and Special Education
8. Who are the key international partners specializing in Emergencies? Should there
9. be a directory be readily available with the Ministry /Dept of Education?
10. A large body of relevant materials, including manuals and guidelines, has been developed to be used in the emergency, rehabilitation and reconstruction phases. How should these materials be consolidated and made accessible when needed?

This note is being sent to all active partners in education and protection working groups during the Earthquake in Pakistan for consideration and necessary action.

Prepared by ITA Public Trust (July 2006)

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**Annex 1:**

<b>Disaster</b>	<b>Month/Year</b>
Earthquake	May 1935
Earthquake	Nov 1945
Earthquake	Dec 1974
Earthquake	Jan 1991
Earthquake	Oct 2005
Flood	1950
Flood	Aug 1973
Flood	Aug 1976
Flood	June 1977
Flood	July 1978
Flood	Sept 1992
Flood	July 1994
Flood	Aug 1996
Flood	July 2001
Flood	July 2003
Windstorm	Jun 1964
Windstorm	Dec 1965
Windstorm	Nov 1993
Drought	May 2000
Drought	May 2001

All the above mentioned natural disasters are top natural disasters having occurred in Pakistan according to numbers of people killed, total affected and economic damage costs

**Annex 2:**

Even before experiencing Tsunami in 2004, having learned from their past experiences, Indian educators and researchers had already started focusing on disaster preparedness and mitigation of disasters through education. The tsunami experience accelerated this process. A textbook analysis conducted by Babsi Khan Banaerjee, in a recently published article, ascertains the changes in the curriculum framework to address the issue at hand. (Please refer to annex) This article examined what kind of provisions are there in the sphere of school education, i.e. in the curriculum and in textbooks, towards preparing the pupils as well as teachers in case of a disaster; how the curriculum addresses this challenge the country faces almost annually. Analysis of the textbooks shows that though the textbooks prepared prior to year 2000 dealt with various natural disasters, the text was in the form of a knowledge input in geography lessons and not something that affects the real lives of the pupils. Case studies included in the text were mostly from foreign countries. Furthermore, the text did not prepare readers about how to deal and act in these situations. Realizing the need, safety education was included in the new curriculum framework formulated in the year 2000. Comparison of pre and post 2000 textbooks show that the focus of post 2000 text books has changed from “knowledge only” to “action also”.

**Abstract**

India seems to be in the cradle of natural hazards. People of India experience natural calamities of one kind or another almost every year. But the Tsunami was a first time experience so far. The tsunami has had a string impact on the lives of Indian citizens. In this context, the author tries to outline the role of school education in India to prepare its future citizens in the wake of such disastrous events. This analysis of school textbooks shows that till 1999, natural hazards were in the school curriculum as a part of geography lesson. After 2000, the national curriculum was revised and disaster education was introduced in school education as a part of reform, even before India's encounter with Tsunami. The Government of India played a very crucial role in the educational reconstruction process after the tsunami.

Basabi Khan Banerjee

Natural Hazards in Indian School Education and the Tsunami Experience.

International Textbook Research Vol. 27, Issue 4, 407-424

1. The Government of New Zealand has also developed training materials and guidelines on "Work safe at Schools - Emergency Management".
2. Government of Granada through the National Disaster Management Agency in collaboration with UNICEF has formally introduced disaster management into Grenada's primary schools curriculum and developed some materials on it (textbook, workbook of games and activities for children, a disaster preparedness teaching guide, and a game called Risk Land).
3. Ministry of Education, Thailand, in collaboration with the country's Interior Ministry and Asian Disaster Reduction Center, organized a consultation in January 2006 targeted at Education for Disaster Education for Disaster Preparedness in Primary Preparedness in Primary Schools in Thailand.

## FINANCING EDUCATION (SCHOOLS)

### *Background*

Education financing needs are high in most countries as it is the largest activity in the social sector of any country. The funding can be from multifarious sources private, public, philanthropic and international overseas development. In view of the high social returns on education, the argument for public funding is always strong and all governments take the responsibility of providing equitable opportunities for all to obtain quality education. Most countries also have high private investments in education. Depending on the model followed by a given country, education may be accessible to all or only those who can afford it. Questions for public funding for education would broadly involve the source of the funding and its distribution within various tiers. Ideally the share of public funds going to school level should be higher as compared to tertiary education. The source of the money can be local, provincial or federal revenues. In most federal states, the function is decentralized to the local level that generates the largest chunk of resources. Funding from federal and provincial levels normally supplements the local component where the latter is inadequate or there is need to pursue a specific national or provincial goal.

In developing countries, the bulk of development expenditure originates from donor funds. In recent years, the methodology for this financing has come under criticism and the issue of coordinated effort of the donors to minimize overlap and delineate the recipient country's own priorities.

### *Situational Analysis*

Pakistan's current public outlay on education is 2.73% of the Gross Domestic Product; which is considered low. Recently, the government committed to raise it to 4% of the GDP. The bulk of this expenditure is on the recurrent side where teachers' salaries make about 90% of the total recurrent expenditure. The development budget is almost entirely financed through foreign aid. This has serious implications for ownership and sustainability as a number of these activities fail to gauge government's commitment and capacity for the long run recurrent expenditure implications of this development work. The funding is generated mostly through donor determined priorities and since the whole sector is uncoordinated there are issues of overlap and excessive emphasis that distorts priorities for the education sector.

At the domestic level, resources are generated through revenues raised at various tiers. With Devolution, the responsibilities for schools have been shifted to the District governments. However the devolved governments are dependent on the Provincial Finance Commissions as the main source for expenditure (only 8% of the requirements are met through the local governments' revenues). Overall the bulk of revenue is collected at the federal level which is distributed to the provinces through the National Finance Commission. Additionally the Federal Government funds vertical projects in provinces through various interventions; the latest is the Education Sector Reform (ESR) Programme.

Over the years another matter that has appeared is poor utilization of funds. This manifests serious capacity limitations, apparently simple increase of funds may not be the immediate answer.

Over the last few years private sector investment in education has expanded though the exact amount is not known as there are serious data deficiencies in this sector. The growth does reflect the potential of funding (and services) outside the government.

***Key Questions***

1. Why have financial outlays in education been low over the years?
2. Why is government unable to undertake the bulk of development expenditure?
3. What are the causes of low utilization?
4. What are the key issues in donors' financing e.g . flexibility, priority, recurrent implications etc.?
5. What has been the experience of direct budgetary support , if any?
6. What are the constraints faced by fiscal decentralization?
7. What is the scope for increased resource mobilization by local governments to meet their education expenditure requirements?
8. What is the potential of private sector funding in meeting the education objectives of the government?

## GENDER AND EDUCATION

### *Background*

Pakistan lies in the zone of the world which embraces 75% of the world's illiterate population, majority of whom are women. A visible gender gap exists as educational attainment of girls is far below than that of boys. According to an analysis conducted by the Ministry of Women Development, there are only 19 per cent females having attained education up to Metric, 8 per cent Intermediate, 5 per cent Bachelors, only 1.4 per cent MA/MSc and only 3.74 per cent of women are employed in various professions in Pakistan.

Women's life in Pakistan does not form a homogeneous entity. Patriarchal structures are relatively stronger in the rural and tribal setting where local customs establish male authority and power over women's lives. On the other hand, women belonging to upper and middle classes have increasingly greater access to education and employment opportunities and can assume greater control over their lives.

### *Situational Analysis*

The educational status of women in Pakistan is unacceptably low, in fact amongst the lowest in the world. In Pakistan, 76% of the female adult population is illiterate. Of the 8.2 million out of school children, 5.9 million are girls. 57 percent of primary age girls attend school, compared with 89 percent of boys. Moreover, 75 percent of rural girls drop out at the primary school level and only 3 percent of rural twelve year old girls continue in school, compared with 18 percent of boys that age. Girl's participation rates at all levels are lower than those of boys.

Probably the root of female education problem also lies at the primary level. The low participation at the primary level keeps the female down from higher education.

Gender disparity in education is more pronounced amongst girls living in poverty. Thus girls are in double jeopardy, affected by both gender discrimination and poverty. Limited resources force families to prioritize their expenditure on education, hence the son's preference. Girls' education is at low priority as parents think that girls will bring no economic benefit to the family and therefore should work at home. School distance and facilities in schools such as availability of toilets, separate toilets, boundary walls of schools, etc are some other factors of low participation and high rate of drop out of girl students. Cultural limitations, as *Purdah* for girls from male members, is another example of low girls participation rate in the country from primary to tertiary and professional education level. These socio-cultural conditions limit girl's decision-making power, keeps the level of awareness of her rights low, develops a poor self-concept and limits her aspirations. Whereas Girl's education adds value to her work, increases her work's productivity and makes her less vulnerable to intra-family violence or outside harassment.

On the demand side, poverty, parent's education, gender discrimination and distance from school are the major barriers for enrolment, attendance and retention in schools. On the supply side, shortage of girls' schools, shortage or absence of female teachers, and poor quality of teaching are major obstacles to girl's education.



***Key Questions***

1. What are the key factors that inhibit girls' education and ultimately cause wide gender disparities?
2. Are the differences in gender in relation to other factors including region, location, income levels, school practices, cultural norms, issues of attendance and retention progression, curricula and teaching material?
3. How could low level of literacy in Pakistan, particularly that of girls add to social costs, for a country like Pakistan?
4. How can gender balance be achieved?
5. How effective have the incentive based schemes been? What are their limitations?
6. How could these schemes be sustained?
7. Do we need an affirmative plan of action at policy level?
8. What are the current trends in relation to female education?
9. How adequately are gender issues filtered into the text books?

## HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

### **BACKGROUND**

Knowledge and advanced skills are critical determinants of a country's economic growth and standard of living as learning outcomes are transformed into goods and services, greater institutional capacity, a more effective public sector, a stronger civil society, and a better investment climate. Good quality, merit-based, equitable, efficient tertiary education and research are essential parts this transformation. Both developing and industrial countries benefit from the dynamic of the knowledge economy. The capacity for countries to adopt, disseminate, and maximize rapid technological advances is dependent on adequate systems of tertiary education. Improved and accessible tertiary education and effective national innovations systems can help a developing country progress toward sustainable achievements in the Millennium Development Goals, particularly those goals related to all levels of education, health, and gender equity.

Key factors in the generation of a well-educated workforce are the quality of education imparted to the graduate, access to higher education and its relevance to the economy. The challenge faced in the higher education sector is the provision of an environment conducive to quality education in all the higher education institutions. The faculty, the infrastructure and support provided to the faculty and students for teaching and research, and the efficiency of operation of university programs, define this environment. Human development, however, can not occur in isolation and must be intricately linked to the current and future priority areas for development. The product of the higher education system is the graduate having the requisite knowledge and skills to drive the 'National Development Plans'. It is thus absolutely critical that focus areas of research and development in the Higher Education Institutions are in harmony with the local and national industrial and social development plans.

### ***Situation Analysis***

Decades of neglect have drawn universities and more generally the higher education sector in Pakistan at levels which are not compatible with national objectives to develop as a modern and competitive society. As it stands now, the sector does not compare well with its counterparts in the region, and unless the reform process is continued, it may become an obstacle to the continuation of the current rapid economic growth, instead of becoming its main engine.

A rare and unfortunate combination plagues the university segment of the Pakistani higher education sector: it is both small in size and low in performance. It is an elitist sub sector, without the excellence (notwithstanding a few exceptions) and the efficiency which usually characterize such a system. These quantitative and qualitative ills call for energetic and radical transformations. The diagnosis is well known, well documented, and widely shared, inside and outside the university community, inside and outside the country. Several plans and strategies have outlined the situation, and proposed solutions. Little however was done until the establishment of the HEC to turn these plans into concrete actions. Two essential ingredients were noticeably missing: the political will, and the financial resources. Furthermore, the institutional setting and the managerial capacity were also weak.

The creation of the Higher Education Commission in 2002, with strong leadership and political backup and substantial increases in budgetary allocations allowed for an extensive reform process to be initiated.

At its inception, the HEC found a situation where access was extremely limited, with a proportion of the post-secondary age group actually enrolled in universities hardly reaching 3 percent, a very small proportion by any standard. The sub sector is fragmented, with two thirds of the student population in universities and other specialized higher education institutions (HEIs), and one third in affiliated colleges. Quality-wise, the lack of human, institutional, and financial resources in public HEIs would hardly qualify them as providers of post-secondary education. Under qualified teaching staff, outdated and static curricula, and the (related) quasi absence of high level research the HEIs as isolated islands of mediocrity with no stake in, nor an impact on, the surrounding world, let it be local communities with the country, its regional neighbors, or its natural competitors. Accountability had no currency in these institutions.

The HEC could not be expected to have changed this bleak situation during the 3 years of its existence, as the gestation periods for reform in the sector by nature will take a while to manifest their impact. Immediately after its birth, the HEC has launched an unprecedented number of substantial reforms directly aimed at the worst and most immediate issues plaguing the university segment of the sector

Seen from a financial angle, changes since HEC became active are impressive: total spending (recurrent + development) by the Commission grew by 344% in real terms between 2001/2002 and 2005/2006. However, this must be put into context. First, it comes after years of under funding, and still leaves Pakistan lagging behind with only half of one percent of the GDP spent on its universities. Second, the bulk of the increase is imputable to the parallel increase of student enrollments. In per student terms, spending has risen only by 9%. At about US \$ 500, public spending per student remains well below the average observed in fast growing developing countries, let alone in OECD member countries. Therefore there is clearly still space – and need- for growth.

### ***Key Issues:***

The Higher Education Commission's reform agenda has identified certain key areas for improvement:

### ***Faculty Development***

Faculty members are the key determinants of the quality of education, and regrettably, an area where Pakistani universities are particularly weak. It is estimated that only about 25% (average) of the current faculty members hold Ph.D. degrees, whereas the holding of Ph.D degrees is universally considered to be an essential pre-requisite to imparting quality education. It is understood here that while the holding of a Ph.D. degree by a faculty member does not necessarily guarantee quality, the lack of a Ph.D. does, beyond large, present a high barrier to sustained provision of quality education

Teaching in Higher Education is a skilled profession which must be adequately recognized and rewarded. The quality of educational programmes cannot be achieved without the adequate provision of faculty members who are able to demonstrate scholarship in their discipline and a professional approach to its application. Meeting the faculty requirements of

institutions through addressing staff deficiencies, as well as assisting in the professional development of current faculty members, and the esteem in which they are held as teachers within the academic community, are all of great importance in securing our strategic aim.

### ***Improving Access***

Widening access and improving participation in higher education are critical to support the needs of an ever expanding population. Participation in higher education will equip our citizens to operate productively within the global knowledge economy. This will result in social benefits including better health, lower crime, civic responsibility, environmental awareness and a more tolerant and inclusive society. Accordingly, we aim to ensure that all those with the potential to benefit from higher education have the opportunity to do so, regardless of socio-economic background. With an ever-increasing population and increasing demands from the economy, widening and increasing participation is a permanent goal of the higher education sector.

In order to respond to the low level of enrollment due to the crisis of coverage and access at the primary and secondary levels, the adoption of innovative approaches to provide suitable learning experiences for the students of the 21st century, while taking into account the willingness and capacity of institutions to expand is necessary. It has therefore been a priority to optimize the utilization of existing resources and focusing on physical infrastructure development, as well as technological infrastructure development so that modern approaches including distance education methodologies can play their proper role.

### ***Promoting Excellence in Learning and Research***

In the modern world, people increasingly need skills of evaluating and managing information, in both their personal and working lives. Curriculum design and pedagogy within higher education must support and develop these skills and encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning. We need to recognize the strong links between teaching and research across the sector, with research informing the design and content of the future higher education curriculum and providing insights into new approaches to learning and teaching, particularly in innovative modes such as e-learning.

A dynamic, world-class research sector is not only vital for the health of universities but crucial to economic growth and social cohesion. This can only be achieved in a research base that is properly funded, where there is critical mass, and with valued and well motivated researchers.

Establishing the competitiveness of the research base in a global context implies that we must recognize and support truly excellent research financially, and foster effective collaboration. A dramatic increase in the research activities in institutions and the establishment of a 'research culture' will be required to achieve our objectives.

### ***Quality Assurance and Accreditation***

Quality in higher education is a dynamic entity, and is the outcome of interaction amongst many factors that determine a state of equilibrium reached at various levels. These include, inter alia, leadership, quality of faculty, quality of students, infrastructure facilities, research and learning environment, governance, strategic planning, assessment procedures, and market forces. Historically, in our Higher Education Institutions, this equilibrium has stuck at a very

low level. To achieve improvements requires reform in each one of the contributory factors. In the Pakistani context, additional factors like poor quality of education at the secondary level, poor grasp of English language by students, and the unstable socio-political environment of universities heavily impact and push the quality equilibrium further down.

The Higher Education has developed a strategic vision to address the relevant issues with strong support of the Government to achieve improvements in the equilibrium to be at par with international standards of quality in Higher Learning. The HEC has adopted a multidirectional approach focused on the issue of quality improvement and has placed particular emphasis on: the improvement of quality of faculty, infrastructure improvement, improvement of the research and learning environment, updating of curricula, governance issues, assessment issues, and accreditation of new Universities and Degree Awarding Institutions.

### ***Relevance to the Economy: Industrial Linkages***

Industrial sector development lies at the heart of the economic revival of Pakistan. Initiatives aimed at enhancing collaboration between academia and industry is crucial, with a particular focus towards the development of locally relevant education and research programs at the academic institutions. Universities the world over serve as local resource centers providing training and support to industries along with trained manpower.

For the promotion of linkage between Academia and Industry it is necessary to enhance the quality and level of research being conducted at the higher education institutions. Research, however does not occur in a vacuum, and there are numerous factors that need to exist for research activities to take root and prosper. This research must also be relevant to local industrial and social needs, leverage the regional and local competitive advantage, and be goal-oriented.

As a developing nation with limited resources Pakistan must focus on areas with direct relevance to the socio-economic development of Pakistan. It is also essential to develop a culture of innovation where graduates focus on job creation, as opposed to the traditional strategy of employment in the public sector. University – Industry linkage enhancement is essential to ensure relevance of teaching as well as research and programs in academic institutions.

## ICT INTEGRATION IN EDUCATION

### *Background*

For developing countries ICTs have the potential for increasing access to and improving the relevance and quality of education. It thus represents a potentially equalizing strategy for developing countries. However, the reality of the Digital Divide—the gap between those who have access to and control of technology and those who do not—means that the introduction and integration of ICTs at different levels and in various types of education will be a most challenging undertaking. Failure to meet the challenge would mean a further widening of the knowledge gap and the deepening of existing economic and social inequalities.

### *How can ICTs help expand access to education?*

ICTs are a potentially powerful tool for extending educational opportunities, both formal and non-formal, to previously underserved constituencies—scattered and rural populations, groups traditionally excluded from education due to cultural or social reasons such as ethnic minorities, girls and women, persons with disabilities, and the elderly, as well as all others who for reasons of cost or because of time constraints are unable to enroll on campus.

Anytime, anywhere. One defining feature of ICTs is their ability to transcend time and space. ICTs make possible asynchronous learning, or learning characterized by a time lag between the delivery of instruction and its reception by learners. Online course materials, for example, may be accessed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. ICT-based educational delivery (e.g., educational programming broadcast over radio or television) also dispenses with the need for all learners and the instructor to be in one physical location. Additionally, certain types of ICTs, such as teleconferencing technologies, enable instruction to be received simultaneously by multiple, geographically dispersed learners (i.e., synchronous learning).

Access to remote learning resources. Teachers and learners no longer have to rely solely on printed books and other materials in physical media housed in libraries (and available in limited quantities) for their educational needs. With the Internet and the World Wide Web, a wealth of learning materials in almost every subject and in a variety of media can now be accessed from anywhere at anytime of the day and by an unlimited number of people. This is particularly significant for many schools in developing countries, and even some in developed countries, that have limited and outdated library resources. ICTs also facilitate access to resource persons—mentors, experts, researchers, professionals, business leaders, and peers—all over the world.

### *Situational Analysis*

Pakistan's current ICT integration in the area of education is limited to data collection and processing through the National Education Information Management system (NEMIS) and the Virtual University Distance learning program which caters to University level students. Utilization of technology in primary, middle and secondary schools is almost negligible due to lack of infrastructure, including hardware, connectivity, local language educational software and trained teachers.

Another serious issue, on the part of the policy makers in Pakistan, has been a lack of vision and research, on the creative and successful ICT utilizations for education, in other developing countries, where ICT has been used to overcome serious education problems such as access and quality.

Outside intervention in this area such as the ICT component of the USAID funded ESRA program have also failed to produce any tangible results.

***Key questions:***

1. Why is there such a lack of awareness on the part of policy makers and implementers in this area? What steps can be taken to remedy the situation?
2. How do we use ICT to provide access to education in remote areas
3. What type of content development activity needs to be undertaken?
4. What type of teachers training programs are required and who can deliver them?
5. How do we address the issue of infrastructure and connectivity? Can the Ministry of IT be involved in this area?
6. Is education on the Ministry of IT's priority list?
7. How do we set national criteria for basic computer literacy skills?
8. How can ICT be used for effective monitoring and transparency?

## INTER TIER RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR

### *Background*

Like most federations, Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan-1973 demarcates the jurisdiction of the Federation and the provinces. This is done through Federal and Concurrent Legislative Lists. The former identifies the areas where the Federal government has exclusive jurisdiction while the subjects in the latter enlists both the federation and the provinces 'concurrent' jurisdiction. Any subject not mentioned in either of the two lists falls within provincial jurisdiction.

Pakistan is a multi-ethnic and multicultural federation. There are differentials among the federating units (even within each federating unit) on the basis of culture, ethnicity, language and development levels. As the federator, the role of the central government is to reduce the development disparities and encourage the cultural diversity (while allowing maximum provincial autonomy to the federating units). Education is a key tool towards achievement of these objectives

Under the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan education falls in the concurrent list. This means that both the federal and the provincial governments enjoy the jurisdiction. Given the administrative and political structures in the country, provinces undertake the bulk of implementation in the education sector. Federal role in such a scenario would normally be coordination and norm setting. However, over the years, the demarcation has blurred and a perception gap has emerged between the two tiers viz a viz their respective roles. Resultantly, there is an increased unease in the relationship has increased leading to adverse impact on education outcomes.

However, the Local Government Ordinance-2001 has enhanced the role of the provinces in governance of the social sector through local governments.

### *Situational Analysis*

There is a general perception that the Federal government intrudes into provincial domain through development and implementation of vertical programs and projects and not only distort provincial planning but also impact its autonomy. Even in areas where the Federal role is more pronounced and accepted, decisions are taken through a top down approach causing confusion and poor implementation. The provinces, on the other hand, have increasingly moved towards an adversarial relationship with the Federal Government that has led to erosion of the federation's role in probably the most important intervention for nation building. At times, even the concept of a federal Ministry of Education is questioned by provincial functionaries. Lately, some improvement geared up in form of revival of the Inter-Provincial Education Ministers' Conference and the Inter-Provincial Education Secretaries' Conference. However, at the technical levels, there is minimal coordination that dilutes the impact of these high forums.

With the implementation of devolution, the need for defining inter tier domains has become even more significant. Education under the Local Government Ordinance is a devolved subject up to the school level. However, confusion persists to understand this structure. Each province has its own interpretation of this development. The current demarcation is mostly



based on division of administrative powers rather than functional responsibilities which further adds. In theory, devolution has taken place whereas in reality its optimal benefits are not being reaped.

The need is to define role of each of the three tiers in the devolved set-up so that efficiency of the system increases without adversely affecting its national character (In fact there are three tiers even within the local governments i.e union, tehsil/town, and district).

Even as the respective roles are being defined the issue of requisite capacity at each tier would need to be identified.

### ***Key Questions***

Some of the key questions that emerge are:

1. What should be the role of the provinces vis a vis the Federal government and local governments?
2. What should be the responsibilities at each tier of the local government i.e. district, tehsil and union levels?
3. What type of capacities are required at each level for carrying out these functions?
4. What is the best method of regulating these relations for example written agreement, legislation, amendments to the constitution, and changes in the Rules of Businesses etc.?
5. Should standardization of content, quality of instruction and assessments be 'nationally' managed rather than federally, provincially or locally?

## LITERACY AND NON FORMAL EDUCATION

Literacy is the meaningful acquisition, development and use of the written language. It is seen as a process by which a set of technical skills of reading, writing and numeracy are acquired, and once grasped, these skills can be applied in all kinds of contexts for many different forms of print-based learning. Literacy is thus, a key and enabling Basic Learning Need (BLN) and included within basic education. Acquiring, improving and using literacy skills happen at all levels of education, and in multiple formal and non-formal contexts. Achieving each of the EFA goals depends strongly on policies that foster literate societies and set high standards for literacy, the foundation for further learning.

**Adult Education (AE)** is a broad field that includes: basic and continuing education, vocational and technical education, higher education and professional development, and is offered through formal, non-formal and informal education means, and by a variety of actors; the State, CSOs, and the market.

We use the term **Adult Basic Education (ABE)** – as differing from continuing, further or advanced adult education – to refer to foundation or essential education, aimed at meeting and expanding the BLN of adults. ABE is not an end in itself. It is only one mean among others to cope with the BLN of adults

### *Evolving Definitions of Literacy*

The definition of literacy may be described under two perspectives: International and National. Looking from International perspective, the word literacy has been defined in various ways. In **Bangladesh**, literacy is defined as the “Ability to read and write in any language”, whereas in **Canada**, 9th grade pass is considered as literate. In **India**, a literate person is considered the one who can read with accuracy at a speed of approx 40 words/minute and write or copy at a speed of 10 words/minutes and take dictation at the speed of not less than 7 words/minutes in any language. In **Malaysia**, the word Literate refers to persons aged 10 & over, who have been to school. In **Tajikistan**, “a literate person is an individual who can read and write”. However, according to the internationally agreed definition of literate person, adopted by **UNESCO**, “*A person is considered literate, if he/she can both read and write with understanding a simple statement on his/her everyday life*”.

In **Pakistan**, the definition of literacy is structured at the time of Population Census. Various definitions adopted at different times may be glanced in the following table:

### *Definitions of Literate Person in Pakistan*

Census Year	Definition
1951	“One who can read a clear print in any language.”
1961	“One who is able to read with understanding a simple letter in any language.”
1972	“One who is able to read and write in some language with understanding.”
1981	“One who can read newspaper and write a simple letter.”
1998	“One who can read newspaper and write a simple letter in any language.”

### ***Situational Analysis***

The *literacy challenge* has absolute and relative dimensions, particularly affects the poor, women and marginalized groups, and is much greater than conventional measures indicate. *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2006* reveals that:

1. In absolute numbers, those without literacy skills are mainly in sub-Saharan Africa, South and West Asia, and East Asia and the Pacific. Prospects for meeting the 2015 goal hinge largely on progress in the 12 countries where 75% of those without literacy skills live.
2. In relative terms, the regions with the lowest literacy rates are sub-Saharan Africa, South and West Asia, and the Arab States, all with literacy rates around only 60%, despite increases of more than 10 percentage points since 1990.
3. Illiteracy is associated to a significant extent with extreme poverty.
4. Women are less literate than men: worldwide, only 88 adult women are considered literate for every 100 adult men, with much lower numbers in low-income countries such as Bangladesh [62 per 100 men] and Pakistan (57 per 100 men)
5. 132 of the 771 million people without literacy skills are aged 15 to 24, despite an increase in this group's literacy rate to 85%, from 75% in 1970.
6. Direct testing of literacy suggests that the global challenge is much greater than the conventional numbers, based on indirect assessment, would indicate, and that it affects both developed and developing countries.

### ***Literacy Trends in Pakistan***

In Pakistan, despite tall claims of politicians and promises contained in National Education Policies, to eradicate illiteracy and universalize the primary education; progress towards literacy and enrolment targets has been very slow, rather disappointing as evident from following table:-

#### ***Age Threshold & Literacy Trends in Pakistan since 1951***

Census Year	Age threshold	Literacy Rate (%)			Gender Gap (%)	GPI (F/M)	Inter-censal Variation	Variation per year
		Total	Male	Female				
1951	All ages	17.9	21.5	13.9	7.6	0.646	...	...
1961	Five years and above Population	16.7	25.1	6.7	18.4	0.267	- 1.2	- 0.12%
1972	Ten years and above	21.7	30.2	11.6	18.6	0.384	+ 5.0	+0.45%
1981	Ten years and above	26.2	35.1	16.0	19.1	0.456	+ 4.5	+0.50%
1998	Ten years and above	43.9	54.81	32.02	22.79	0.584	+17.7	+1.04%

***Source: Compiled from 1981 and 1998 Census Reports of Pakistan.***

It may be seen that the variation in literacy rate was negative during the inter-censal period of 1951 & 1961, mainly because of making the definition more comprehensive. Literacy in Pakistan has been growing at a very slow rate. It rose at the rate of almost 0.5% per year during the first three decades or so and about one percent per year during 1981-1998. PSLM Survey 2004-05 has reported an overall literacy rate of 53% (for population 10 years and older), with a gender gap of 25% i.e. male literacy rate of 65% and female literacy rate of 40%.

**Literacy Rate (10 +) in Pakistan & its Provinces by Sex Since 1998**

	1998 Census			2001-02 LFS			2004-05 PSLM Survey		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
<b>Pakistan</b>	<b>43.9</b>	<b>54.8</b>	<b>32.0</b>	<b>50.0</b>	<b>62.2</b>	<b>36.9</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>40</b>
Rural	33.6	46.4	20.1	40.5	55.0	25.4	44	58	29
Urban	63.1	70.0	55.2	67.8	75.5	59.3	71	78	62
Punjab	46.6	57.2	35.1	51.8	62.3	40.8	55	65	44
Sindh	45.3	54.5	34.8	54.9	67.0	41.0	56	68	41
NWFP	35.4	51.4	18.8	39.3	59.4	19.9	45	64	26
Balochistan	24.8	34.0	14.1	33.5	47.4	16.3	37	52	19

**Source:** i) *Population Census, 1998.*

ii) *Derived from Statistical Appendix Tables 3 to 3.4 of LFS 2001-02 & 2003-04 and Pakistan Social and Living Standard Measurement (PSLM) Survey 2004-05*

However, the wide inter and intra provincial disparities present a discriminating scenario from geographic as well as gender lense. As per 1998 Census, Literacy rates (of population 10years and above) ranged from 77.83% among urban male population of Sindh (Karachi Central) to 1.96% among the rural female of Balochistan (Dera Bugti). Likewise the Literacy Gender Parity Index (GPI) varied from 1.018 in the urban localities of Sindh (Karachi East) to 0.118 in the rural areas of Balochistan and 0.119 in the rural areas of NWFP (Hangu). In fact, the literacy ratio has been negatively aggravated due to the absence of meaningful and ambitious literacy programme in the past.

While there is gradual increase in the absolute values of indicators of Literacy; yet the progress rate is extremely slow, not coping with the challenges faced by the country to address the core issue of basic learning needs of the society at large, sufficient enough to leave some momentous impact on alleviating poverty. History of development of today's economically developed nations of the world provide stark testimony to the fact that no developed nation crossed the take-off stage of economic development before attaining a minimum Adult Literacy rate (15+age) of 75% (and a GER of 100%) with a Gender Parity Index (GPI) of above 0.90. The latest data of PSLM manifest a Literacy GPI of 0.615 only for whole Pakistan, with provincial break-up of 0.677 for Punjab, 0.603 for Sindh, 0.406 for NWFP and 0.365 for Balochistan and a slightly better position with regard to gender parity in access at primary level.

**Literacy Programmes**

Although almost 15 major Literacy programmes/projects were launched in the country under the auspices of Ministry of Education since independence, but these were not prepared with a national and holistic vision, rather at a very small scale, only in selected province(s) and few districts, leaving little impact on the overall situation. Even these programmes were inconsistent and mostly terminated before envisaged period. Each regime experimented in its own way. National Commission for Human Development has launched first ever mega literacy programme at national level in 2002, initially in 16 districts (4 in each province) and later expanded to 58 districts of Pakistan.

***Key Issues/ Questions***

7. What are the causes of low literacy level in Pakistan?
8. What should be the definition of literacy in Pakistan?
9. What should be the age threshold/level for measuring literacy in Pakistan?
10. What are the critical impediments in the way of improving literacy rate in Pakistan?
11. What role a district/local government can play in addressing the literacy challenge and what role can be played by the society?
12. Can literacy challenge be met if:
  - a. Political leaders at the highest level commit themselves to action and
  - b. Countries adopt explicit literacy policies to:
    - Expand quality primary and lower-secondary education;
    - Scale up youth and adult literacy programmes;
    - Develop rich literate environments.

## PRIMARY EDUCATION

### *Background*

Primary education in Pakistan is indicated for children of the age group 5 to 10 years and consists of class I to V. Primary education is the foundation on which all subsequent stages of education are built. Though the number of primary schools and primary school teachers is the highest as compared to other levels of schooling in Pakistan provisions for primary schools are very poor in the country.

The Report of the Commission on National Education-1959 underlines that countries where a marked increase in national wealth had taken place in the last century, the progress could be dated from the time when primary schooling was made compulsory. Could we apply this in context of Pakistan?

### *Situational Analysis*

***Out of 105 districts, there are 30 districts in Pakistan which have less than 20 % and only seven districts which have more than 60% participation rate at primary level. All districts of the two provinces NWFP and Balochistan have less than 60% participation rate. The survival rate up to Grade V is only 49.7% in Pakistan while the repetition rate for each grade in the primary schools is about 15.74%***

The concern over this stage is to both cater to the almost 3.4 million children added to the population each year, of whom only half have access to basic education and the other half is never enrolled but also for the half of the enrolled children who drop before completing basic five years of education. Drop outs are high among girls and are increasing at a higher pace relative to boys. Currently 44 per cent of the boys and 56 of the girls leave the school before reaching the fifth Grade. Male children attend an average of 3.8 years of school while female children receive an average of 1.3 years of schooling

The primary schools in urban areas have better facilities than schools in rural areas, which are often shelter less known as *Chappart* schools. Quality of public primary schools is a cause of concern both in terms of the number of teachers and their method of teaching. Per average teacher-student ratio is 2.35 percent. Multi-grade teaching is common especially in rural schools A teacher has to teach 3 to 6 grades simultaneously in a different context.

Qualitative aspects of primary education are responsible for the poor quality of learning as well as the high drop out rate in Pakistan. Its public primary education curricula, syllabi, text books and method of teaching does not conform to the present pedagogical requirements.

### *Key Questions*

1. Despite so many policies, efforts and investments to universalize primary education, why Pakistan has not been able to meet the targets? Is there a problem in agenda setting or a implementation crises?
2. How to meet the challenge of the drop-outs?

3. What are the major areas of concern in primary level education which need intervention?
4. How to address the problem of low participation at the primary level, particularly of the females?
5. Since the attainment of the education in Pakistan is mainly of the level of primary education, what product the education system would want to produce (at the primary level)?
6. What should be taught to a primary level student?
7. Which is the most preferable choice for primary school teachers...Male teachers or female teachers?
8. Should primary education be made compulsory?
9. What should be the minimum age for entry to school?
10. What should be the length of primary schooling?
11. What should be the timing of schooling?
12. What should comprise of Early Childhood learning?
13. Since the attainment of the education in Pakistan is mainly of the level of primary education, what product the education system would want to produce (at the primary level)?
14. What should be taught to a primary level student?
15. How to meet the challenge of the drop-outs?

## ROLE OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN EDUCATION

### *Background*

The term “private sector” in the case of education is applied in various ways. Most commonly it is restricted to school ownership and management. Actually the ‘Private Sector’ is also involved in a number of less visible services which usually escape debate. Some use the term in a more inclusive manner covering all non state players while others adopt a more restrictive connotation. The way private sector is defined and understood, it has also implications for education policy.

‘Provision of education’ embeds a set of services that collectively enable education to be provided to the student. In every country these services are provided by the state as well as non-state actors. The role of the latter can be limited or expanded depending on the policy adopted by the state as well as its potential. The second issue is what constitutes private sector. Non state actors may be organized in various manners and for different purposes to deliver services. These may be purely entrepreneurial initiatives undertaken with a profit motive or there may be for a philanthropic cause. Other non-state actors may include religious groups, civil society organizations and community. Do all of these qualify to be the private sector? It is more convenient to include all of them in the term in common parlance but for policy purposes a stricter bifurcation may be required. In such a case the term should ideally be used only for the players moved by market incentives.

The role of the private sector is usually well understood and defined in a policy articulation for most developed countries. In developing countries the role is less well recognized and therefore education policies may not target them fully as a potential resource. On the other hand, there are also limitations to the capacity of the sector as compared to the more advanced nations. In a typically developed country, the private sector would be providing textbooks, teachers training, supplementary reading material guides for the teachers and parents on specific child related issues and would among other things also have a well defined role in construction of school buildings. In developing countries, the extent of such services from the private sector would normally be limited because of state policy and endogenous limitations of the private sector in these states.

In most countries, school ownership and management is the most visible activity of the private sector and therefore it generates more debate in this area than in other. All over the world the role of the state in school education is greater as compared to private sector while at the tertiary levels the relative share is closed by proportion. Netherlands is an interesting exception where there are no state owned schools. In most countries, the private schools appear along with the public school systems, the reasons and manifestations vary. Either these may simply cater to an elite or fill in areas where the state either does not have a priority or there are statutory bars to its intervention.

As a consequence of deteriorating quality of education in public schools, there is a visible multifold increase in growth of private schools in many a developing countries, ensuring better education for children.



### *Situational Analysis*

Non state players have played a significant role in the education sector of Pakistan since its inception. The bulk included elite ‘public schools’ and the institutions run by Christian missionaries along with the Islamic madrassahs. The size of the ‘pure’ private sector driven by market forces was small in the initial years. In the early 1970s most institutions outside the state ownership were nationalized. The policy was reversed in the late 1970s but the bulk of the nationalized institutions were not divested of state ownership. A more relaxed policy was followed from the eighties onwards encouraging the growth of the private sector. In 1990s, specific tax exemptions were extended to private institutions to facilitate their establishment and expansion.

Last few decades has witnessed a rapid expansion of the private sector in Pakistan. According to one estimate, it now constitutes about 30 percent of the education sector. The prime cause of this growth, in both the school and higher education, has been the demand for ‘quality’ education combined with the perception that the public sector schools standards have deteriorated. At the school level, it is easy to observe the desire for English medium schools in the market from the advertised claims of the private schools, since skills in English language are relevant to the more ‘desirable’ jobs.

The private schools range from the elite ‘public schools’ and school systems to small house based ones including those in towns and villages. There are also missionary schools (most of them nationalized in the 1970s) and schools run by non-government organizations and individual philanthropists. The Madarris, may also be categorized as one form, especially where they are owned by individual Ulema. For tertiary education, there has been a manifold increase in private institutions and with a more flexible policy for awarding charter to many universities has facilitated the growth of private sector. The provincial and federal governments have allowed these institutions to develop without much hindrance. This may partially be a result of a deliberate option to encourage growth but also because the unencumbered mushrooming has caught the state unaware. It has neither a policy nor the machinery to develop a structured relationship with the private sector. As a result, cases have been reported where people have been out rightly defrauded and there is a general demand for regulation of this large sector. On the other hand, the government has failed to channelise potential benefits which this growth entails. In fact, there is very little or inadequate data on these non-state providers to develop a meaningful policy. Recently, Ministry of Education has initiated a National Education Census to establish correct and complete data.

In addition to school ownership, the private sector has been involved in printing and publishing of textbooks. For public sector schools the role has been largely restricted to printing as the publishing task is accomplished by the Textbooks Boards. Private schools textbooks are developed by private publishers for the ‘elite’ schools. Some of these have also been involved in preparation of supplementary readings material. Lately non state players have also appeared in areas like teachers’ training and research.. In the case of Punjab an initiative to outsource the latter to the private sector through competitive bidding is being undertaken. As for research, the bulk of the capacity is recruited by international development partners. Overall there are limitations to what the private sector can do in provision of these services. There are capacity issues resulting from state monopoly that has left few opportunities for the non-state actors. The potential however exists and has been demonstrated quite visibly in pockets.

***Key Questions***

1. What is the best definition of the private sector for the purpose of the National Education Policy?
2. What are the key areas where private sector can be encouraged to play a role?
3. What are the major problems faced by the private sector in the education sector in Pakistan?
4. What are the issues faced by the customers of the private sector education?
5. To what extent must the state regulate the sector?
6. What are the main areas that a regulatory mechanism must include?

## DEFINING EDUCATION QUALITY

“There is mounting evidence that the quality of human resources, as measured by test scores, is directly related to individual earnings, productivity and economic growth” **EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005**

### *Background*

In countries with high numbers of out of school students and low literacy rates, access is the primary concern. Excessive focus on access may lead to a diffusion of the limited resources to the detriment of quality. While there is a trade off between access and quality in a country like Pakistan there may be a need to create a balance at some base level for quality even as enrollments are increased. There is sufficient evidence from international experience to suggest that poor quality of education results into high level of dropouts and reduced incentives to send children to school. Most international instruments including the Education For All (EFA) Framework attach high value to quality of education.

Defining quality in education is not easy and various measures are used as proxies. It may be measured as a standard set of abilities that the learner may acquire or it may be contextualized as per the requirements and aspirations of society. To the extent, quality is linked to relevance. It has to be defined indigenously within the social context of each culture and therefore may need some public debate. However, it is recognized that an important qualitative outcome for the learner is the development of his or her cognitive skills that leads to his or her analytical ability and continue on the path of a lifelong learning.

### *Situational Analysis*

Pakistan is a country with low literacy rates, low enrollments and high dropouts. The situation could understandably lead to an excessive focus on increased access at the cost of quality. There is general perception that the quality of education in the public sector schools has declined over the last few decades and continues to be low. It is generally believed that quality of education, even at the private schools (with the exception of a few elite institutions) stands low. In fact many of these have even poorer quality than the average public sector school. The education system encourages rote learning where cramming of facts is of paramount importance rather than development of cognitive analytical ability. Resultantly despite a high demand for education there is a large section of the population that opts to stay out of education because observed outcomes have revealed poor private returns. Conversely this may be interpreted as demand for quality education. The low supply in high cost private elitist schools is beyond the reach of the vast majority.

There has never been an effort to define quality in Pakistan. There is a general perception that ability to speak, write and read English is the result of quality education. Observed outcomes in the economy would encourage this definition as most white collar jobs are beyond the reach of those with little or no knowledge of the English language. However there is a need for a deeper analysis as to whether this is an adequate proxy for quality education. There may be a need for a national debate on what would constitute quality education. This may include outcomes for the learner that allow him or her to improve personal productivity and make economic gains. It may also include the set of socio-cultural values that he or she may

acquire as per the aspirations of society. To attain this some sort of a social agreement on what constitutes quality may be reached.

***Key Questions***

Some of the key questions that emerge are:

1. What do we understand by the term ‘quality education’?
2. Is the learning of English a sin qua non for quality education?
3. How can we define and agree on quality within our socio-cultural context?
4. How can we channelise our definition of quality into an outcome for the education system?

## SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

### *Background*

The basic functioning unit of the education system is the school. In systems, where schools have greater autonomy and heads of schools play an active role in improving academic output do better than those that are more centralized. This means that there is greater financial autonomy in making decisions on expenditure, in developing school plans for better academic achievements and ability to have a freer intercourse with the community. Schools in more developed systems are the pivot for the educational needs of a community and have greater focus of its members. This not only allows greater immediate accountability but also helps in improvement of the school through direct support to schools. The head teacher can play a key role in mentoring of the teachers, assisting them in improving their performance, developing relations with community and making more needs based investments provided he or she has the relevant financial independence.

### *Situational Analysis*

In Pakistan, despite devolution adequate level of decentralization to the school level has been wanting. There are manifold reasons for this including capacity at the school level, the financial systems and the tendency to centralize decision making. There are two main strands of effective school management; head teachers and community. In Pakistan traditionally head teachers are selected from the teachers' cadres without any specialized training in management of schools. Normally, this makes them badly equipped for the task. Given the low social status accorded to teachers and consequently head teachers, there are limitations to what he or she can manage with the community. In a country with low levels of literacy and weak social voice there are limitations to the ability of society to be mobilized effectively. However, there have been many efforts to involve community and the results have been mixed. The devolution plan intrinsically caters to involvement of society in development efforts and provides opportunities for increased community mobilization.

### *Key Questions*

1. What should be the management functions at the school level?
2. Why have we failed to make the school level, the basic functioning unit for educational management?
3. What should be the role of the head teacher?
4. Why is the head teacher unable to perform the functions one would expect of him or her in a more developed education system?
5. What is the role of the district officers (EDOs/AEDOs etc.) in school management? What has been the experience of School Management Committees/Parent Teachers Associations in school management?

## SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

### *Background*

School is a place of learning and if learning is to be enjoyable or even merely possible the environment plays an important role in attracting and retaining students and imparting quality education. Environment would include the classroom, the facilities available including the latrines, boundary walls and the learning culture.

### *Situational Analysis*

The public sector in Pakistan has almost one hundred thousand schools. Discounting institutions like the cadet colleges, the military run and some of the federally run schools the bulk of the remaining are in a dilapidated state. The term ‘dilapidated’ in this context is very relative as there are differences even amongst them. Primary schools that are the largest in numbers are in the most pitiful condition. There are those that are under a thatched roof known as ‘chappar schools’ , there are others that might have a better appearance but the actual quality of the physical conditions may be worse.

Once inside the classrooms one can observe

1. Absence of furniture (even in most urban schools)
2. Multigrade classes in overcrowded rooms
3. No protection against extreme weather conditions (this is worse where local traditional architecture has been ignored.)

In secondary schools the situation is only slightly better. Some of the urban schools even have large playgrounds but even these have serious problems. Here the key problems are :

1. Crowded classrooms (upto a hundred per class)
2. Low or no availability of latrines. Schools with over 500 students sometimes have only one latrines. Some of the best schools have this problem. This, along with absence of a boundary wall, is an important factor in girls not opting for schooling beyond primary.

In addition to the physical environment the pedagogic methods used also adversely impacts the learning ability of the students. The teachers employ rote learning methods and often resort to corporal punishment. In extreme and rare cases even deaths have been reported. The Government of Punjab has started an effective campaign against corporal punishment which has had some positive impact though the practice continues to prevail.

School environment also varies within the private sector where the bulk are being run after converting houses. The rooms are not of optimal size and most do not have grounds. Poor pedagogy and corporal punishment also exist in private school – only the degree of the latter may be a little less severe.

***Key questions***

Some of the key questions that emerge are:

1. What should be the bare minimum physical requirements of a primary and a secondary/higher secondary school respectively?
2. In view of the cultural sensitivities what should be the bare minimum requirements for a girls school, especially at the secondary levels?
3. How can corporate punishment be eliminated from schools?

## SECONDARY EDUCATION

### *Background*

Secondary education is usually the most neglected area of education in developing countries. In recent years, the focus in most of these countries has been on basic education without adequate planning for the secondary level. Resultantly, there is an imbalance in different tiers of education. The importance of the sector cannot be overestimated. Countries that have developed the sector earlier have also benefited from it.

In most developing countries secondary education is considered to be linked to tertiary education. This is a colonial legacy. The colonial powers linked their secondary education to higher education so that education development trickles down from universities to schools. The role of secondary education has been seen in a more varied way over the years. It is the link between the basic and tertiary education as well as the first conduit of quality human resource for the labour market. Courses for secondary education are designed keeping in view its role within the education sector. This is also a formative and learning phase to inculcate a value system within the children. With globalization and increased need for knowledge based economies, secondary education has emerged as a critical area.

According to the famous Sharif Commission Report of 1959:

“The first and basic principle is the recognition of secondary education as a complete stage in itself and the need to demarcate it clearly in respect of objectives, purposes, methods of teaching, curricula and equipment, from secondary education”

One can see that very early in the development of education the importance of secondary education as a distinct level with special needs was identified by the policy makers. It was considered as having a greater role than simply a nursery for tertiary level.

### *Situational Analysis*

In recent years there has been an increased emphasis on basic education by country planners and the international development partners. The hype around primary education has led to a neglect of secondary education and presently there is an obvious imbalance with much fewer secondary schools than the primary level graduates. In a situation where access is increasing the bottleneck may prove a serious impediment to educational development in Pakistan.

The relatively smaller secondary education sector is infested with issues around quality, relevance, access and drop outs. The drop out rate at this level is 45 % as compared to 30% at the primary level. This may be the result of higher opportunity cost of education at the secondary level. There have been efforts to make secondary education more relevant through introduction of technical streams but the results have been mixed. A serious issue at the secondary level is the decreased participation of girls due to cultural constraints and unfortunately there is no mechanism to cater to the specific requirements of girl students to enable her to receive education as per cultural norms. This is a serious concern since there is enough evidence from research to suggest that girls' education at the secondary level has positive impact on other social indicators including infant mortality.



The higher secondary stream in Pakistan has emerged as distinct from the secondary level. It is designed for filtration for career options. Over the years, it has been debated that an alternate option to secondary and higher secondary, as feeder to higher education could be to go into the labour market, thus converting secondary education into a terminal process .

***Key Questions***

7. Why has secondary education been an area of neglect in the sector?
8. What are the key issues in the secondary education sector?
9. What is the role of the secondary level in the education sector?
10. What has traditionally been the role of secondary education in Pakistan?
11. What are the key causes of the high drop out rates?
12. How should one see the role of secondary schools in the education system in Pakistan?

## SECTOR PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

### *Background*

Over the last half century overseas development assistance has been a major contributor in the education sector of the developing countries. This ODA has been disbursed through multilateral agencies as well as bilateral ones. Without prejudice to the benefits of this aid the effort has become uncoordinated leading to distortions within and across sectors. The imbalances emerge due to specific focus of each donor based on its own perception of the development priorities which may or may not coincide with the priorities of the host country. In many cases the priority may be correct but due to lack of coordination among donors one area may be reinforced excessively at the expense of another.

However, the main reason for such development is erosion of the host government's control over policy and planning. There can be multifarious reasons including the loss of capacity of state machinery and a mismatch between donor-state resources leading to retreat of the government from planning. Eventually the policies and plans become donor driven. In recent times there has been an awareness of this problem across the developing world and the donors leading to a number of donors' agreements (e.g. Monterrey and more recently in Paris) to move towards improved coordination/harmonization and away from individual projects. Ideally donors should be supporting government's plan rather than developing their own ones. Such sector wide plans would allow government greater control and ownership of the development process in the sector and also hold it more accountable for deficits.

### *Situational Analysis*

Pakistan has been a typical case of a developing country that has moved into donor driven development. In the education sector there are about seventeen donors assisting in various sub-sectors and geographic regions. At times assistance from these overlap creating geographical as well as intra-sectoral imbalances. The government has developed plans like the Education for All National Plan of Action but these have failed to attract the resources available to more donor driven initiatives. Unless the government develops its own sector plans at district, provincial and national levels the current state of affairs would continue. With development of the country's own sector plan not only would there be better comprehension and control of the development process but it would eventually allow the country to move away from foreign aid in the long run.

### *Key Questions*

1. Do you agree that development in the education sector has become donor driven over the years?
2. Why has the state lost its control of planning in the education sector?
3. Why are donor driven initiatives less desirable?
4. What can be a good design for sector plans?
5. Would it be possible for districts to develop their own sector plans?
6. What should be the role of the provincial and federal governments in sector plan development?

## SCIENCE EDUCATION

Science and mathematics education at school level has increased in importance as the modern day technological advancement has become the key to development. To create a niche in today's global economy most countries place a high premium on science and mathematics. One indicator is the appearance of international tests to compare educational achievements in the last ten years. These tests assess the students in reading, mathematics and science literacy. For example the OECD's Programme for International Students Assessment (PISA) tests all three while the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) focuses primarily on science and mathematics.

Pakistan is a long way from participation in such international comparisons but locally the Social Policy Development Centre (SPDC), Karachi conducted a science and mathematics test to check the concepts of students who had completed 11 years of school (Secondary School Certificate plus one year). While it found differences among provinces Report stated the following :

“the performance of the students was unsatisfactory across the board, irrespective of province, city or gender”<sup>6</sup>

The results showed that the only subject in which some of the students performed better was biology where more concepts are descriptive. In the more conceptual subject like mathematics and chemistry the students were unable to find their way through the test.

### *Situational Analysis*

Science education in Pakistan is affected by three key factors; the textbooks, the teachers and the examinations. The average textbook of science is considered to be of poor quality. It fails to generate a student's interest and in most cases complicates the matter presented. Science teachers are a rarity and in most secondary schools teachers trained in other subjects are teaching science and mathematics. Finally the examinations do not test the students' concepts and anyone who can memorize the facts can manage to get through.

Another major deficit in most schools is the availability of laboratories for practical. A number of secondary schools are without them. The few that have a laboratory fail to optimize the benefits as it is difficult to update them and the large number of students means that not all can take advantage. Practical examinations are most notorious for use of unfair means and even in otherwise stricter boards these are influenced. This leads to further retardation of the learners capacity.

### **Key Questions:**

9. What are the key factors for poor quality of science education in Pakistan?
10. How can science and mathematics education be improved?

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<sup>6</sup> For details see Social Development in Pakistan; Annual Review 2002-03; Social Policy Development Centre, Karachi.

## TEACHERS

### *Background*

“Teachers are a key enabling factor in improving the quality of education. The evidence is that teachers are critical to any reforms designed to improve quality”

Education for All: The Quality Imperative”; EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005

Any system for hiring and retaining good teachers needs to ensure that it attracts quality, builds their capacity, ensures career growth and offers a reasonable pay structure. Increased pressure for access to education has increased the demand for teachers and hence the financial burden of the input. Most education systems spend the bulk of their expenditure on teachers. In most third world countries about 90% of the recurrent expenditure is spent on teachers’ salaries. Despite high expenditure, the individual compensations are low and quality of teaching inadequate in these countries. There is a perception that the profession fails to attract the most talented. Globally teachers’ pay has fallen compared to other professions. In real terms, it has increased in middle to high income countries but reduced in low income countries.

The most important input into teaching quality is training of the teachers. Broadly there are two types of trainings in most countries: the pre-service and the in service. Detail treatment of each varies. Ideally a good training system imparts a set of skills that goes beyond the knowledge of the subject and include matters like good pedagogical skills, ability to assess the students, sensitivity to cultural nuances and many others.

### *Situational Analysis*

Teachers are the largest set of professionals in the public sector in Pakistan numbering around 1 million. Given the fact that the current provision of education is less than optimal the potential for increase is much larger. Any reform for teachers will not only have to look at the present but also the forecast figure for teachers. The key issues for Pakistan are similar to most developing countries. Two prime problems are:

1. Inability of the system to attract and/or retain quality human resource to teaching
2. Good quality teachers’ training

Attracting quality human resource would require adequate incentives in the form of financial compensation as well as career paths. In Pakistan, school teachers are placed in the lower pay scales (equivalent to clerical staff in the government). College teachers are taken at par with the officer cadre. Career paths in both cases are slow moving and uncertain providing little incentive for improvement. Additionally the social status of the teacher has declined over the years and is not considered an attractive job by most young persons, especially men.

Another impediment is the basic qualification for initial recruitment of school teachers. Initial qualifications for primary teachers in most areas is matriculation plus Primary Teaching Certificate (PTC) awarded by Government Colleges of Elementary Training (GCET), for lower secondary (previously called middle) the qualification is intermediate plus one year course of Certificate of Teaching (CT) secondary education intermediate plus Bachelors of Education (B.ed). For higher secondary qualifications depend on whether these classes are

being held in a college of higher secondary school. Currently Punjab has raised the qualifications for new primary teachers to B.ed.

Teacher training in Pakistan is divided into the pre-service and the in service training. The pre-service training is given in the GCETs (which gives the initial certificates) while the colleges of education teach the B.ed classes. Additionally B.ed degrees are awarded by Allama Iqbal Open University through distance learning projects and some private universities. In service training is organized differently in different provinces. Primarily the Provincial Institutes of Teacher Education (PITE) are responsible for in-service training. In Punjab the task is handled by the Department for Staff Development. Given the large number of teachers management of continuous in service training is an extremely difficult task. Additionally, it requires finances and presently most of the activity is donor funded with expenditure appearing on the development budget side which contradicts the philosophy of professional development of teachers being a continuous function. There are also doubts raised about the quality and relevance of both the pre-service and in-service teachers' training.

Politicization is also perceived as playing a negative role in improving or associating the quality of teaching in the country. Given the large number of teachers, unions are quite effective which also at times affect reforms. Secondly, their appointment in elections as Returning Officers is considered another factor for politicization. Resultantly, the entire process of accountability and monitoring is rendered ineffective. Teacher absenteeism also remain quite high.

### ***Key Questions***

1. Why is the quality of teachers in Pakistan's public sector perceived as being poor?
2. How can quality human resource be attracted to the teaching cadre?
3. What are the deficiencies of the current training regimes: both pre and in service?
4. How can teachers training be improved?
5. What are the roles of federal, provincial and district governments in teacher management, training and standardization?
6. Will an accreditation system help?
7. What would be a good accreditation system?

## TEXTBOOKS AND LEARNING MATERIALS

### *Background*

In Pakistan the education publishing sector as a whole and the role textbooks and learning materials can play in the development of education are largely underdeveloped. The learning environment of government as well as many private schools is passive. The textbook is the only available learning material in most schools. Additional materials like teaching aids, supplementary materials and school libraries are virtually non-existent. Bookstores are hardly stocked with interesting support material to meet Pakistan's development needs and changing requirements of education.

For government schools the Textbook Boards (TBB's) are the single providers of textbooks for all subjects from grades K to 12. Due to this monopoly the Textbook Board material often suffers from low quality content and presentation. There is lack of understanding of the complexity and technicality of the textbook writing process resulting in repeated development of traditional style textbooks that are not much different from their predecessors.

With Textbook Boards as the sole providers of textbooks for government schools there is no choice for the user and no competition on the side of the supplier. Choice on the part of the buyer promotes knowledge, empowerment and participation. Competition on the part of the seller forces the acquisition of the best available know-how for product development and leads to a wider variety of products, improved quality and better prices.

In 2001 the Federal Cabinet took a decision to deregulate the publishing of textbooks and asked the Ministry of Education to direct the provincial governments to implement this decision. The aim of this 'deregulation policy' was to encourage private sector publishers to participate in the development of school books resulting in a multiple choice of quality textbooks and supplementary reading and learning materials being available in the market at competitive prices for both government and private school children.

This policy decision created insecurity regarding the future of the Textbook Boards along with multiple (mis-)interpretations of the textbook 'deregulation policy'. Textbook Boards and private printers associated with them resisted the move.

Some larger private sector publishers welcomed the decision and started submitting manuscripts to the curriculum wing for approval but there was no clarity on how these approved books would reach government schools.

Most of the misgivings continue and the Federal cabinet's decision to Deregulate Textbooks is still not implemented.

For the private schools the type of textbooks used varies as per the school. Those that offer 'A' and 'O' levels (the elite schools) use their own textbooks developed in the private sector either locally or abroad.

### ***Situation Analysis***

The Textbook Boards have two main functions. One is regulating and monitoring and the other is publishing as sole monopoly publishers. The main focus of the Textbook Boards has always been on publishing as lack of competition in the Government school textbook market has gradually phased out the regulating function.

The Books developed by the Boards have come under criticism from various quarters for different reasons ranging from cultural, religious and political sensibilities to outright technical qualitative issues. The teachers, students and parents generally consider the textbooks (especially at the primary level) to be uninteresting, lengthy and irrelevant to the local context. This makes learning for the students, especially of the smaller towns and rural areas, difficult as they cannot relate to most of the content. Therefore a case was presented for phasing out the publishing function of the Boards and allow the private sector to take over the function. It was perceived that competition would improve the

This change of policy has been criticized from many quarters as there is a perception that it would provide monopoly to a few major players to the detriment of the consumers and smaller printers in the market. Also the Textbook Boards who would be required to play the regulating function may still lack a comprehensive understanding of competitive private sector publishing..

#### ***Key questions:***

Some of the key questions that emerge are:

1. What constitutes a good textbook?
2. What are the main problems of the present text books and the textbooks development process?
3. What are the roles and responsibilities of Federal and Provincial Governments in textbooks and learning materials development, approval, selection and promotion?
4. Should the private sector be given a broader role in the publishing of textbooks?
5. How can Textbook Boards be strengthened for their revised role of regulating and monitoring and facilitating?
6. How successful and useful has the policy of free textbooks distribution been in Pakistan?