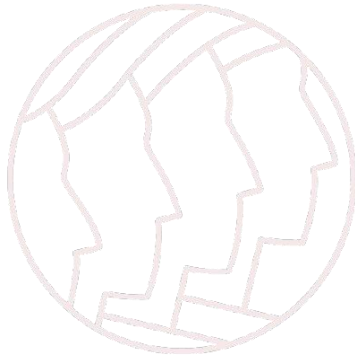


# School Education Governance: Informing Reform in Pakistan

EDITOR  
HAMID MASOOD



# EDUCATION



Dedicated to  
“Courage to Know”

## About this Book

**S**chool education governance in Pakistan presents an interesting case of interface between access, quality and service delivery mechanism over its entire history. The post-colonial inheritance of schools run by local governments, private sector, and religious entities formed major fragments for successive governments. The policy making and implementation process in its genesis originated from acknowledgement of the then existing landscape and taking cognizance of evolving realities for a developing nation. Questions of curriculum, learning outcomes, teaching standards, infrastructure, and other educational inputs under the umbrella of an effective governance system formed cornerstones of evolving realities requiring an appropriate response from the government. Disruptions in political governance and deprivation of agency for the people compounded the issues surrounding allocation of resources through prioritization by citizens and development of a robust system around it that could be accountable before people.

This book looks at school education from diverse theoretical perspectives ranging from legislative governance to school level budget analysis. The chapters present rigorous analysis of data collected through multiple sources and cases from Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces have been highlighted to inform the educational reform process generally in Pakistan and specifically in the discussed provinces. However, the case specific issues offer

governance value for each tier of management and government whereby the plethora of identified issues may be answered in tandem through holistic efforts. Relevant policy instruments, governance mechanisms, management practices, and view points of stakeholders have been presented in an analytical manner along with recommendations for stakeholders. Policy makers may benefit from the adopted analytical approaches as tools for measuring efficacy of policies and for designing the future ones.

We hope that practical value offered by this book positively contributes to the educational reform process in the wake of Article 25-A of the Constitution of Pakistan which guarantees free and compulsory education for our children.



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## Introduction

This anthology takes an analytical view of education governance of Pakistan while discussing the policy landscape with examples from the provinces of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The federal level policy making and the provincial level structures provide a frame of reflection whereas outputs of service delivery have been analyzed through reflections on adopted mode and subsequent delivery vehicles. Challenges of access and quality of education remain at the heart of educational governance despite significant progress over the past seven decades. Sophistication in policy making, implementation processes, and resource allocation has contributed towards the improvement of education indicators. However, growing population and questionable learning outcomes in the backdrop of efficacy of governance have emerged as pressing issues. Districts are the doorstep of education service delivery that function under the provincial framework and thus exhibit clear demarcation of responsibilities between provincial and district levels of governance.

Variance in demography across Pakistan adds to the issues of access to education for the vulnerable segments of population and ethno-political context adds to the ever-prevalent concerns over allocation of resources. Thus, brining forth notions of allocative efficiency and equity for

both districts and the provincial governments. These notions have deep seated implications for the reform process as they form poles of governance supported by the implementation mechanisms and development partners. Absence of voice of people further exacerbates the issues of access and quality resulting in a dismal outlook of education sector. Out of school children, poor learning outcomes, weak regulation of the private sector, and missing facilities form some major areas of disproportionate development across the sector. The class led and class-oriented segregation of society has taken place despite investments in education by both the state as regulator as well as facilitator and the parents as consumers. Parents act as consumers besides being the contributors of policy making owing to the voice they have in the system. However, unfortunately the policy making process excludes the role of citizens and we witness least prioritization of education in terms of resource allocation and reform measures. Vote by citizens is taken as proxy for political convenience of the ruling class at the provincial level and likewise by the implementation structure at the district level. Provincial legislators and government officials adhere to exclusion of citizen voice whereas the district level officials function in a system without horizontal accountability.

After the formulation of national policy and related instruments at the federal level, education reform process is led by the provincial governments especially in the wake of 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan along with monitoring for the district level defined indicators. In

addition to the administrative measures, this book looks into the legislative oversight of education which is a relatively less understood and thus least practiced phenomenon in Pakistan. Case of Punjab for legislative governance has been depicted with an understanding that Punjab is the most populated province and thus has maximum population to cater to for education service delivery. Moreover, the legislative framework for oversight is akin to that of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The subject has been covered in the first chapter whereas the following four chapters specifically present data from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on different reform measures including school level budgeting. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa over the past decade has received the most volume of funds for school education reform from international development partners which reportedly is higher than those received by Punjab. Concerted efforts at all levels of governance and in different areas form a good case for analyzing improvement measures against the resources spent and the outputs achieved.

Community based development practiced through formal engagement of parents in school management practices has also been reviewed in this book. School Improvement Plans (SIP) made by select Parent Teacher Councils of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were analyzed to understand the extent of improvement brought in educational indicators. The overall role of these Councils has been reviewed through secondary and primary data where the former informed on educational indicators and the latter spoke for capacity and specific

implementation measures along with challenges. One chapter is dedicated to the subject of corporal punishment and efficacy of the imposition of ban on corporal punishment in the context of improving access to education besides being a major factor in child development by means of disciplining them. Final Khyber Pakhtunkhwa specific chapter deals with the communication of province wide reform process from the standpoint of on-boarding of stakeholders for holistic development. Perceptions of stakeholders have been presented while identifying the communication needs of reform agenda.

Finally, review of the annual Voluntary National Review has been undertaken to better appreciate the standing of Pakistan with respect to the SDGs that include education as well. All the chapters in the book are result of rigorous work of researchers who contributed their findings in form of individual chapters. For this reason, chapters often refer to the field work as study undertaken on the subject. The Reform process devised indigenously or with the assistance of international development partners may benefit from the findings presented here.

# Chapter 1: Education Legislative Governance

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## Introduction

Legislatures are entrusted with the powers to legislate and oversee the performance of the executive to ensure that will of the people is reflected in policies and their implementation. It has been noted that the functions of legislatures / parliaments may be segregated into three broad categories<sup>1</sup> i.e. 1) Representation, 2) Legislation, and 3) Oversight. Effective functioning of legislature is not only dependent upon the constitutional parameters but also rests upon the form of government, per capita income, and the level of democracy<sup>2</sup>. This study takes into account the oversight function of the Provincial Assembly of Punjab and focuses on the role of Standing Committees as a tool of legislative oversight.

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<sup>1</sup> Tools for Legislative Oversight: An Empirical Investigation, Riccardo Pelizzo, and Rick Stapenhurst, World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 3388, September 2004

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

The significance of legislative oversight cannot be more emphasized for a developing country like Pakistan. Realization of the development agenda while addressing existing gaps in the public delivery of basic services requires continuous monitoring of the executive. The case of development agenda for education forms a strong subject of discussion. Pakistan falls short of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the constitutional requirement of providing free and compulsory education to children<sup>3</sup> is far from being fulfilled. Punjab being the largest province in terms of population poses challenges of access and quality of education that need to be addressed on priority. Therefore, the need for legislative oversight becomes tantamount to monitoring of the executive for achieving goals of education sector.

Hearings of Standing Committees along with the questions raised are the most common tools of legislative oversight. Role of Standing Committees is quite significant in improving transparency and accountability by the legislators as policies of relevant departments are questioned and issues of public concern are investigated. However, the role of Standing Committees in Punjab is compromised in the absence of *suo moto* power of the Standing Committees to examine the working of their concerned departments and to review the expenditure plan of these departments. Moreover, unlike the national assembly the Rule 154 of Punjab assembly

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<sup>3</sup> 25-A: Right to education: “The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of five to sixteen years in such manner as may be determined by law”



(Rules of Procedure) does not empower the Standing Committees to accept and examine petitions of public interest. The Rules 158, 162 and 164 in Rules of Procedure also reduce the opportunities for transparency and citizen participation for oversight and accountability.

The available evidence informs that the challenge is similar for most of the standing committees and legislators of the provincial assembly in Punjab. It was noticed that only seven out of 38 department-related committees in Punjab were referred business by the House during the first year of the current government. Furthermore, 24 Committees, out of a total of 45 did not meet even once, other than for electing their respective chairpersons, during the year. It is also important to note that the delay in formation of the Standing Committees also remained a major challenge during first year of the current provincial assembly in Punjab.

The procedural constraints and delay in the formation of standing committees have adversely affected the role of the standing committees and as a result the legislators are unable to hold state institutions accountable, question executive policies and investigate issues of public concern. Missing citizens' voice for improved educational legislative governance through effective committee system is one of the key contributing factors to the limited role of legislators. In the above context, the present study establishes a baseline of the functioning of Standing Committees in Punjab.

The role of Standing Committees and the policy space accorded to their working ensuing their responsibilities is critical in the context of legislative oversight of the executive. The oversight potential of Standing Committees is determined by *suo moto* powers and use of interpellations. In the absence of these aforementioned tools, the Committees perform their role as an aide to the legislative business only. The challenge of monitoring the performance of the executive and administrative pillars becomes insurmountable and the institutional requirement of oversight is diffused into other organs of the executive. The policy instruments governing the functioning of Standing Committees of the National Assembly and the Provincial Assembly of the Punjab are distinct in terms of setting work parameters for the two legislatures.

The National Assembly provides for effective legislative oversight by the Committees whereas Committees of the Punjab Assembly are restricted to giving recommendations on the assigned business. However, interpellation as a tool of oversight is not used by Committees of both the Assemblies. Although the Committees have the power to summon government officers for questioning and records for inspection yet the oversight of policies and departmental performance is missing from their work parameters. It has been noted that the use of interpellations as an oversight tool is most common in high income countries, less common in low-income countries and least common in middle income countries while the presence of committees of enquiry and of the ombudsman offices is most common in middle income

countries, less common in high income countries and least common in low-income countries<sup>4</sup>.

This chapter looks into the records of the Punjab Assembly to understand the working of Standing Committees with respect to legislative business. The number of Acts passed by the Assembly has been taken into account with respect to the legislative business assigned to the Committees to gauge the volume of Bills processed through Committees. Rules of Business of the National Assembly have been juxtaposed against the Rules of Procedures of the Punjab Assembly to differentiate between the work parameters of Committees of both the Assemblies. In contrast to the rules governing the working of the Standing Committees, provisions for the working of 'Select Committees' and 'Public Accounts Committees' of the Punjab Assembly have also been considered for analysis. Participation of members of Punjab Assembly in the proceedings of the House has also been analysed with the help of available data. Interest level of the members is indicative of the strength of the Committee System.

We understand that legislative oversight is a multifaceted phenomenon whereby law-making is followed by monitoring of effective implementation and redressal and correction of

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<sup>4</sup> Tools for Legislative Oversight: An Empirical Investigation, Riccardo Pelizzo, and Rick Stapenhurst, World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 3388, September 2004

problems arising thereof<sup>5</sup>. This includes both *ex ante* and *ex post* application of the oversight tool. In the context of our Standing Committees, only the Public Accounts Committees partially stand up to the theoretical requirements of legislative oversight whereas in case of all other Committees except the Enquiry Committees, the oversight tool remains *ex ante*. Interpellations remain a distant tool of legislative oversight within the existing framework of Committee system in Pakistan.

The chapter benefits from the views of the Members of the Provincial Assembly (MPAs) about the working of the Standing Committees. The interest and knowledge of the members has been gauged to understand their level of contribution towards the Committees. These aspects help place the debate on legislative oversight in our peculiar political context. The Committees of the National Assembly can examine public petitions and have greater powers of oversight but in comparison the provincial Committees have limited powers. The phenomenon is indicative of the intent of the two legislatures rooted in their respective political realities. Procedural modifications have been suggested to make legislative oversight more effective in Pakistan<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> Strengthening Legislative Capacity in Legislative-Executive Relations, National Democratic Institute, Legislative Research Series, Paper #6, 2000

<sup>6</sup> Parliamentary Oversight of the Executive, PILDAT 2008

## **Procedural Framework for Standing Committees**

The discussion in this chapter focuses on the Rules of Procedure of the Punjab Assembly, Rules of Business of the National Assembly and further takes into account the comparable case of committee system in India. Provisions of the aforementioned procedures that define the scope of work of the committees have been highlighted while delineating the limitations.

### **a. Creation of Committees and Basic Limitations**

Chapter 17 of the Rules of Procedure of the Punjab Assembly deals with the subject of Committees and lays down provisions for the creation, working and powers of the committees. The Rules provide for the creation of a Standing Committee for government departments<sup>7</sup> and 39 committees have been created by the Assembly<sup>8</sup>. Besides providing for the creation of committees, the Rules also restrict the committees to take up matters referred only by the Assembly<sup>9</sup>. The provision has serious implications for the autonomy and functioning of the Committees as the Assembly may choose to not to send a Bill to the Committee for deliberation or expert advice.

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<sup>7</sup> Section 148(1) Rules of Procedure, Provincial Assembly of Punjab

<sup>8</sup> Assembly website accessed on November 20, 2015:

<http://www.pap.gov.pk/index.php/committees/clist/en/0/1>

<sup>9</sup> Section 148(2) Rules of Procedure,

‘Except as otherwise provided in these rules, a Committee shall only deal with a matter which may be referred to it by the Assembly’

It has also been ordained by the Rules that the Secretaries of the concerned department and Law and Parliamentary Affairs, or officer designated by each of them on their behalf, are to attend the meetings of the Committees as expert advisers<sup>10</sup>. The absence of a requirement to send each Bill to the Committee hints at a shortcoming within the defined Rules. If each Bill is debated upon by the Committee members and expert advice is sought, it is likely to improve upon the legislation under discussion. Moreover, the notion of legislative oversight remains incomplete where the performance of the executive is not reviewed by the public representatives due to restriction of taking up matters referred to only by the Assembly. The proposed plans for each department and their implementation may be made a subject of scrutiny by the Standing Committees. Although there exists a provision for preparation and submission of **'Special Reports'** by Committees yet the scope of these reports is limited<sup>11</sup> and needs to be extended for greater legislative oversight.

In comparison with the scope of functions of the Standing Committees, the scope of work of Select

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<sup>10</sup> Section 149(4) Rules of Procedure

<sup>11</sup> Section 165, Special reports.–

A Committee may, if it thinks fit, make a special report on any matter that arises or comes to

light in the course of its work which it may consider necessary to bring to the notice of the Speaker or the Assembly.

Committees provides for greater legislative efficiency. A Select Committee has been empowered to hear expert evidence and representatives of special interests affected by the Bill. The explicit provision for hearing expert advice is in sharp contrast with the functioning of Standing Committees whereby the Secretary of Department relevant to a Bill and Secretary of Law and Parliamentary Affairs, or their nominated officers, are required to attend meetings for expert advice. The Select Committees appear to be at advantage to gain from expert advice on subject matters under discussion. Therefore, the need exists to expressly provide for similar power for the Standing Committees.

The Public Accounts Committees deal with the Appropriation Accounts of the Government and reports of the Auditor General thereon and such other matters as the Assembly or the Speaker or the Finance Minister may refer to the Committees. However, as mentioned earlier, the Standing Committees can only take up matters referred to them by the Assembly. The need exists for the Standing Committees to review the reports prepared by the concerned Government Departments. The Departments may be required to prepare annual reports regarding their progress against the allocated budget and assigned tasks. These reports may be placed before the concerned Standing Committees

for review. The measure is likely to enhance the legislative oversight and efficiency of the executive.

## **b. Time Period for Creation of Committees**

The Rules lay no restriction on the time period for creation of Committees which means that legislative business relevant to certain subjects / government departments may occur without the possibility of matters being referred to the relevant Standing Committee. A review of the Assembly records reveals that majority of the Committees were formed in January 2014 whereas the Assembly started functioning in June 2013<sup>12</sup>. First three sessions i.e. June 1, June 3, and June 6 were for oath taking, election of the Speaker and Deputy Speaker, and election of the Chief Minister respectively but the subsequent lapse of seven months in creation of majority of the committees is indicative of a shortcoming in the Rules and their application. The subject is discussed in detail in Chapter 3 of this report. The need exists for placing a restriction on the time for creation of Standing Committees so that they start contributing to legislative business as early as possible.

## **c. Scope of Functions**

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<sup>12</sup> The elected members took oath in the first session of the Assembly held on June 1, 2013.



Section 154 of the Rules of Procedure defines the scope of functions of Committees. The section reaffirms the limited scope of functioning of committees as the committees are to work only on the Bill or matter referred to it by the Assembly. It can propose changes in legislation but it will have no power of preventing the Bill from being considered by the Assembly. The provision is in concurrence with the supremacy of the provincial legislature over its subordinate entities whereby the Assembly retains the right to dispense with legislative business. A committee may, with the approval of the Speaker, appoint a sub-committee for a specified function arising out of the matter referred to the Committee<sup>13</sup>. The space accorded by the Rules ensures that the Committees are able to solicit expert advice and deliberate extensively on any important subject that requires so. However, data for the creation / working of sub-committees is not available.

#### **d. Sitting of Committees**

Sittings of Committees have also been defined by the Rules and a Committee is required to work to submit its suggestions / proposed amendments within specified time. If the report is not submitted in specified time, the matter may be considered by the Assembly without waiting for the report. The Rules i.e. Section 156(3) state that subject to other clauses

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<sup>13</sup> Section 154(5) Rules of Procedure

the sittings of a Committee shall so far as possible continue from day to day till the completion of business assigned to it. It is further supported by the Rules as the Committees are allowed to function even when session of the Assembly is prorogued<sup>14</sup>. Any business pending before a Committee is not to lapse only by reason of the prorogation of the Assembly and the Committees are empowered to continue functioning despite prorogation. The provisions support the active functioning of Committees and assign them with the responsibility of completing the given task at their earliest. However, sub-section (4) of the same Section lays down that a Committee shall not sit for more than two times in a month except with the prior written approval of the Speaker. Since the Rules already provide for the suspension of Committee work while the Assembly is in session<sup>15</sup>, the given sub-section may be revised to provide freedom of work as expressed by Section 156(3).

In contrast to the functioning of the Standing Committees, the provision for the Public Accounts Committees states that the Committee shall not meet for more than 3 days in a week without approval of the Speaker<sup>16</sup>. The Rules also allow the Public Accounts Committees to hold a sitting outside

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<sup>14</sup> Section 170 Rules of Procedure

<sup>15</sup> Section 157 Rules of Procedure

<sup>16</sup> Section 179 Rules of Procedure

Lahore with the prior permission of the Speaker and the Finance Minister if necessary in the public interest. However, other Committees are bound to hold sittings in Lahore. The Rules may be revised to accord similar functional space to other Committees for the sake of public interest.

#### **e. Examination of Officials and Records**

The Rules strengthen the functioning of Committees by according powers to summon and summon any person and the records of the Government and of statutory bodies, autonomous or semi-autonomous under the Government<sup>17</sup>. The power to examine government officials and records is critical in maintaining the supremacy of legislature over the executive. The legislative oversight ensures scrutiny of the executive by the elected representatives. The Rules further provide for the maintenance of record of the summary of proceedings of each Committee. Currently the record is only for the Assembly Secretariat and, as provided by the Rules, is open to inspection by the members. However, apart from the evidence tendered before a Committee in a subject declared confidential or which pertains to in-camera proceedings of the Committee; the record of summary of proceedings may be made public by the Assembly Secretariat through the Assembly website.

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<sup>17</sup> Section 161 Rules of Procedure

Currently, the Assembly website shares the reports submitted by Committees.

#### **f. Unfinished Work of the Committees**

A Committee is required to report to the Assembly about inability to complete its work before the expiry of its term or before the expiry of the Assembly. Any report, memorandum or note prepared by the Committee is to be transmitted to the Secretary who shall make it available to the Committee that succeeds it<sup>18</sup>. However, the Rules mention only the Public Accounts Committee which may proceed from the stage where the previous Committee left the proceedings before the dissolution of the Assembly. Similar legislative space may be accorded to the Standing Committees on grounds of continuance of legislative oversight process. The new Committees may dispense with the submissions of the previous Committees and may offer different recommendations but the work done by public representatives will have linkage with the current legislative business.

### **Review of Rules of Business of the National Assembly**

Rules of Business of the National Assembly of Pakistan define the creation and functioning of the Standing Committees under Chapter XX. The Rules require for the creation of a

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<sup>18</sup> Section 171 Rules of Procedure

Standing Committee for each Ministry of the Government and the Cabinet Secretariat and Prime Minister's Secretariat are also deemed to be a Ministry<sup>19</sup>.

#### **a. Functions of Standing Committees**

Under the Rules, the Assembly or the Speaker may remit to the Standing Committee any subject or matter with which it is concerned and the Standing Committee shall study such subject or matter with a view to suggest legislation or making recommendations to the Assembly<sup>20</sup>. In the case of a Bill, the Committee shall also examine whether the Bill violates, disregards or is otherwise not in accordance with the Constitution. These provisions limit the role of the Committees to attending to the legislative business assigned by the Assembly. It is akin to that of the Standing Committees of the Punjab Assembly under the Rules of Procedure.

However, the Rules of Business accord greater space of legislative oversight to the Standing Committees of the National Assembly. A Committee may examine the expenditures, administration, delegated legislation, public petitions and policies of the Ministry concerned and its associated public bodies and may forward its report of findings and recommendations to the Ministry and the Ministry

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<sup>19</sup> 198 Rules of Business, National Assembly

<sup>20</sup> 199 Rules of Business, National Assembly

shall submit its reply to the Committee. The Rules also provide for the presentation of public petitions on a Bill. These measures extend the work scope of a Committee and provides for its functioning as active body of legislative oversight in sharp contrast with its counterpart created by the Provincial Assembly of the Punjab.

Moreover, Each Standing Committee can scrutinize and suggest amendments, if necessary, and recommend Ministry's Public Sector Development Program (PSDP) for the next financial year before the same is sent to the Ministry of Finance for inclusion in the Federal Budget for the next financial year<sup>21</sup>. The time limit imposed by the Rules for such submissions further provide for adherence to the notion of legislative oversight. Given the nature of business to be handled by the Standing Committees, the Rules provide for the examination of witnesses. Since the Standing Committees of the Punjab Assembly do not have similar framework, the Rules of Procedure do not carry any details in this regard.

In the light of review presented in the preceding section, the extensive powers of the Standing Committees of the National Assembly may be emulated by the Provincial Assembly of the Punjab and the Rules of Procedure may be amended accordingly.

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<sup>21</sup> 201(6) Rules of Business, National Assembly

## **b. Unfinished Work of the Committees**

The Rules of Business of the National Assembly mirror the notions of the Rules of Procedure of the Provincial Assembly of the Punjab in terms of the unfinished business of Committees. The Rules require unfinished business of the Standing Committees to be made available to the new Committees whereas work of the Public Accounts Committees is to be continued from the point where it was left by the preceding Committee. We understand the peculiar nature of the work of Public Accounts Committees but in the best interest of legislative efficiency similar space may be provided to the work of Standing Committees. The new Committees may be given the right to make their decisions about the fate of the work done by the previous committees.

## **c. Public Hearing by Committees**

Standing Committees of the National Assembly may invite or summon or allow to appear before the Committees any member or any other person having a special interest in relation to any matter under their consideration and may hear expert evidence and hold public hearing<sup>22</sup>. The provision is a step ahead from the practice of Standing Committees of the

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<sup>22</sup> 227(3) Rules of Business, National Assembly

Punjab Assembly where no power for hearing of expert evidence and holding of public hearing exists. A Select Committee of the Punjab Assembly can ask for expert advice in contrast to the Standing Committees of the provincial Assembly but no provision exists with respect to public hearing.

In this context, the Standing Committees of the Punjab Assembly emerge to be having very limited scope of work. Following the practice of the National Assembly, the Rules of Procedure of the Punjab Assembly may be amended to follow the example of National Assembly.

#### **d. Discharge of Inactive Members**

Unlike the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of Punjab, the Rule of Business of the National Assembly provide for the discharge of inactive members of Standing Committees. If a member is absent from three or more consecutive meetings of a Committee, motion may be moved by any member in the Assembly for the discharge of such member from the Committee<sup>23</sup>. The provision lays down a safeguard measure whereby disinterested or inactive members of a Committee may be removed so that active members are made part of the Committee.

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<sup>23</sup> 221 Rules of Business, National Assembly



The Rules of Procedure of the Punjab Assembly only provide for the occurrence of a vacancy by virtue of resignation or occurrence of a casual vacancy<sup>24</sup>. The disinterest of members or inability to attend meetings does not create cause for removal from the Committee. Therefore, the Rules of Procedure may be revisited to incorporate the identified shortcoming.

#### **e. Sitting of Committees**

The previous sub-section on the review of Rules of the Punjab Assembly discusses the provisions related to the sitting of the provincial Assembly whereby certain restrictions have been imposed on the number of sittings. In case of the Standing Committees of the National Assembly, the only provision<sup>25</sup> related to the sitting of Committees states that business of committees is to be suspended only due to the Assembly proceedings and that too if the Chairman of the Committee thinks it fit to enable the members to vote in case of a division. Moreover, any business pending before a Committee shall not lapse only because the Assembly session has been prorogued and the Committee shall continue to discharge its business despite such prorogation<sup>26</sup>.

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<sup>24</sup> 152 & 153 Rules of Procedure, Punjab Assembly

<sup>25</sup> 225 Rules of Business, National Assembly

<sup>26</sup> 243 Rules of Business, National Assembly

These provisions provide an adequate yardstick for benchmarking the work parameters of the Provincial Assembly of the Punjab. The existing Rules of Procedure may be revisited to strengthen the Standing Committees so that legislative business and oversight measures are fully realized.

### **Suggestions for Improving the Role of Committees**

In the light of the views expressed by the legislators, following suggestions are being submitted:

1. Rules of Procedure of the Punjab Assembly need to be amended to empower the standing committees. There is a strong need to extend the scope of work of the committees to make them effective tools of legislative governance. Room should be created for media to cover the sittings of committees.
2. The Committees should be given suo moto powers and their functioning needs to include monitoring and accountability of the government departments and their budgets.
3. Rules of Business of the National Assembly may be adopted by the Punjab Assembly to accord more powers to the standing committees.
4. The Standing Committees need capacity building and measures should be taken to build the capacity of legislators with respect to familiarization with the Rules of Procedure,

working of the government departments, and prospective role of legislative oversight.

5. The office of the Speaker Punjab Assembly should take lead of the reform process of strengthening the role of standing committees and it should be done beyond the party dictations. Therefore, support by the government is critical in bringing about the needed changes.
6. Think tanks, researchers, academic institutions and citizens should be allowed to attend the committee sittings and should also be allowed to express their opinions with the permission of the Chair. It would improve the functioning of committees and the members would have the much needed external expert advice as well.
7. The Assembly Secretariat needs to be further strengthened to extend better support to the committee members.
8. Majority of the committee members have limited understanding of the complicated documentation in English language. Therefore, all documents of the Assembly including the ones that are to be presented before the committees should be in Urdu.

### **Key Findings**

Based on the perceptions of the provincial legislators and review of documents, following key findings are being shared:

1. Rules of Procedure of the Punjab Assembly provide limited scope of legislative oversight to the Standing Committees. The Committees can only function when a Bill / subject is referred to them by the Assembly. This provision constitutes the basic limitation for working of Standing Committees with respect to oversight.
2. Absence of Suo Moto powers with the Committees makes legislative business the prime concern of the Committees. Moreover, issues with the implementation of law and governmental policies fall out of the domain of the Standing Committees.
3. There exist no provisions in the Rules of Procedure for examination of public petitions and holding of public meetings by the Standing Committees whereas the same have been accorded to the Committees of the National Assembly. It dilutes the notions of transparency and accountability at the level of provincial legislature.
4. Lawmakers exhibit low interest in the proceedings of the Assembly as quorum is rarely maintained in the House. Review of record of two sessions reveals that attendance of MPAs at the start and at the end of sittings on average stood at 16%. The maximum presence of MPAs during the sessions was noted to be 32%. Since data for Committees was not available, one may infer a similar low level of interest in the work of Committees.
5. Formation of majority of the Standing Committees took more than 7 months after the constitution of the Assembly which had serious implications of the

legislative business as laws pertinent to particular Committees were referred to Special Committee.

6. During the present tenure, Bills have so far been referred to 24 out of 39 Committees whereby the highest number of Bills referred to were to the Committees on Home Affairs, Education and Special Committee I at 14, 13, and 13 respectively. The non-assigning of legislative business is a continuation of historical practice by the Assembly.
7. Till October 2015, a total of 94 Bills have been sent to the Committees which indicates increased legislative work during the present tenure i.e. the previous Assembly referred 39 Bills to the Committee during the entire tenure. The Assembly records reveal that the Committees during the present tenure reported back on all the Bill referred to them.
8. The Standing Committee on Zakat and Ushr was the last Standing Committee constituted by the Assembly i.e. on August 28, 2015. The delay in creating the Committee on Zakat and Ushr is unexplainable in the context of legislative business especially when majority of the Committees were formed in the first two months of 2014 after 7 months of the constitution of the Assembly.

Recommendations in the light of analysis and findings are:

1. Rules of Procedure of the Punjab Assembly should be amended to grant *suo moto* powers to the

Committees so that they take up the challenge of monitoring the work of the executive.

2. The Departments may be asked to present their annual reports and long term policy documents before the concerned Committees for oversight and monitoring. The Rules of Procedure of the Assembly and the Rules of Business of the Punjab Government should be amended to provide for these measures.
3. Standing Committees should be empowered to examine public petition and hold public hearings. Moreover, the records of proceedings should be made available to the public unless otherwise required by the law.
4. Think tanks, researchers, and members of the academia along with common citizens should be allowed to attend the sittings of committees and the committees should have the power to solicit their views on certain subjects.
5. Standing Committees of the Assembly should be formed within the first two months of the constitution of the Assembly so that legislative business is adequately attended to.
6. Keeping in mind the regional best practice, Annual Reports on the working of Committees should be published by the Assembly Secretariat highlighting the number of Bills deliberated upon, reports

furnished, and attendance of members of the Committees.

7. The Rules of Procedure should be amended to cater to the removal of disinterested / non-participating members from the Committees. Continued absence from two or more consecutive meetings may be taken as lack of interest and any member should be allowed to move a motion for removal of the said member from the Committee.
8. All documents of the Assembly including the ones to be presented before the committees should be in Urdu for improved understanding of the legislators.
9. Capacity building of the legislators need to done with respect to the functioning of committees and Rules of Procedure.

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## Chapter 2: Strengthening Communication in the Education Sector of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

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**K**hyber Pakhtunkhwa is one of the most important regions in Pakistan in terms of conflict and strategic importance. However, it has a lower-than-average literacy rate of 55.1%, out of which 72.8% is attributed to the male population<sup>27</sup>. This is a cause of concern and demands proactive measures to rectify the situation especially when coupled with an annual population growth rate of 2.8%: it is estimated that in the age group of 9-39 years there are around 7 million illiterate people in KP so literacy improvements are needed now.

In terms of public financing of education, the KP government allocated Rs. 34.87 billion for education, up by 53 percent over the last year's allocation of Rs. 22.7 billion which in absolute terms translates into an increase of Rs. 12.1 billion. But it is important to note that this increase was mainly meant for the current budget of higher education and a small portion was earmarked for elementary and secondary

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<sup>27</sup> Economic Survey of Pakistan 2023-2024

education<sup>28</sup>. Nevertheless, increase in educational budget, despite the issues of terrorism and floods, is commendable and speaks well for the political will of KP governments towards education.

It is with this background and situation that reform programs have been designed to support the cause of education with defined priorities<sup>29</sup>. In the wake of achieving these priorities through project implementation mechanisms, it is critically important to deal with the various stakeholders and cater to their communication needs so that participation, transparency and accountability are ensured. It is worthwhile to note that communication activities that are solely based on the output of products, such as radio and TV spots, newspaper and magazine ads may not serve the information and communication needs of the project stakeholders. Therefore, a systematic approach integrating researched needs, stakeholders' analysis and communication strategies for promoting the concept and

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<sup>28</sup> Public Financing of Education, ISAPS

<sup>29</sup>Improved and more equitable access to education; Improving the quality of learning in schools; Improving the curriculum, textbooks and learning materials; Development of human resources; Improved infrastructure; Rehabilitation of education in crisis situations; Adult literacy and non-formal education; Improved governance and management; Strengthened demand for education and enhanced community involvement; Partnerships with private schools through the KP education foundations

progress of work is required. The stakeholders of KP-ESP can roughly be divided into the following seven main groups:

### **Public Representatives**

Provincial legislators, members of the National Assembly and the Senate hailing from KP comprise this group of stakeholders. Provincial legislators have a direct stake in the project by virtue of representing the will of people in the KP Assembly whereas the members of the parliament hailing from the KP province also take deep interest in the development agenda pursued by the provincial government as their constituencies overlap the provincial constituencies or they are elected by the votes of provincial legislators.

As a result of the FGD conducted with the members of the Provincial Assembly, it was learnt that no formal or well-defined mechanism for information sharing with provincial legislators exists. Their main source of information remains the electronic and print media. Only members who hold governmental responsibilities receive information about different development projects from their relevant department (whether these are Education, Finance or P&D Departments). MPA's rely on personal rapport built with government officials (ranging from Administrative Heads of government bodies to the DCOs of their respective districts) to help them ascertain information about development projects. It is important to note that all such information shared and received is informal and does not correspond to

a formal information sharing mechanism with public representatives.

Research also found that concerns of MPAs about the educational needs of their constituents often manifests itself in the form of questions on the floor of the House. The official Governmental response to such questions is to apprise the MPA about the status of education-related projects in their area. Based on available information regarding media-reported issues of maintaining quorum in the Assembly, it can also be inferred that only a limited number of public representatives become aware of development projects in their entirety. Other means of seeking information are largely limited to rapport building with relevant ministers and government officials. These means are informal and hence cannot be relied upon as an effective medium of communication. Concerns were also shared by the public representatives over the minimal efforts by development organizations implementing such projects to share information with the provincial legislators on regular basis. They stressed the need for creating direct and well-defined communication channels between developmental organizations and provincial legislators. Importantly it was stated that for the public representatives, economic issues override concerns about education: MPAs opined that since voters and citizens don't lobby them about educational issues, they are reluctant to make education a top political priority.

Key communication challenges faced by the project with respect to public representatives along with their communication needs are defined below:

- a. *Foremost challenge is that they lack understanding of education reform. Orienting legislators, Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries on educational issues and especially on ESP objectives and implementation progress needs to take place under KP-ESP.*
- b. *High visibility issues concerning education like the construction / up-gradation of schools are taken up by the public representatives which leads to the neglect of other aspects like public financing of education, learning outcomes, community involvement etc. Orientation and targeted messaging campaigns by KP-ESP can help address this challenge.*
- c. *Ensuring education is an agenda item during the upcoming election is another challenge for the project. Usually during elections other issues such as provision of water facilities or employment get more attention and negotiations with reference to education remain limited to posting*

*and transfers. Aggregation of citizens' voices can lead to making access to and quality of education an important agenda item for the public representatives. PTCs can play a critical role in aggregating and articulating citizens' voice for improved access to and quality of education for all.*

### **Provincial & District Administration**

Stakeholders within the provincial government comprise three different layers. The Provincial bureaucracy comprising key officials of the Education Department and Education Sector Reform Unit (ESRU), Finance Department and the Planning and Development Department stands at the forefront of provincial government and forms the first layer of stakeholders at the provincial level. Offices of the District Education Department and the DCOs form the second layer of stakeholders and school administrations form the third layer.

The provincial and district education bureaucracy is, in general, the largest repository of policies, background, reviews, statistics, research, reports, updates and information on educational issues but there is no information policy that regulates the use of all this repository on educational issues. Work of the provincial



bureaucracy is defined by an elaborate set of rules and procedures defined by the government and anything outside the purview of the roles and responsibilities assigned by the provincial government fails to gather its attention especially seeking of information which does not belong to the relevant desk. Given this, it is understandable that information flow mechanisms within the same department are limited by the relevance of each assignment. Although there are instances that a “grapevine of communication” (informal information sharing) is a viable alternative to formal or well-defined information sharing mechanisms it remains unreliable.

A similar situation persists in the offices of DCOs and the District Education Department with the exception of EDO Education and the DCO who, by virtue of their designations and strong linkages with the provincial hierarchy, remain abreast of the development initiatives related to their districts. However, the same cannot be said about other officials of these two offices at the district level: relevance of desk and a “Need to know basis” form the defining parameters of information sharing through formal means of communication in these cases. The last layer of stakeholders within this group comprises the school administration which remains largely ignorant of developmental projects and their scope until and unless they have a direct bearing on their particular school. Direct interaction does provide a

mechanism of information sharing but the absence of it leaves most school administrations ignorant of the work of development projects.

Given this it is obvious that there exists a dire need to develop information sharing network at the provincial and district levels that not only provides information in a vertical manner but also shares the required information horizontally. District Steering Committees created under the Provincial Roadmap is a needed step for information sharing at the district level which can not only relay information within the district to all the concerned offices but can also inform the provincial government. Project staff needs to work closely with the steering committees and information products need to be developed for making the best use of this forum. The forums can prove to be good source of disseminating district-based information to other stakeholders. It is important that dedicated sessions are conducted to sensitize them about their role. Experience sharing and insights provided by such a network can be valuable in not only bringing provincial and district stakeholders together but also benefiting future development initiatives. The foremost challenge is to ensure the existence of information sharing mechanisms. This challenge can be addressed by making effective use of the newly created forum of District Steering Committees.

Appropriate information products can provide focus and ownership of key messages for each group

### **Parent Teacher Councils and Beneficiaries**

The third group of stakeholders identified comprises Parent Teacher Councils (PTCs), parents, community members and students. The study found that local communities are generally concerned about the state of education and lack of facilities for children. More often than not, education remains a universal public concern at the district level. While analyzing their communication needs we understand that the communities also have certain marginalized group of people such as the illiterate, housewives, the unemployed and disabled who predominantly rely on verbal communication through public meetings, house to house visits, road and radio talk shows and broadcasts. Moreover, students are the supposed direct beneficiaries of all educational policies but they are the stakeholder least equipped to articulate their needs and views. Concerted voices of these stakeholders can impact everyone - from policymakers to implementers and from development partners to media.

PTCs have been entrusted with an important role with respect to improving education at the school level. However, community members are infrequently desirous of becoming

members of PTCs<sup>30</sup>. PTCs lack communication plans for properly engaging the community which they are intended to serve though they should be a natural communications platform to promote education improvements. If the communications capacity of PTCs could be developed, it may impact more widely in encouraging public engagement with the PTC and on education issues.

Women form one of the marginalized groups within KP communities and their free participation in educational activities is yet to be materialize despite consistent efforts on part of the government, development partners, civil society organizations and the media. A means of communication conducive to local traditions and customs needs to be adopted so that women become a part of the development process and can have their say in setting the educational priorities at the local level. Other than women, illiterate people also need to be made part of the educational improvement process at the local level. The literacy rate for women is the lowest in the rural areas so information sharing mechanisms must cater for their needs. Empowerment of these marginalized groups can be done by focusing on strengthening the community involvement aspect of the functioning of PTCs. Female PTCs, if made effective in their outreach towards the community; can

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<sup>30</sup> Review of PTCs in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, ISAPS

voice their concerns for education at the local level. Decision making process within the female PTCs is taken care of by females so their role in making effective decision making and encouraging them to take up the responsibilities given to them under the PTC rules can prove to be a good way of empowering them.

#### Key Communication Challenges:

- a. Communicating with the large number of PTCs all over the province is a challenging task and given the limitations of the project it will not be possible for the project team to establish and maintain communication channels with all of them. Nonetheless, the need to effectively engage PTCs is key to improving education. New forums for PTCs at the district and provincial level can be created by the project which in turn would be able to communicate with other PTCs. Members of these new forums are proposed to be taken from the existing PTCs so that while being members of the local PTCs they contribute to the new forums and voice is aggregated and articulated. Orienting new forums of PTCs

on ESP project and key goals will help them familiarize with the project, and the orientation sessions should also include information for PTCs to access different resources about education and utilization of the identified resources. For example, orienting them on accessing and using EMIS data would be good for their understanding and could provide them with a comparable set of information to engage with the district and provincial governments. *~Providing a what-and-how mechanism for PTCs to become more effective*

- b. Engaging the female PTCs will be another challenge and the need exists to effectively engage them at the district level. It is suggested that the cluster heads should play their role in enhancing engagement with the female PTCs. Frequency of meetings should be enhanced for female PTCs under the facilitation of cluster heads. Two meetings per month would be a good practice to follow in the first six months so that engagement is rigorous and follow-up is continuous. This would help

in building communications capacities of PTCs and marginalized groups on local progress on ESP goals ~*Providing communications tools for PTCs for outreach to communities & media.*

### **Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)**

Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and other local community leaders and activists form the fourth group of project stakeholders. Due to their strong linkages with the community, they can play a substantial role in adding value to the outreach of reform programs and help create ownership of the sector development objectives and the SDGs at the local level.

Research has highlighted that though CSOs strongly realize the need for strong communication networks and therefore interact with media and community members regularly, they do not do so as often as necessary. CSOs working on education issues are no different in this regard than those working on other thematic issues such as health and environment. The interaction with the media largely depends on the profile of an organization i.e. organizations with a strong profile tend to reach out to the mainstream media whereas organizations with a relatively weaker profile mostly interact with local, district-based media. On the other

hand, the state of interaction with a community is quite the opposite i.e. small local organizations tend to have closer ties and subsequently closer interaction with community members. Community based organizations find themselves more accountable to the people and are desirous to receive the extended support by the community.

It is pertinent to note that CSOs interact with the media for specific event-based developments and the modes of communication adopted are mostly in the shape of press releases and press conferences. Consistent engagement with the media on educational issues and sharing of updates on development projects is largely missing. The situation in terms of interaction with community members is the same. Apart from community-based organizations, CSOs rarely share work updates with the community.

In this context, it is important to recognize the potential role of CSOs and it is recommended:

- a. Provision of a platform to CSOs to play a more effective role by aggregating their voices is a big challenge. Government can address the challenge by creating a platform for CSOs at the provincial level in the provincial capital. The Education Department can leverage the work of CSOs and there exists an opportunity for the CSOs to align behind the objectives of



reform. Support can be generated from the CSOs in terms of raising voice on service delivery of education and challenges faced at the local level. Since CSOs working on education already have their respective agendas and motivations to implement them, it would be easy for them to identify with the broad umbrella of the reform process.

- b. The challenge of mobilizing local community leaders and activists is also a big one and the project limitation does not allow for adoption of such extended communication mechanisms. Therefore, creation of provincial level forum will address this problem whereby the members of the provincial forum can mobilize the activists and leaders of their respective communities on local goals and progress.

### **Communicators**

The media, comprising radio, TV, newspapers and online content is the fifth group of stakeholders. Newspaper reporting of education related issues over the period of last one year was analyzed to identify trends in reporting. The

content of radio, TV and online media was also followed to ascertain knowledge about their treatment of education as a media subject.

Analysis of different components of media revealed that the perspectives of teachers, educationists and educational administrators are absent from Pakistani media in general and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa media in particular because of a mismatch of reporting priorities and educational issues. Reporting of educational issues by the electronic media of KP and national media generally focuses either on terrorist activities carried out on educational institutions or on missing facilities in certain schools. Articles highlighting issues of quality, access and equity in the education sector are minimal in the electronic media. A similar situation exists in the print media with the exception of some stories that focus more broadly on the state of education in the province. Issues like gender inequality in enrollment, inadequacy of teacher training, plight of girls' in schools and gender sensitized content rarely find a place within the mainstream media. The incidence of discussions on educational issues is least on radio programs. Online campaigns on education or the use of social media to highlight educational issues are yet to be observed in the province. It was learnt during the stakeholders' consultation that the tradition of inviting celebrities and media personnel to programs on education proves to be counter-productive as people shared strong reservation about this group of individuals. Therefore,

persons who conduct the programs and speak / appear as guests is very important. Individuals having credibility in the masses / in the local context should be considered while planning programs on media. Engagement with media should take cognizance of this factor. The project can tap the positive influence of media by adhering to the norms of local culture.

Discussions with media personnel revealed that there is very little appetite among them to cover stories on education due to their insufficient knowledge: usually reporters are not well trained to report on issues related to education. They require a basic understanding of the dynamics of the education sector so that familiarity with sectoral issues can assist them to report in an objective manner. Currently their role in reporting on education is largely limited to filing reports based on the statements of policy makers or complaints of citizens regarding infrastructure and missing facilities. This calls for the need to engage the media for non-reporting purpose such as familiarizing them with educational policies, processes and developments. The partial success of “Zara Socheay” campaign of DFID on Geo Television Network and other media channels can serve as a yardstick in this regard. The campaign presented an opportunity for the project to make use of the potential of wider appeal that the electronic messages could create with the masses and with the policy makers. Current reform process can learn lessons from this best practice of the past

decade and electronic content should be designed with a view to highlight data and findings in the most effective manner. Modes of communicating these messages such as promos, short documentaries or talk by guests / experts in some on-going programs need to be carefully decided. For example, data on missing facilities can be very well presented through on-line graphics in promos but issues of teacher training need a different mode of on-screen communication. Complex issue of gender mainstreaming would require the design and production of teasers, promos, news reports on failures and successes of gender mainstreaming, short documentaries and road shows<sup>31</sup> along with special programs.

FGD with media personnel revealed that the educational bureaucracy evades the media. They interact mainly through press releases but what the media needs is regular interaction with them, preferably through a formal platform, which can provide information to the media according to the media's regular needs, not the restricted needs of the bureaucracy. Provision of reliable data was highlighted as an important requirement of the media which is currently

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<sup>31</sup> "Road Show" is a kind of TV production which is totally done outdoor (out of the studio) and a host / presenter goes to common people on streets / offices / markets and other stakeholders. Views of the aforementioned people are ascertained about a topic. Sequence of the show is inquisitive and investigative.

missing. If reliable data, broken down by districts, is made publicly available the media can highlight this, incorporate feedback from local communities and build a campaign around it. Data to be generated by RM approach can be useful and the concerned stakeholders should make use of this data. Different information products can be made for different audience. Meetings, leaflets, periodic reports should be considered in this regard. Additionally, if research and policy documents were made available by policymakers, development partners and the CSOs working on education in a format that is easy to understand manner, the media will be more likely to report educational stories. The district Steering Committees should consider holding media briefing session regarding education and success stories should be communicated. Information to be shared with media should include the status of missing facilities, teacher absenteeism and girls' education along with other pertinent issues. Any improvements should be immediately highlighted for the media. If some individuals from the media intend to do investigative stories on education, they should be facilitated by the nominees of the steering committees.

Within this context, development partners and reform projects can help build understanding of the media through regular interaction and by providing access to specific information on various educational themes on a regular basis - as information forms the basis for story ideas and

media coverage. Key Challenges with respect to communicators are identified below:

- a. Highlighting issues of education in the local and national media with a view to build public pressure for their redressal.
- b. Enhancing the capacity of media in education-sensitive reporting *~Fill in the gaps on missing perspectives on policy issues*
- c. Raising awareness about issues related to low enrollment, gender inequities in enrollment, high dropout rates and weak learning outcomes *~Address emphasis on structural shortcomings*
- d. Helping reflect on internal media policies on content development and reporting on educational issues and linking educational advances with development and empowerment gains of communities *~Help translate media commitment into priority and mobilize public opinion*
- e. *work to make all roadmap data available to media outlets*

## **Development Partners**

International development partners form the sixth group of stakeholders. The projects financed, designed and implemented by the development partners have limited outreach to the public and other stakeholders like the public representatives. Therefore, there remains an opportunity to frame public perceptions about the reform projects led by GoKP and supported by development partners.

Formulation of a communications policy and its subsequent implementation will ensure a centralized and organized means of sharing information about reform projects and their progress across all stakeholders. Moreover, the issue of creating synergies between development partners remains a big challenge for provincial policy makers. Areas of priority for the provincial government and areas of financing with least fiduciary risk for the development partners need to have a constructive interface that result in undertaking positive reform efforts.

Key communication challenges comprise effecting a proactive policy to frame the benchmarks for communication modalities, messages and media narratives on the project along with plugging information gaps on details about the project and ensure uniformity of public profile of project, and finally smooth flow of information between the project partners.

## **Synergizing with other Reform Initiatives**

It is very important to make best use of the impact of interventions already undertaken or being planned by other initiatives of development partner. Transforming Education in Pakistan (TEP); and c) ILM Ideas were two such initiatives that address various dimensions of education and current reform initiatives have an opportunity to capitalize on their interventions and achieved progress. It will not only be cost effective but will also supplement the efforts being done by other projects in KP.

Firstly, TEP was geared towards supporting Pakistani change-agents in politics, media and civil society to ensure the delivery of better-quality education and that the parents also make a demand for it. Measures taken under TEP to influence the policy makers and other stakeholders can prove to be helpful in informing the on-going reform agenda. Most important of all it can help in harnessing the political capital so that explicit commitments made for education are effectively employed by the policy makers. It will also lend ownership of initiatives which would in turn ensure their sustainability. Moreover, the “Data Observatory” created under TEP could be a useful resource for all the reform projects and its stakeholders. Data thus generated and shared could play a critical role in demand generation. A similar approach in creating synergies has to be adopted for the CSOs. Mobilized support can be effectively utilized by reform process for leveraging its goal and objectives. KP



specific data and messages need to be incorporated in to the campaign content regarding reform agenda. Public affinity with the message will increase by delivering the content in regional language.

Secondly, KP-ESP can create synergy with the successive activities of ILM Ideas project of UKAID. Since ILM Ideas intended to increase access to education, enhance the quality, improve satisfaction of parents and students, and increase effectiveness of governance so these can be targeted through district steering committees and successes made on the projects can be highlighted as cases for up-scaling by the government. Best practices should be identified and widely disseminated.

All the above suggestions can be effectively implemented and maximum impact can be achieved if the provincial government takes up the challenge of working as a facilitating agency and coordinates well with the identified stakeholders. In order to address the communication challenges and identified needs, it is important to adopt a realistic approach for implementing a holistic communication strategy.

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## **Chapter 3: Corporal Punishment in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**

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### **Introduction**

It has been a widely researched and admissible phenomenon that learning environment of schools is seriously hampered by the occurrence of incidents of corporal punishment. Different forms of corporal punishment extending to the limits of torture and child abuse have negative impact on the learning environment and personality of children. It has been recorded in literature that child abuse and high degree of administering corporal punishment leads to higher dropout rates in schools and adversely affects the personality development of children. In order to improve the learning environment at schools of KP both public and private and to gauge the incidence of corporal punishment in schools and then to reduce it by adoption of appropriate measures, the present chapter informs about formulation of a strategy. E&SED KP had already established a Hotline with a toll free number for recording complaints regarding corporal punishment. Complaints are being received at the Hotline for the past decade. Some awareness building measures were also

adopted by E&SED to promote ban on corporal punishment and to encourage people to report such incidents. Redressal mechanism for the resolution of complaints received at the hotline has already been defined along with the appointment of focal persons both male and female in all the districts of KP. However, considering the sensitivity of issues pertaining to corporal punishment, it is important to develop and implement a comprehensive Communication Strategy to devise measures for raising awareness regarding adverse effects of corporal punishment and to highlight the significance of measures for reducing Corporal Punishment.

It needs to be understood that incidents of corporal punishment arise out of a rampant perspective on child development that considers corporal punishment integral to disciplining children. Notions of beating children for their own good and use of abusive language are deep seated in the society of Pakistan as well as that of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Therefore, this analysis and suggestions take into account the societal and individual thinking and behaviors based upon them while realizing that curtailing corporal punishment is a long and tedious process of societal and individual transformation. Sustained efforts are required at every level of government and society to curb the occurrence of this phenomenon.

### **Corporal punishment in Pakistan and KP**

The United Nations Committee on the Rights of Child defines corporal punishment as, “*any punishment in which physical*

*force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light. Most involves hitting (“smacking”, “slapping”, “spanking”) children, with the hand or with an implement – whip, stick, belt, shoe, wooden spoon, etc. But it can also involve, for example, kicking, shaking or throwing children, scratching, pinching, biting, pulling hair or boxing ears, forcing children to stay in uncomfortable positions, burning, scalding or forced ingestion (for example, washing children’s mouths out with soap or forcing them to swallow hot spices). In the view of the Committee, corporal punishment is invariably degrading. In addition, there are other non-physical forms of punishment which are also cruel and degrading and thus incompatible with the Convention. These include, for example, punishment which belittles, humiliates, denigrates, scapegoats, threatens, scares or ridicules the child.”*

Many international covenants affirm the right of child to be protected from corporal punishment. A significant body of literature is available on the nature of corporal punishment which delineates the actions amounting to punishment, abuse and torture in different cultures that allow for disciplining of children through harsh measures. Negative effects of all such harsh measures for disciplining children have also been recorded by the researchers and Patterson (1982) may be cited over establishing strong link between harsh measures of disciplining children and academic failure along with anti-social behavior.



Many countries have banned corporal punishment in schools and the ban is strictly adhered to by the authorities and teachers alike in consonance with the letter and spirit of the legal and administrative requirements. However, the case of Pakistan is quite different in this regard which although as a signatory is bound by the UN Charter has not been successful in curbing the incidences of corporal punishment. The reasons for the failure are not merely administrative or managerial, they are indicative of a conflict between social values and statutory obligation which requires people to act against the cherished values. A 2024 survey carried out by the Society for the protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC) revealed that 76% of the parents interviewed were in favor of corporal punishment. They considered it 'necessary' to discipline children as an effective means of behavior modification. The results of survey indicate the deep-seated beliefs of people about child development. Despite being erroneous and entailing negative impacts, the high prevalence of such beliefs calls for education of masses at a large scale. After the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution, provinces are solely responsible for devising policies and undertaking measures to ameliorate learning environment at schools.

For high incidence of corporal punishment in KP, example may be cited from studies by SPARC, and Save the Children and UNICEF which denote high occurrence of corporal punishment in home and schools of KP. The latter study was conducted in collaboration with the Government of NWFP

(now KP) in three districts. It is sadly noted that not a single child whether male or female reported for not receiving corporal punishment. Most common punishments administered in schools were identified as ear twisting, smacking, hitting with an object etc. Another survey by the Pakistan Pediatrics Association and UNICEF revealed that “more than four out of five children were vulnerable to physical abuse from parents, elders and teachers, with boys more likely than girls to suffer physical abuse.” A study on corporal punishment in KP suggests that the impact of corporal punishment is always negative on the growth of children. It further reveals that excessive and repetitive use of corporal punishment leaves long lasting distortions in the psyche of children which later leads to exhibition of anti-social and deviant behavior. It was learnt during the course of this study that proponents of corporal punishment claim to administer physical punishments out of love for children. The societal paradox of love for children and discipline through harsh measures has been briefly discussed in this chapter

We understand that the role of corporal punishment is detrimental to the positive growth of children and the incidence of corporal punishment is quite high in Pakistan and KP. On one hand, corporal punishment is an administrative issue whereby the Education Department and the school administration are required to curtail the practice in the best interest of children and on the other hand it is a social issue rooted in the beliefs and cultural practices of

individuals about grooming and development of their children. The gap between the administrative challenge to curb corporal punishment and the societal thinking endorsing corporal punishment is immense and needs to be looked at in a holistic manner. The analytical approach adopted to analyze the available literature for devising the present strategy benefits heavily from the model presented by Jay Belsky (1984) which attempts to understand parental functioning by integrating the literature on child development and child abuse. He identified factors that contribute towards shaping parental functioning and child development at different levels. He further categorized these as Ontogenic development (Individual), the family (microsystem), the community (exosystem), and the culture (macrosystem). Right from the personality of parents to the social networks along with cultural influences, each factor leaves its distinguishing marks on the development of a child. The model assumes that parental functioning is also altered by the aforementioned factors which have a direct bearing on child development. Later work of Belsky builds on similar notions and reaffirms his stance on growth of children<sup>32</sup>.

Firstly, if we look at the personality of perpetrators of corporal punishment, studies reveal that those who were recipients of corporal punishment in their childhood tend to endorse this practice for their own kids as compared to the

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<sup>32</sup>Jay Belsky. 2009. *Effects of Child Care on Child Development: Give Parents Real Choice*.

ones who were not subjected to corporal punishment in their childhoods<sup>33</sup>. It has been further affirmed that use of force and physical punishment does not discipline children for longer period of time as it induces rebellion against the notions for which a child is subjected to punishment or any form of harsh treatment<sup>34</sup>. Research further shows that children may conform to defined standards and set of behaviors as a result of use of force and harsh punitive measures but subsequent resentment of the use of such measures is reflected in later stages of life calling for exercise of extreme caution<sup>35</sup>. The spill-over effect of use of violence with children has also been studied and Rohner (1991) in his theory on 'Cultural Spillover' postulates that use of force / violence to achieve legitimate ends further induces use of force for achieving illegitimate ends in the society.

The proponents of corporal punishment interviewed for this study were unanimous in repeating their childhood experiences of being subjected to corporal punishment and were proud to declare their support for this practice as an effective tool of child disciplining. Evidence from the available literature further affirms that adult aggression has its roots in childhood treatments<sup>36</sup>. Parallels drawn by

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<sup>33</sup>. Hyman, I.A. (1988). Eliminating Corporal Punishment in Schools: Moving from Advocacy Research to Policy Implementation

<sup>34</sup> Bauman, L.J., Friedman, B. (1998). Corporal Punishment.

<sup>35</sup> Please see the studies conducted by Pandey. (2001); Straus. (1991); Pearlin. (1989); Sanderson. (2003).; Kaur. (2005).

<sup>36</sup> Longitudinal Study by Eron, Huesmann, & Zelli, (1991); Earlier study by Carroll (1997) pointed out that children who are exposed to high

interviewees with their own childhood were self-righteous in nature and considering themselves as ‘perfect personalities’, they showed resolve to raise their children as their mirror images. Teachers who could use harsh punitive measures were lauded for committing themselves to the task of reforming and building the personalities of children. Thus, a chain of ‘grooming measures’ like corporal punishment has been developed and is sanctified in the name of tradition and is well guarded by its proponents. On the other hand, researchers have also identified that effects of corporal punishment are associated with deviant behaviors of all kinds from lying to theft<sup>37</sup>.

Further application of the model by Belsky draws attention towards the likelihood of greater occurrence of corporal punishment in certain segments of the society. It has been argued in the literature that people with lower income levels and lower levels of education tend to use corporal punishment more excessively as compared to people who have access to better resources and are well educated<sup>38</sup>. In the context of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, it was learnt that the people hailing from low-income areas favored excessive use

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degree of physical punishment are more likely to be aggressive in behavior as adults.

<sup>37</sup> Please see studies conducted by Straus, Sugarman, & Giles-Sims. (1997); McCord and McCord. (1959); Burt. (1925); Gove & Crutchfield. (1982); Hetherington, Stouwie, & Ridberg. (1971); West & Farrington. (1973); Glueck & Glueck. (1964); Straus, Sugarman, & Giles-Sims (1997).

<sup>38</sup> K.A. Dodge, V.C. McLoyd, J.E. Lansford (2005), *The Cultural Context of Physically Disciplining Children*.

of force while maintaining that children were sent to school for learning discipline. These parents, usually financially challenged, were found to have no time for parent teacher meetings whereas parents with better access to resources could spare time for meeting the teachers to gauge the progress of children. Low education level makes these parents accept beating of children as the only appropriate measure of disciplining them. Parallel for this practice may be drawn with Korea where adult-centered culture required children to be obedient and corporal punishment was permissible for parents and teachers. However, debate in the media and advocacy by the civil society led to the formulation of policy on prohibition on use of corporal punishment<sup>39</sup>.

It is important to note here that the socio-cultural context defined by Belsky as a macro-condition may also accommodate the religious beliefs of people as they have a direct and deep bearing on their perspectives for everyday life including child development. People interviewed during the course of this study and the participants of FGDs were unanimous in referring to the religious beliefs regarding disciplining children which in their opinions allowed for beating of children for discipline's sake. This notion of drawing religious sanction for administering corporal punishment raises serious concerns over the interpretations of religious texts and caution of the highest degree needs to

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<sup>39</sup>Sondra, SeungJa Doe. (2000). *Cultural Factors in Child Maltreatment and Domestic Violence in Korea*.

be exercised while attributing cultural traits to religious beliefs.

It is noteworthy that traditional Muslim teaching styles propounded by thinkers like Ibne Sina (Avicenna) and Imam Ghazali dispel the orthodox viewpoint of administering corporal punishment as a means of disciplining children. Excerpt from Imam al-Ghazali's "Revival of the Religious Sciences" (Ihya `Ulum al-Din) states that: "If he (a child) does something contrary to that just on one occasion, it must be overlooked and ignored, and he should not be exposed. He should not be given the impression that anyone could conceivably have the audacity to do such an action, especially if the child is hiding it himself, and making efforts to conceal his action. If his secret is exposed, it may just increase him in daring and lead him to becoming unconcerned about being discovered. If he does the undesirable act a second time, however, he must be told off in private, and the enormity of his act must be explained, and he should be told: Make sure you do not do such a thing again, for if you do, and people find out about it, they will all think you are bad." It is evident that persuasion has been advised as the best course of disciplining children in the traditional Muslim school of thought. Therefore, it has been noted with concern that misinterpretation of religious texts is being used to further strengthen cultural ill practice of corporal punishment. A similar practice of rigid cultural sanction drawn in the name of religion has been pointed out

by Vernon R. Wiehe who conducted research on the religious influence on parental attitudes<sup>40</sup>.

Alternate methods of disciplining children have been well researched and 'Expectancy Value: Theory of Achievement Motivation'<sup>41</sup> is of particular importance in this regard which deals with the issues of abilities of children as opposed to the expectations of the adults. Subjective value of different tasks has been deemed important in this context and use of motivational methods by assigning values to tasks has been found as useful. The model further alludes to the complexity of discipline problems and the need to carefully assess the issue at hand is highlighted. Variance in methods to provide motivation and reassessment of values assigned to different tasks also fall within the scope of the model to address complex issues. This notion of the Theory of Achievement Motivation learns from the 'Solutions and Agreements' approach of Gordon Thomas<sup>42</sup> which emphasizes that children can be made to realize that some agreeable solution has to be found for situations requiring disciplinary / corrective action. He terms the use of power-based methods as having a causal contribution towards phenomenon like rebellion and depression. Hence the alternatives of power-based methods i.e. motivation and agreement teach

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<sup>40</sup>Vernon R. Wiehe. (1990). *Religious Influence on Parental Attitudes towards the use of Corporal Punishment*.

<sup>41</sup>Allan Wigfield, Jacquelynne S. Eccles. (2000). *Expectancy-Value : Theory of Achievement Motivation*.

<sup>42</sup>Gordon, Thomas. (1989). *Teaching Children Self Discipline*.



children cooperation and self-discipline leading to academic achievement and sound mental health<sup>43</sup>.

### **Legal and Institutional Framework**

Distribution of legislative powers between the federal government of Pakistan and provinces tilts in favor of the federal legislature in case of legislation over a similar subject or over any matter pertaining to the implication of a subject which invokes both federal and provincial laws. Case of legal framework on corporal punishment in Pakistan forms prime example in this regard and calls attention towards areas in statutes that need to be addressed.

**Pakistan penal Code (PPC) 1860** sets the ground for debate on legal ramifications of corporal punishment in Pakistan through its section 89 and other provisions regarding hurt and injury. Section 89 of PPC states that: “Act done in good faith for benefit of child or insane person, by or by consent of guardian: Nothing which is done in good faith for the benefit of a person under twelve years of age, or of unsound mind, by or by consent, either express or implied, of the guardian or other person having lawful charge of that person, is an offence by reason of any harm which it may cause, or be intended by the doer to cause or be known by the doer to be likely to cause to that person..” Parents,

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<sup>43</sup> See also the foundational work in this regard, Nathan J. Blum, George E. Williams, Patrick C. Friman, Edward R. Christophersen. (1995). *Disciplining Young Children: The Role of Verbal Instructions and Reasoning*,

guardians, and teachers are counted in within the domain of this section of PPC and corporal punishment administered gets excused by law with these stipulations. However, blanket cover has not been provided and conditions have been laid down for this exception which include that the exception “shall not extend to the intentional causing of death or to the attempting to cause death.. and that That this exception shall not extend to the voluntary causing of grievous hurt, or to the attempting to cause grievous hurt, unless it be for the purpose of preventing death or grievous hurt, or the curing of any grievous disease or infirmity;”.

It is evident that the federal law stipulates for taking of actions in good faith and at the same time restricts causing grievous hurt but the problems start rising when the notions of law are construed to draw blanket freedom for administering corporal punishment on children barring grievous hurt to escape social and legal repercussions. Moreover, determination of age limit for a person i.e. under 12 years of age, for whom such actions can be taken in good faith further limits the scope of application of this law and does not necessarily correspond to the criticism leveled against this statute as a tool of oppression. Although data on relevant litigation is not available yet the cases brought before media falling short of grievous hurt point towards the intolerance of law towards hurting children and the difficulty of establishing ‘good faith’ before the court of law. However, the need to explicitly prohibit all forms of corporal punishment remains so that stringent legal framework works

as a deterrent for all the potential perpetrators of corporal punishment. It is encouraging to note that the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2012 for the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) prohibits corporal punishment in schools (Section 13) but at the same time the limitation of this Act is imminent in geographical terms. After the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan, education has become a provincial subject so for introduction of a complete legal ban on corporal punishment, laws have to be enacted by the provinces within their jurisdictional boundaries.

**The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child protection and Welfare Act 2010** stands out as the most relevant provincial legislation on corporal punishment to date. The Act repealed The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Protection and Welfare Ordinance No. 11 of 2010 and lays down stipulations to provide for the care, protection, maintenance, welfare, training, education, rehabilitation, and reintegration of children at risk in the province. The Act provides for abolishing corporal punishment of all kinds, its manifestations, and its practice in any form under its Section 33 but submits to the overarching notions of section 89 of PPC 1860. The section reads: “Corporal punishment stands abolished in all its kinds and manifestations and its practice in any form is prohibited as provided under section 89 of the Pakistan Penal Code, 1860 (Act No. XLV of 1860).” The Act may be criticized for this submission but it needs to be kept in mind that in case of independent and complete ban on

corporal punishment by the provincial legislature in presence of an active clause of a federal law i.e. PPC, the resulting confusion would have led to non-existence of the provincial law as contrary to the federal statute. Keeping this factor alive in discussion suggests the course to be adopted for advocacy to amend the federal as well as provincial legal statutes.

Another important aspect to be considered with respect to the Child Protection and Welfare Act 2010 is the permission granted to parents or persons having lawful control of the child to administer reasonable punishment. Section 44 of the Act lays down for defining and prohibiting cruelty to children and at the same time states that: "Provided that where some reasonable punishment, not corporal punishment, in good faith is administered to a child by the person having lawful control or protective care of the child as the parents normally would do for the betterment of the child, it shall not be deemed to be an offence under this section." Moreover, corporal punishment is defined by the Act as: "Corporal punishment means intentional use of physical force intended to cause a high degree of pain or discomfort for discipline, correction and control, changing behavior or in the belief of educating or bringing up the child, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation."

The gaps in existing legal framework are evident but at the same time speak of the clear intentions of the legislators i.e.

distinction is made between corporal punishment of high degree and low degree at the cultural practice level by majority of the individuals and the same distinction has been made clear in the 2010 Act. It is important to understand here that the gap in law is not due to being ill informed over the definition of corporal punishment but due to being well aware of the subsequent impact the definition is likely to have on the legal and administrative set up of the province. Therefore degree of corporal punishment entailing effects on child development has been defined by the law. If we bring the debate on corporal punishment to the domain of PPC then subsequent legislations federal or provincial would be analyzed with respect to the notion of harm to be inflicted on child. Law for the ICT, cited above bans corporal punishment without consideration for its degree despite the existing leverage in PPC 1860. Likewise, enactment of laws (Child Protection and Welfare Act 2010 in this case) by the provincial legislature might have considered legal and administrative implications of drawing distinctions on corporal punishment.

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Protection and Welfare Act 2010 has many laudable features which include laying down penalties for corporal punishment for whosoever causes or permits to cause corporal punishment, Creation of child protection courts which are required to decide a case within four months, and formation of child protection committees. The proposed Child Protection Committees can prove to be a good platform to alleviate the sufferings of children

including enforcement of ban on corporal punishment. The creation of such forum provides room for creating synergies between different government organizations and the civil society to work jointly for the well-being of children.

**Draft Bill on Corporal Punishment 2011** was a step in the right direction and lays down a comprehensive definition of corporal punishment in line with the available literature and international best practices. It states that:

“corporal” or “physical” punishment means any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light it may be, which may involve hitting (“smacking”, “slapping”, “spanking”) a child, with the hand or with an implement (a whip, stick, belt, shoe, wooden spoon, etc) including kicking, shaking or throwing a child, scratching, pinching, biting, pulling hair or boxing ears, forcing a child to stay in uncomfortable positions, burning, scalding or forced ingestion (for example, washing a child’s mouth out with soap or forcing him to swallow hot spices), including but not limited to:

...other non-physical forms of punishment which are cruel and degrading, for example, punishment which belittles, humiliates, denigrates, scapegoats, threatens, scares or ridicules the child.”

Section 3 of the Bill lays down that:

“(1) The child has the right to be shown respect for his personality and individuality and shall not be made subject to corporal punishment or any other humiliating or degrading treatments.

(2) Notwithstanding anything contained in section 89 of the Pakistan Penal Code, 1860 and any other law and regulation for the time being in force, corporal punishment of children by any person is prohibited in all its forms in the family, in schools and other educational institutions including formal and non-formal, both public and private, in child care institutions including foster care and any other alternative care settings, both public and private, and in the juvenile justice system.

(3) Disciplinary measures concerning the child can only be taken in accordance with the child’s dignity, and under no circumstances corporal punishments, or punishments which relate to the child’s physical and mental development or which may affect the child’s emotional status are allowed.”

Although the proposed Bill is a comprehensive piece of legislation yet the political will and right kind of advocacy is required for enactment of law on corporal punishment. Words such as ‘*Tan’beeh*’ and ‘*Naseehat*’ on the lines of twisting ear of children or a light slap on the head / shoulder echoed widely in discussions with the stakeholders i.e. officials of Education Department, PTCs, teachers, parents

and public representatives. Torture and abuse of children was widely condemned and every soul termed it as inhuman and worthy of severe punishment but did take leverage for allowing light punishment in the name of disciplining children. The widespread belief of administering light punishment for disciplining children poses the greatest challenge for any strategy to win over the minds of important local stakeholders.

### **Institutional Framework to Curtail Corporal Punishment**

The formal institutions entrusted with the task of curtailing corporal punishment are the Education Department, Child Protection Bureau, and the diversified institution of media. These formal institutions have to grapple with value system practiced by the informal institutions of family and community in order to effectively curtail corporal punishment. It is pertinent to note here that the formal institutions actively involved in undertaking efforts to curtail corporal punishment are confronted with deep rooted social and cultural barriers exhibited by the informal institutions of KP which preserve and promote the practice of corporal punishment.

#### **Formal Institutions:**

Education Department is the frontline of institutional mechanism for curtailing corporal punishment. The Department through its notifications No. 4131-74 dated 07-09-2004 and No. ESED/ESRU/C.P/2011-12 dated 11-04-2012



imposed ban on corporal punishment of students and child labor in educational institutions. All the EDOs of the Department were directed to ensure complete ban on corporal punishment through the last notification. As a policy instrument, the notification does signify resolve of the KP Government to curtail corporal punishment. However, the occurrence of corporal punishment continues as per the past practices in the schools of KP. Interviews with the teachers and officials of the Education Department are testimonial to the fact that the teachers and officials alike maintain a strong distinction between torture / child abuse and light punishment. Light punishment as a means to discipline children is not only considered un-harmful but essential for properly educating children. Likewise, it was noted that the very definition of corporal punishment proved alien to all the participants of FGDs and interviews. For them, corporal punishment is defined as measures that are severe and amount to some kind of torture for the children. Reference to the last issued notification by the Department entailed positive response from the teachers and officials who confirmed that there hardly occurs an incident of torture towards children. It is therefore noteworthy that the E&SED department needs to educate its officials and teachers regarding the definition of corporal punishment and how to get rid of present practices in the name of '*Tan'beh*' and '*Nasehat*'.

For any communication strategy to yield successful results, the phenomenon or menace at hand needs to be clearly

defined for all its stakeholders. It is pertinent to mention here that when the interviewees and participants of FGDs were apprised of the definition of corporal punishment adopted by ESP-KP, they altogether dismissed it as irrational and impractical. Some considered it as an attempt to thwart the efforts for proper upbringing of children. Therefore, the resolve of E&SED and ESP-KP signified through its efforts to curtail corporal punishment firstly needs to address the notion of putting across a common definition. The institution of Parent Teacher Council (PTC) has a significant role to play with respect to eliminating corporal punishment in the schools of KP. Their potential role and expected outcomes have been discussed in section 3.3.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Protection and Welfare Commission (CPWC) established in accordance with the provisions of Child Protection and Welfare Act 2010 is the second most important formal institution worthy of discussion in attempting to curtail corporal punishment. As discussed in the section on legal framework, the Child Protection and Welfare Act 2010 clearly imposes ban on corporal punishment and lays down punitive measures for individuals guilty of administering corporal punishment or allowing its use. The Commission as a nascent organization is struggling to expand its scope of work according to the given mandate. Child Protection Units have so far been set in eight districts namely Peshawar, Charsadda, Mardan, Swabi, Swat, Buner, Abbottabad, and Kohat. Mandate of the Commission and the Units established thereunder span beyond the

boundaries of controlling corporal punishment but it does involve taking steps for community education and maximizing safety nets for children at risk. Since the Commission is required to liaise with other government departments to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children therefore creating synergies with the efforts of the Education Department will be an effective measure. PTCs and Child Protection Units can work closely to raise awareness regarding ban on corporal punishment and child labor.

The institution of Media has gained great importance over the last decade with the advent of electronic media in Pakistan. Its role in raising awareness and as a watchdog of public interests has been widely accepted. The example of large scale campaign on Education under the DFID program 'Transforming Education in Pakistan' can be cited as a milestone in the history of Pakistan but at the same time one cannot help notice the dearth of informed and sustained reporting of social issues in media especially education. It has been observed that corporal punishment as a phenomenon detrimental to healthy growth of children could not find its way into the print as well as electronic media of Pakistan. Cases of torture and child abuse are reported once in a while without follow up on the event but media in general is not sensitive to the nuances of corporal punishment and its rampant occurrence. The need remains to sensitize the representatives as well as editorial staff of different media houses about the adverse impacts of corporal punishment on child development and to urge

them to act as eyes and ears of the society by reporting such incidents.

### **Informal Institutions:**

The role of informal institutions like family and community is critical towards curtailing corporal punishment. The field visits for formulation of this strategy revealed that efforts of formal institutions to curb corporal punishment are thwarted by the opposing practices of the informal institutions regarding child development. Families and community members especially those in the semi-urban and rural areas are convinced that beating in some form is essential for better grooming of their children. Many parents may be quoted on saying that “We send our kids to schools so that the teacher disciplines them in a strict manner and if teachers are not going to use corporal punishment then we have no means to raise our kids properly.”The problem is further exacerbated by the interpretation of religious teachings in a cultural context. It is widely inferred that when parents have been asked to beat children for not offering their prayers at a certain age then by the same definition use of corporal punishment in the upbringing of children is considered inevitable for disciplining them. The nexus of cultural practices with the self-proclaimed righteous interpretation of religious teachings poses the biggest challenge for any communication strategy that tries to tell them otherwise. A rough parallel of such beliefs may be drawn with the tradition of ‘*Satti*’ in India which despite

prolonged efforts of the formal institutions took a long time to be curbed.

Role of community is tantamount to the reinforcement mechanism at a bigger scale which provides all necessary support and protection for the continuation of ill practices in the name of child development. Individuals who approach authorities for reporting minor incidents of corporal punishment are considered deviants and a threat to the prevalent system. The local elders and even members of PTCs (representatives of two PTCs from the rural areas affirmed to this insight) give a strong public reaction to that person for promoting non-cultural ill practice of attempting to stop the teachers from beating children. It has been noted with concern that a head teacher proudly narrated an incident involving his own son whereby the kid was beaten by the teacher of *madrassa* resulting in bruises on the back. Despite complaint from the mother of the kid, the said head teacher refused to talk to the *madrassa* teacher and restated his viewpoint that a teacher beats up students for their good and the practice needs not to be checked. His narration of the incident during the FGD was lauded by all the participants while maintaining their respective positions on ending violence and torture in school as it might have a negative bearing on the growth of children. The social sanction and subsequent acceptance of corporal punishment as a means of disciplining children is a multi-faceted phenomenon and has to be dealt with in a well thought out and cautious manner.

## **Measures Adopted to Curtail Corporal Punishment**

The efficacy of the measures adopted has been briefly discussed to draw inferences to suggest future course of action.

### **Creation of Hotline**

With respect to corporal punishment, the E&SED KP created a hotline to record and address the complaints regarding corporal punishment at the end of year 2012. Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) was defined in close coordination with the Education Department for redressal of complaints. Data for the previous years has been collected and analyzed for the sake of identifying the nature of complaints and the efficacy of the procedure adopted for resolution of received complaints. The number of complaints for initial month and subsequently initial years was the highest as compared to the corresponding later month and years due to rise in awareness among masses. A fine distinction between reporting of an incident of corporal punishment and occurrence of such incidents has to be made as low reporting does not affirm the non-occurrence of incidents of corporal punishment.

A close look at the data reveals that the unresolved complaints comprise not only the ones regarding corporal punishment but also involve the ones about teacher absenteeism, closure of school, overcrowded classrooms, and missing facilities etc. It is pertinent here to look at the duration of complaint resolution specified by the E&SED. The

timeframe defined by the E&SED is seven days after receipt of a complaint and the same is communicated to the complainant but in case of severity and complexity of complaint, the matter has to be resolved in no more than two weeks. However, if even more time is required for the resolution of complaint due to some extraordinary circumstances, then such extension of time has to be endorsed by the Director ESRU and Secretary E&SED. In this context, occurrence of significant unresolved complaints is worthy of further investigation.

In our reflection, rules governing the conduct of government servants are to be taken into account which present a different scenario as compared to the process defined under the 'Complaint Handling and Redressal Procedure' of Corporal Punishment Hotline. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government Servants (Efficiency and Discipline) Rules, 2011 published September 16, 2011 clearly define the procedure to be followed by the competent authority where inquiry is necessary. Section 10 of the Rules states that in case a competent authority decides to hold an inquiry against the accused, it shall pass an order of inquiry in writing which shall include, "direction to the accused to submit written defense to the inquiry officer or the inquiry committee, as the case may be, within reasonable time which shall not be less than seven days and more than fifteen days of the date of receipt of orders." The Rules under Section 11(7) further state that "The inquiry officer or committee, as the case may be, shall submit his or its report, to the competent authority

within thirty days of the initiation of the inquiry: Provided that the inquiry shall not be merely vitiated merely on the grounds of non-observance of the time schedule for completion of the inquiry.” Moreover, time for issuance of show cause notice and time availed due to medical reasons is yet to be taken into account. During the field visits and interviews with the government officials, it was learnt that they were well aware of the discipline rules and measures related to formal inquiry to be conducted by the Education Department. The difference in process may be categorized as ‘preliminary inquiry’ in terms of the said Rules but they do create space for extending the timeframe defined by the Complaint Handling and Redressal Procedure laid down by E&SED.

Secondly, the nuances of local interests and rapport amongst the community members play an important role in delaying the inquiry report by means of prolonging the investigation. Inquiry sessions are held again and again with the involvement of elders of the area and *Jirgas* are organized to straighten out the matters. The field visits revealed that incidence of such practices was particularly high in the semi-urban and rural areas.

### **Complaints on Corporal Punishment**

The incidence of lodging complaint can be categorized into two broad categories i.e. resolved and unresolved. Irrespective of the unresolved complaints, the further categorization of resolved complaints is significant and



worthy of reflection. Resolved complaints have been categorized into complaints where some action was recommended / taken against the teacher, response awaited, complaints that were found to be baseless, and complaints where a compromise between the two parties was made.

Broad categorization of the resolved complaints on corporal punishment reveals that minor percentage of complaints were found to be genuine after inquiry whereas majority of the complaints were declared baseless. It is important to note that an enquiry report finding the report baseless as school with a particular name did not exist in the area took months' time to be filed. Similar instances may be found with respect to the beating of children whereby the inquiry officer took at least a month to accomplish that no incident of corporal punishment took place in a particular school. Majority of the complaints found bogus were from individuals who refused to be contacted afterwards for conducting further inquiry into their complaint. It clearly indicates abstinence on part of the complainant. Field study reveals that hotline is often used to settle personal scores with teachers. Furthermore, the complaints resolved also include an important category of complaint resolution i.e. compromise between the aggrieved and the aggressor. The procedure defined by E&SED does provide for such compromise by stating that: *"The nature of the aggression if found to be resolvable, SDEO will resolve the matter between complainant and aggressor."* However, complaints as severe

as fracturing arm of a student were resolved through compromise between the complainant and aggressor. Taking longer time than the stipulated one for inquiry gives space for mediation through *Jirga* at the local level and since rules of the government provide leverage for prolonging the inquiry, inquiry officer makes use of the available space. Instead of filing a report determining the nature of complaint as true or false and fixing the responsibility for administering corporal punishment, *Jirga* mediations are undertaken to resolve the matter. Precedence of informal institutions / practices over the formal institutions indicates the gravity of issue with respect to redressal and self-reliance of the involved communities.

Appointment of focal persons both male and female in each district is a step in the right direction. However, the occurrence of non-reporting on the complaints sent to the districts raises concerns over the working of focal persons. Identification of the problem barring timely resolution of complaints needs to be highlighted in the analysis of hotline data or some report by the focal persons has to come on record detailing the effort to elicit response from the concerned officials. Unresolved complaints without citing reasons of inordinate delay call for closer and improved coordination between the focal persons and the departmental officials.

## **Review of Awareness Measures**

Newspaper advertisements and instructional message at the back of training manual for PTCs were the major awareness measures undertaken to curtail corporal punishment. Instructions in form of office order were also issued by the E&SED to ensure strict ban on corporal punishment. These measures from the government were supplemented by the civil society organizations and outdoor campaign comprising advertisement through hoardings was also carried out in the provincial capital. The awareness measures adopted did result in sensitizing people about corporal punishment and the number of complaints received at the hotline testifies to the success of getting the message across. Despite the gradual fall in the number of complaints received, it is important to note that the means of awareness adopted reached a sizable population and communicated two key messages i.e. a) corporal punishment is illegal and b) there is a hotline where all incidents of corporal punishment may be reported.

However, despite clarity regarding the above two key messages the awareness measures need to be critically analyzed in the cultural context of KP and prevalent practice of administering corporal punishment. Some of the content from the instructional message is being reproduced below for this purpose:

### **3.2.1 “Maar nahi pyaar”**

3.2.2 “Kya aap jantay hain k talab’a per jismani tashadud qanoonun jurm hae?”

3.2.3 “Agar sarkari aur niji sarkari taleemi idaron mein jismani tashadud ka koi bhi waqe’a ru’numa ho / staff ki ghair hazri waghaira ho tou darj zail number per it’laa dain”

The very first message ‘Maar nahi Pyaar’ when repeated before the participants of the three FGDs elicited replies of disapproval stating that it is love which induces beating children otherwise an elder would not be bothered at all to beat a child for the sake of ‘*tan’beeh*’ and ‘*nasehat*’. Hence, a very appropriate and well coded message turns out to be ineffective in the cultural context of KP. It is not just the meanings ascribed to messages by the message proponents but the meaning derived / acquired by the addressees that complete the communication process. A very well intentioned and clear message like the one just quoted has been misconstrued by the parents and teachers alike on the basis of their claim of excessive love for welfare of children. Therefore, it is suggested that future messages may be coined keeping in mind the perceptions of people. Example may be cited of awareness campaign by the Peshawar Electric Supply Company (PESCO) to decrease line losses. The outdoor campaign witnessed during the course of formulation of this strategy comprised placement of flex carrying instructional messages for curbing line losses and

power theft. Some of the messages are reproduced below to highlight the cultural affinity of the messages:

3.2.4. “Jaez bijli ki roshni mein namaz perhain ta’ke aap ki duaen qabool hon”;

3.2.5. “Jaez bijli ki roshni mein maa baap ki khidmat karain....”

Appeal to religious understanding of people along with cultural affinity are imminent in these messages which have a greater chance to persuade people to act upon the desired notions.

In terms of message coding, it is important to maintain uniformity in the message content and the reader / addressee draws parallels to main message from within the content of advertisement. Main message given at 3.2.1 “Maar nahi Pyaar” is easily correlated with the piece of information at 3.2.2 which draws the attention of people towards illegality of torturing children. Hence the parallel drawn with the notion of ‘Maar’ is ‘*tashadud*’ or torture and everything falling short of it fails to qualify as ‘Maar’. It is imminent that the intention of message giver to introduce the masses with the concept of complete ban on corporal punishment has been compromised. Moreover, message at 3.2.3 giving a call to action causes confusion when it states that ‘If any incident of... takes place in public and **private public educational** institutions...’ so it may be revised for clearer message coding in future.

Reinforcement of parental love through messages like “Bachay shafqat k mustahiq hain” in the right alignment of messages in an advertisement is critical for arousing the desire to act upon the propagated notion. Same message in the advertisement has lesser reinforcement value due to contradiction between central theme of introducing ban on corporal punishment (maar nahi pyaar) and its meanings equated with the notion of torture highlighted in red color. Moreover, call for action in form of lodging a complaint is with respect to physical torture and staff absenteeism etc further dilutes the main message of spreading ban on corporal punishment.

In the light of the above discussion, views of people and literature reviewed; it is suggested that all communication regarding curbing corporal punishment may be centered on one theme i.e. **“Persuasion is the best way of disciplining children”**

Other sub-messages may be weaved around this central theme keeping in mind the required consistency in message coding.

### **Indicators of the Communication Strategy**

We understand that awareness level regarding ban on corporal punishment and redressal mechanism introduced by E&SED are yet to achieve momentum therefore the first six months are expected to increase awareness which in turn would result in an increase in the number of complaints

being received at the Hotline whereas for rest of the year, the number of complaints is expected to fall down as a result of adherence to the ban. Elements of awareness building measures deemed important to the success of the communication strategy with respect to different stakeholders have been made part of the indicators for proper monitoring and subsequent alignment of the implementation plan.

**Table 3.1 Indicators of the Communication Strategy**

S. No.	Indicator	Means of Verification	Responsibility	Reporting Frequency
1.	Number of cases resolved: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Within the stipulated time</li> <li>b. Beyond the stipulated time</li> </ol>	Hotline Data	Hotline focal person	Monthly
2.	75% of the cases resolved within the stipulated time (This indicator may be termed as	Hotline data	Hotline focal person	Monthly

	target to gauge the efficacy of the resolution process)			
3.	Number of schools having Corporal Punishment Hotline number on school wall/or building	Report by the head teacher	Head Teacher	One time
4.	Number of awareness campaigns conducted in districts through: a) Radio b) Television c) Print media d) Local events e) Social media	Report on awareness campaign	EDO	Bi-annual
5.	Number of PTCs, Teachers & District Education Officials oriented on Corporal	Report on orientation sessions	ESP Focal person / ESRU/ E&SED	Bi-annual



	Punishment & its redressal mechanism			
6.	Number of specialized campaigns (other than print, tv) targeting the adverse implications of Corporal Punishment	Report on such campaigns	ESP Focal Person / E&SED / ESRU	Annual

### **Achieving the Indicators**

A well thought out plan is needed to achieve the defined indicators for curtailing corporal punishment in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Principles of economy and maximizing outreach have been primary considerations for defining modes and channels of communication to reduce the incidence of corporal punishment.

#### **1. Mass Awareness Measures**

Advertisements on social media along with in three leading newspapers and on cable TV may be run on periodic basis to inform people about the unacceptability of corporal punishment in the province and about the existence of the penal

framework for offenders. Cable TV is an effective medium of awareness building and as compared to the terrestrial and satellite channels it can provide a cost-effective mode of communicating the message on curtailing corporal punishment besides urging people to report incidents of corporal punishment on the Hotline. It has been learnt that radio is an effective medium of communication in the rural areas and has the maximum outreach for the illiterate of the province. Radio Pakistan as the premier broadcasting organization has extensive outreach all over the province including areas of newly merged districts and Chitral with its 10 stations. Outdoor advertising is suggested as another means of raising awareness whereby hoardings at important places, with maximum visibility due to geographical location, within the district headquarters will be used to sensitize people regarding corporal punishment and reporting of such incidents.

## **2. Awareness Measures for Schools, PTCs and Community**

Schools being the first entry point with respect to practicing the ban of corporal punishment and forum to discourage the use of harsh punitive measures will be of prime importance in the awareness campaign of this communication strategy. It is suggested that

flex containing the pre-approved content about Hotline and ban on corporal punishment be mounted at a prominent place in every public school of KP. PTCs can be pivotal in educating members of their respective communities about alternate means of disciplining children but the PTCs themselves need education over the issues created by the use of corporal punishment. The awareness message on the training manual of PTCs has already been analyzed so as a starting point; appropriate changes may be introduced when the manuals are printed in future. Central theme of the message may be; “Persuasion is the best way of disciplining children”. Hotline number and ban on corporal punishment with appropriate message coding may be clubbed with the primary theme. Suggested measures for raising awareness at this level may include:

- Instructions by the E&SED to district education heads and subsequently to head teachers of schools delineating the definition of corporal punishment so that erroneous assumptions rampant at this level are eradicated.
- PTCs may be directed to make curtailing of corporal punishment as an agenda item of its regular meetings and review of adherence to ban on corporal

punishment may be recorded in the minutes of meetings.

- PTCs may also be directed to invite random members of the community to attend brief sessions within the meetings whereby ill-effects of corporal punishment are explained to them and information regarding ban on corporal punishment and Hotline is communicated.

### **3. Effective Use of Government Forums**

District Steering Committee and District Development Committee are the two important forums at the district level which may be targeted for raising awareness about corporal punishment and which can also provide an effective monitoring mechanism to gauge the district level efforts of curtailing the incidents of corporal punishment. One of the forums is headed by a government official i.e. District Steering Committee and the other forum is led by a public representative. Since both the committees have highest representation of government officers and public representatives at the district level so making curtailment of corporal punishment as an agenda item with them can lead to the design and implementation of effective local level

campaigns. It is therefore suggested that meetings by the district education officers are arranged with the heads of the aforementioned committees for bringing corporal punishment on their work agenda. Review of the progress of committees and their working shall be done once campaigns are designed and finalized at the district level.

#### **4. Awareness Building Sessions for Specific Groups**

##### **a. For Public Representatives / Politicians**

Awareness building sessions are recommended on bi-annual basis for the public representatives and notable politicians of KP to apprise them of education reform in general and ban on corporal punishment in particular. Gaps in the existing laws also need to be highlighted so that a strong legal framework is in place to curb corporal punishment. Objectives of these sessions will be to:

- Introduce ESP-KP and ban on corporal punishment
- Sensitize the public representatives about the ill-effects of corporal punishment on child development

- Draw attention towards the gaps in existing laws
- Present an overview of the draft Bill on Corporal punishment
- Seek suggestions on the potential role of public representatives in curtailing corporal punishment.

**b. For District Education Officials**

Session similar to the above ones need to be conducted with the District Education Officials. Office of the DEO may be used for holding sessions along with the district focal persons on the following:

- Definition of corporal punishment and strict enforcement of the ban on corporal punishment
- Identification of bottlenecks in the resolution of complaints
- Review of the status of pending complaints
- Review of performance by the PTCs regarding curtailing corporal punishment

It is suggested that the proposed sessions be held on quarterly basis at every district.

**c. For Media Personnel / Editorial Staff**

Social media influencers, reporters of print and electronic media need to be targeted along with their editorial staff so that they may be sensitized towards highlighting issues of corporal punishment that fall short of child abuse and torture. It has been observed that learning sessions for media are seldom attended by the editorial staff which leaves an important segment of media unattended. Every report eventually passes through the editorial desk and ignorance of the relevant staff can cost the right placement and frequency of occurrence for an important news item. Keeping in mind the job constraints of media personnel, both reporters and editorial staff, it is suggested that sessions of three hour duration may be organized over a period of two days for the intended participants. Participants may be segregated into groups from print and electronic media, and radio while clubbing the reporters and editorial staff.

Media may be divided into a) print media and radio, b) electronic media, and c) social media. Two bi-annual sessions may be organized for each group with the following objectives in mind:

- Highlight the ban on corporal punishment

- Introduce the institutional framework and efforts of ESP-KP towards curtailing corporal punishment
- Role of media in curtailing corporal punishment
- Follow-up of news items regarding child abuse and torture

It is strongly recommended that monthly press briefings need to be organized to keep the media informed about development of project activities and efforts of curtailing corporal punishment.

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## **Chapter 4: Public Financing of Education – School budget analysis Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**

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**S**chools are the delivery points for imparting education to students and it is imperative to study and analyze their budgets to understand the implications of available resources for quality of education. The strength and quality of human resource available along with the fiscal space accorded to schools form the defining parameters for raising the quality of education service delivery. The utilization of allocated and transferred budget in accordance with the needs of the school is another important area of investigation. Despite the efforts to decentralize and devolve education in Pakistan, the preparation of budgets is still done in a centralized manner thus failing to respond to the needs of schools. The primary objective of this study is to assess the adequacy of financial environment of government schools (Primary, Middle and Secondary) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Two tehsils of District Swabi, i.e., Swabi and Topi, were selected based on the fact that majority of the schools in the district were in these two tehsils. Using a 95% confidence interval, 135 schools were selected out of the total 1289 schools in District Swabi. Keeping the scope of the study in

mind, all the three levels (primary, middle and secondary) were given equal weightage i.e., 45 each. Within each level, the schools were equally divided into the two tehsils to give equal representation to the population under study. Overall, 69 schools were selected from Tehsil Swabi and 66 schools from Tehsil Topi. Within each tehsil, individual schools were selected using systematic sampling (equal-probability method).

Sample adjustments were made considering limitations in the sample frame. For example, there are only 7 middle schools and 5 secondary schools in Tehsil Topi; so only this number of schools were used in the respective sample.

### **Analytical Framework**

This study benefits from the notions of 'self-managing school' and 'student weighted allocation of resources' to understand the limitations faced by public sector schools of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Effective school management is inextricably linked with the availability of financial resources in accordance with the needs of school. However, determination of the availability of resources and assessment of the school needs by an agency other than the school itself is likely to create problems of resource constraint and efficiency leading to inadequate delivery of education service. It has been argued that a self-managing school needs to exercise complete autonomy over the mobilization of resources and the subsequent expenditure / utilization of those resources to ensure the quality delivery<sup>44</sup>.

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<sup>44</sup> The Self Managing School, Brian J. Cladwell and Jim M. Spinks

This notion has strong correlation with effective management through collaborative management of schools so that planning for education service delivery is not only owned by the community but also ensure transparent utilization of the available resources. It can be further understood that inclusion of the community in a self-managing school will minimize the externalities attached to hierarchical management in an overly developed structure of administration. Moreover, the size of classes and students will also be kept in check by a self-managing school keeping in view the resource constraints like availability of teachers and learning materials.

The second notion of student weighted allocation of resources has been employed to bring in the perspective of analyzing the resource distribution at school level in the light of needs of the students instead of doling out the available funds in an arbitrary manner. It has been stated that keeping the needs of students tantamount to other considerations can significantly improve the quality of education in a school<sup>45</sup>. Resource equity needs to be redefined with respect to the desired learning outcomes at each level of education. In the decentralized system of education in Pakistan, the size of school<sup>46</sup> is another important consideration in the wake of

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<sup>45</sup> 'Understanding Student weighted Allocation as a Means to Greater School Resource Equity', Karen Hawley Miles and Marguerite Roza 2009

<sup>46</sup> A Review of Empirical Evidence about School Size Effects: A policy Perspective, Kenneth Leithwood and Doris Jantzi, 2009; 'The Smaller the School, the Better? The Smaller learningCommunities program in US High Schools', Moosung Lee and Tom Friedrich, 2007; 'High School Size: Effects on Budgets and performance in New York City', Leanna

scarce resources. We understand that complete self-management of schools is not possible in the present policy framework but resource allocation can be improved with respect to the size of the school whereby needs of students can serve as the primary consideration.

### **Educational Profile of KP & District Swabi**

The key figures presented in here help in contextualizing the data compiled through the study. The current projected population of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is 40.85 million and has a total of 27, 811 educational institutions in the public sector. 27,617 are functional schools of these institutions whereas 194 are non-functional<sup>47</sup>.

Out of the 22,124 Primary (including Mosque/Maktab) schools, 21,941 are Functional Primary Schools inclusive of 238 Community Model Schools, and 29 JICA Primary Model Schools, 21,200 are Government Primary Schools (inclusive of Community Model & JICA Primary Schools), 741 are Mosque/Maktab Schools. Primary schools by location are: 1,310 are in Urban and 20,814 in Rural areas. Out of the total 5,687 Schools at Secondary-Level, 5,676 are Functional Schools, there are 2,624 (1,436 Male + 1,188 Female) Middle, 2,282 (1,441 Male + 841 Female) high and 770 (491 Male + 279 Female) Higher Secondary Schools. Out of 194

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Stiefel, Robert Berne, Patrice Latarola, Norm Fruchter, New York University 2000; 'Hope or Despair', Warwick and Reimers 1995

<sup>47</sup> Annual Statistical Report of Government Schools 2021-2022, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Education Monitoring Authority

Non-functional Schools, 164 are Primary (30 Boys + 134 Girls), 19 are Mosques, 9 are Middle (6 Boys + 3 Girls) and 2 Boys High Schools. Out of total Functional Government schools, 92.56% of Schools have Boundary-Wall, 96.37% have Water-supply, 91.32% have Electricity, and 95.31% have Toilet facilities. There are 9,021 registered Private Schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, out of which 600 are Boys' Schools, 173 are Girls' Schools and 8,248 are Co-Education. By level, there are 1,848 Primary, 3,144 Middle, 2,803 High and 1,226 Higher Secondary Schools / Inter Colleges and most of them have Primary and Middle Sections<sup>48</sup>.

## **2.1 Education Statistics of District SWABI**

Literacy rate of district Swabi is 58.48%<sup>49</sup>. There are a total of 1265 institutions in Swabi out of which 1170 are located in urban areas whereas 95 are located in the rural areas thus making Swabi largely an urban settlement. 249,961 is the total enrolment and the share of urban areas in enrolment is 30,544 whereas the share of rural areas is 219,407.

a. Percentage of institutions in Swabi that have drinking water is 89.6 which is quite high as compared to that of District Shangla which stands the lowest in the province i.e. 19.8%. Districts having higher percentage of institutions with drinking water are Charsadda, Bannu,

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<sup>48</sup> Adopted from annual report by KPEMA

<sup>49</sup> Population Census 2023



Mardan, and Kohat with respective percentages of 95.6, 95, 89.9, and 89.6. Figure 2.1 depicts the situation of institutions with drinking water in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and top five districts have been presented.

b. Swabi ranks among the top five districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for providing its students with a toilet facility with its 93.2% schools having toilets. Kohistan stands lowest i.e. 28.2% in terms of having institutions that provide toilets to students. Top ranking districts are Kohat, Peshawar, Charsadda, and Bannu having respective percentages of 98.1, 95.2, 95.1, and 93.8 for institutions that have toilets for students. Figure 2.2 graphically presents the percentage of institutions with toilets for students in five districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

c. Swabi ranks seventh among the districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in terms of institutions that have a boundary wall with 92 percent of institutions. Figure 2.3 presents comparative situation of seven districts of KPK. Kohat ranks at the top with 99.5 percent institutions having a boundary wall. Batagram has the least percentage of institutions in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa that have boundary wall i.e. 26.7%.

d. An overview of the number of institutions in Swabi, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa reveals that the district has relatively higher number of institutions for boys as compared to girls. Difference in the number of total institutions from primary to high secondary level is 233.

The biggest contributor to this difference is the primary level which tilts in favor of institutions for boys with a difference of 164 primary schools. The difference in number of institutions at the Middle and High school level stands at 39 and 30 respectively. It is encouraging to note that the number of institutions at the High Secondary level, though quite low with respect to the population of the district, is the same for boys and girls. Therefore, at least in terms of governmental policy there does not exist a gender bias.

e. The enrollment in Swabi district is highest at the primary level with a total of 129, 322 whereby 78, 734 and 50, 588 are the enrollment figures for boys and girls respectively. The difference in enrollment with respect to gender is evident at each level of education except for the High Secondary where the enrollment of girls exceeds the enrollment of boys by 80. In case of other school levels, the difference starts from the pre-primary level and goes up to the High school level. However, with respect to the total enrollment at each level the strength of difference at each level varies and is highest at the primary level with more than twenty eight thousand boys getting registered.

f. The number of teachers for each level of education in district Swabi depicts the variance with respect to the need of teachers at a particular level and further highlights the gender difference. An overview of the situation of strength of teachers in Swabi is presented through Table 2.5. It is evident from the table that the

number of available teachers for boys far exceeds the number of teachers for girls' schools. The difference in number ranges from 285 at the middle level to 727 at the high school level. In case of Middle schools the difference is 724 whereas for the High Secondary there are 18 more teachers for Boys schools.

g. Tehsil-wise Percentage of Institutions, Enrolment, Teachers in Swabi clearly indicates that Swabi tehsil stands highest with respect to the given criteria. Percentage of teachers and enrollment is more than fifty whereas share of institutions is around forty one percent. Lahor and Topi come next in terms of percentage with respect to teachers, enrollment, and institutions with Lahor having relatively higher percentage on all three accounts.

### **Baseline Findings and Inferences**

This sub-section presents the findings of the study and gives a critical overview of the data in terms of their role in increasing the quality of education in district Swabi. Data collected through the means and methodology mentioned in the earlier section has been placed in context of the available information regarding the district and its standing as compared to other districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

### **Profile of Respondents**

Educational qualification was the first attribute of respondent profile that was analyzed along with professional

qualification and details about the service. Education of the respondents when coupled with the years of service as teacher and as head of the institution gives a clearer picture of the state of education provision in the school and also defines the boundaries of ones expectations regarding any improvements. It is understandable that a low qualified head of education with minimal number of education years and professional training is least poised to improve upon the teaching standards and quality of education in his school as compared to a head who is highly educated and well trained with increased professional capabilities.

#### **a. Education:**

Majority of the respondents have Masters Degrees in one subject or the other and by virtue of having post-graduation degrees are more likely to positively contribute to raising the education standards. However, the incidence of respondents having Masters degrees at different tiers of school education is a cause of some concern. Primary education considered as the foundational stone of an education of a lifetime presents the least number of respondents having post-graduation degrees in this category whereby respondents from elementary and secondary schools having Masters Degrees stand at 74.47 and 90.70 percentages respectively.

The cumulative picture about the qualification of respondents draws attention to the disruption in the gradual increase of qualification with the increase in the level of school i.e. increased school tier. Respondents with Matriculation stand at the lowest percentage with 3.70 in

the Swabi district but respondents having intermediate degrees are almost 3 percent higher than those having graduation degrees. The variance in the level of education is alarming in the light of increased responsibility and higher expertise at higher tier of education. Likewise, the percentage of graduate respondents decreases with the rise in educational level. Starting from a 22.2 percent for the primary schools it drops to 14.89 and 2.33 when it comes to elementary and secondary levels respectively. Equal percentage of respondents at the secondary level of education with matriculation and graduation as their qualifications i.e. 2.33 percent is another cause of concern regarding quality of education.

#### **b. Professional Qualification:**

The notion draws attention to the complementary nature of educational and professional qualification when it comes to dealing with improving education as a service. It is encouraging to note that the highest percentage of respondents have M.Ed. as professional qualification standing at 38.06 percent followed by B.Ed., Other, and CT with 29.10, 28.36, and 4.48 percentages respectively. Within each category of qualifications, the respondents serving at the lowest tier of education i.e. primary schools are least in percentage as compared to higher levels. For example, respondents with M. Ed. are lowest in percentage at the primary level but highest at the secondary level. However, big contrast to this understanding is depicted by the category of Other which present the highest percentage of respondents belonging to the level of primary schools. We

understand that professional qualifications that are not mainstream gather lesser institutional response at higher levels. There exists a difference of minor percentage i.e. 6.67 and 6.52 within the respondents having CT as professional qualification and serving at the primary and elementary levels respectively. The difference in level of school of the respondents that have B.Ed. as professional qualification is imminent at the elementary and secondary levels. Respondents having B.Ed. at the elementary level stand at 36.96 percent whereas respondents with similar professional qualification at the secondary level stand at 30.23 percent.

The variance in professional qualification in accordance with levels of education should conform to the need of higher expertise at increasing levels. However, in case of both education of respondents and professional qualification we understand that the ground reality is quite different which calls for an adequate policy response from the government.

### **c. Duration of Teaching Service**

Duration of teaching service of the respondents and duration of service as Head Teacher have been discussed here. Duration of service as teacher and as head teacher speak for the value assigned to experience required to push through the service cadre and head an institution at any level of education. It is evident from Table 1.3 that more than 83 percent respondents have 15 or more years of teaching experience whereas respondents with less than 5 years of experience stand only at 4.44 percent. Moreover,

respondents with 10 years of experience or more but less than 15 years stand at 3.70 percent. Teachers having an experience of 5 years or more but less than 10 years form the second biggest category of respondents with a percentage of 8.15. It is evident that teachers with more experience are preferred to take up positions at schools and seniority remains the basic guiding principle.

For duration of service as Head Teacher, it is discernable from the available data that majority of the respondents i.e. 44.44 percent have an experience of less than 3 years. On the other hand second biggest category of respondents comprises those having served 10 or more than 10 years as Head Teachers with a category percentage of 24.44. Respondents with 3 years or more but less than 6 years of service as Head Teachers stand at 20.00 percent whereas respondents 6 years or more but less than 10 years of experience comprise 11.11 percent of total respondents. The highest percentage comes from the lowest number of service years whereas the second highest percentage comes forth for those having the maximum number of service years as head teachers. Since the dynamics of posting as Head Teacher are beyond this study, we confine ourselves to observing that based on the service duration of teachers the appointment as head teacher does demand long teaching experience which can be useful in effectively altering learning outcomes at the school level.

It may be discerned that the highest incidence of service as head teacher in the present school lies in the lowest categories of years i.e. less than 3 years and 3 years but less

than 6 years. However, the contrast with the third highest percentage of teachers i.e. falling under the category of time stipulated as 10 or more years at the percentage of 14.81 is a cause of concern as it also breaks away from the descending order of percentage with increasing number of years as service. The percentage of teachers who retained their posts as head teachers for 10 or more years is significant alludes to good performance on the job and right kind of placement within the administrative set up.

### **School Profile and Facilities**

This sub-section draws out the profiles of public schools in district Swabi based on the facilities provided at each level of schools in the district. The sample of schools being representative of the district gives a better understanding of the overall district situation. The analysis presented concludes with inferences based on the data and its correlation with the state of education at the district and school level.

An overview of the facilities available to students in the public schools of District Swabi has been presented here and in order to develop a better appreciation of the facilities available to students it is imperative to look at the average strength of students in the schools. Except the average number of female students in elementary level, the average numbers of students are pretty high at each level. Ranging from as low as 107 for females in Grade I-V to an average high of 1639 for females of elementary level, the high number of students calls for greater number of facilities



including toilets, play grounds, black boards in classrooms, and electricity in school among other facilities.

#### **a. Facilities Provided in Schools**

This subsection presents the state of facilities in the public schools of Swabi district. The collected data speaks for the classrooms, classrooms with blackboards, classrooms with table and chair for the teacher, availability of toilets for students, number of playgrounds or sports area for students, and number of classrooms that have electricity. Data collected for each of the aforementioned categories has also been analyzed. It is learnt that as compared to the high average number of students the facilities available to them need to be re-examined in the context of needs of students. Although we may conclude from the data that classrooms have black boards and also have table and chair for the teacher but it cannot be affirmed that strength of students in each class is in accordance with the desired optimal number and also that the availability of table and chair despite being a good sign for the availability of necessary facility for the teacher does not correspond to the needs of the students. We do not know from the available data whether the students have adequate sitting arrangement or not. Likewise, availability of electricity is an appreciable phenomenon and irrespective of the size of the classroom can take care of the illumination need in a classroom. Availability of toilet and playground again come up as appreciable areas and one cannot deny their necessary presence on school campus. However, the number of toilets and size of the playground with respect

to the number of students remains an area of investigation. Given the higher number of average students, many more toilets may be required in a particular school. Also, if the strength of students in a school is high and the playground made available to them is fit for use by half the number of students then the mere availability of playground would be insufficient and requirement of additional space would be there.

Data gathered for this study regarding the availability of toilets collaborates well with the district data presented earlier in this report. Swabi ranks fifth in the districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa that have high percentage of institutions with toilet facility for students. Therefore, the number of toilets available for students revealed through the present study complements the district ranking.

## **b. Drinking Water Sources in Schools**

District Swabi has a high percentage of institutions with drinking water facility for students of public schools with 89.6 percent of its schools having the facility. The high percentage makes Swabi stand fourth in all the districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with Charsadda having highest percentage of institutions with drinking water facility for its students i.e. 95.6%.

Five sources of drinking water have been included in the study i.e. rain water tank, spring / lake / river, well / bore hole, pipes, and other. Institutions that have no source of drinking water have been categorized as 'None'. It is evident

from the figure that the highest percentage of institutions has well / bore hole as a source of drinking water with almost 66%. Almost 21% institutions have piped supply of water which indicates that government i.e. local municipal administration is supplying water. Piped water supply is the second highest source of drinking water. Other sources, spring / lake / river, and rain water tank form 4, 3, and 1 percent as sources of water respectively in the institutions of Swabi. 5% institutions surveyed had no source of drinking water making it the third largest category of institutions in Swabi.

School level wise detail of the sources of drinking water has been presented in Table 3.8 and helps to deconstruct the cumulative percentages of sources of drinking water. We come to know that well / bore hole forms the supply of water in 64.44, 61.70, and 72.09 percent institutions at the primary, elementary, and secondary levels respectively. Pipes as source of water supply cover 11.1, 27.66, and 23.26 percent institutions at the primary, elementary and secondary levels respectively thus making a cumulative percentage of 20.74. Rainwater tank is the source of drinking water in only 2.13 percent of the elementary schools and takes only 0.74 percent of the total percentage. 4.44 percent primary institutions, 2.13 elementary institutions, and 2.33 percent secondary institutions have spring / lake / river as sources of water. Institutions without a source of drinking water are 11.11 percent primary and 4.26 percent elementary level institutions. Segregated data for other sources of drinking water reveals that 8.89 percent primary,

2.13 percent elementary, and 2.33 percent secondary level institutions constitute the category of 'Other' sources.

Higher percentage of institutions with well / bore hole speaks for lack of water supply by the relevant municipal administration in terms of coverage and supply hours. The use of bore hole by schools calls for higher usage of electricity thus incurring higher bills which is a strain on the meagre school budgets. Therefore, the absence of other sources of water the cheapest and most reliable of it being the pipe water leaves no choice to pump school's own water by use of bore hole or wells. The scarce usage of rainwater tank indicates the non-reliability of water availability.

### **School Budget and SC Fund Utilization**

School budget speaks for the priorities of school administration and of the government with respect to improving infrastructure and quality of education. Involvement of community in managing the school affairs has been deemed to have better impact on educational outcomes. Therefore, School Councils under the names of Parent Teacher Associations, School Management Committees have been constituted in different provinces of Pakistan. Besides managing some administrative affairs of schools, School Councils have been entrusted with disbursement of funds as well. This sub-section reviews the state of utilization of funds by schools of district Swabi with a focus on expenditure by School Councils.

## **Presence of Active School Council**

In the context of utilization of funds by the School Council, the study first undertakes to establish the presence of an active school council. It also takes into account the dissolution of School Councils due to various reasons after their creation. It is encouraging to note that majority of the schools in district Swabi have active School Councils with a percentage of 74. The percentage of non-active School Councils is 25 which is relatively quite low as compared to the percentage of active School Councils. However, the incidence of this much School Councils being inactive is a cause of concern for the wellbeing of the schools. The reasons for non-functional councils are beyond the scope of this study but the need on part of the government to ensure the presence of active and functional School Councils remains there. The percentage of school councils that presently stand dissolved is approximately one and is not alarming. However, the new councils need to be constituted without fail to improve the quality of education in these schools.

The percentage of active and non-active school councils at each level is indicative of the degree of attention required by the authorities to ameliorate the situation. It is evident from the figure that school councils at the Secondary level are most active with the highest percentage of 76.74 followed by the primary and elementary institutions with 73.33 and 72.34 percent school councils active respectively. The situation of school councils stands reversed when it comes to non-active school councils at these levels. The

percentages of non-active school councils at the primary, elementary, and secondary levels stand at 26.67, 25.53, and 23.26 respectively. The school councils that were dissolved after their creation and are presently non-active form only 2.13 percent of school councils at the elementary level only which is a cause of concern for authorities.

When we contrast the data of active school councils with the data regarding functional school councils in district Swabi, the resultant picture is quite encouraging and the difference between the two is not alarming. The percentage of fully functional school councils is 72.59 whereas the percentage of not fully functional school councils is 23.70.

The incidence of fully functional school councils is highest at the secondary level followed by the primary and elementary levels with respective percentages of 76.74, 73.33, and 68.09. The percentage of not fully functional school councils is the highest at primary level with 26.67 percent non-functional school councils. The incidence of non-functional councils decreases with increase in the level of institutions and stands at 25.53 and 18.6 respectively for elementary and secondary levels. There are schools where the functionality of school councils could not be ascertained due to lack of record maintenance or ignorance of the respondents. Such school councils are low in percentage and are only 6.38 percent at elementary level and 4.65 percent at the secondary level. Unclear status of a school council needs immediate attention as compared to the non-functional councils as it denotes a serious disconnect between school

administration and the community along with lack of adequate record keeping.

### **Transfer of Funds by the District Government**

The status of funds transferred to school councils by the District Government over the period of two years i.e. 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 has been described in this section. It is encouraging to note that an overwhelming majority of school councils i.e. 92.37 percent received funds from the government in 2011-2012 whereas only 7.63 percent school councils did not receive any funds.

The increase in percentage of school councils that received funds from the district government in the year 2012-2013 is not that big a percentage but is nonetheless encouraging keeping in view the number of schools and volume of funds. Improvement in public financing modes i.e. transfer of funds is a good indicator and calls for further improvement with respect to transfer of funds. The percentage of school councils that did not receive funds in 2012-2013 stands at 6.87. It may be inferred that the school councils which did not receive funds might be the ones that were not fully functional. However, resource constraint on part of the district government might be the other factor behind non-transference of funds.

Breakdown of the percentage of school councils that received funds from the district council according to the level of institutions over the two years has been discussed here. The given data reveals that for the year 2011-2012, all

secondary level school councils received funds from the district government followed by the school councils of primary and elementary level institutions. The percentage of school councils that received funds at the primary and elementary levels stands at 93.33 and 84.09 percent for the same year. The incidence of the percentage of school councils that did not receive funds happens to be the highest at the elementary level with 15.91 percent. As compared to the elementary level, the percentage of school councils not receiving funds at the primary level is quite low and stands at 6.67 percent.

The overall percentage of transfer of funds to school councils has improved in the year 2012-2013 but the breakdown of this percentage is a cause of concern. First, the appreciable aspect of increase in percentage of school council that received funds is the increase in transfer at the elementary level which from the previous year's standing at 84.09 has moved to 97.73 percent and correspondingly the non-transfer percentage has come down from 15.91 to 2.27. Secondly, the decrease in percentage of school councils that received funds from the district government is discernable for the primary and secondary levels. 84.44 percent school councils at the primary level and 97.62 percent school councils received funds from the district government as compared to the corresponding figures of 93.33 and 100 for the preceding year. 15.56 percent school councils at the primary level did not receive funds during 2012-2013. The decline in the percentage of school councils is a cause of concern and demands further inquiry into the matter.



## **Utilization of Transferred Funds**

School Councils at each level have exhibited good capacity regarding utilization of funds in the years 2011-2012 and 2012-2013. It has been noted that the amount of funds transferred increases with the level of institution thus primary level school councils received the least amount of funds i.e. 27, 090, elementary level school councils received 35,830, and the secondary level school council received 355,997 for the year 2011-2012. The utilization of these funds has exceeded the amount transferred to school councils except in the case of elementary level councils which utilized 34,694 out of the transferred amount of 35, 830.

In the following fiscal year i.e. 2012-2013, the transfer of funds by the district government and utilization of the same by the school councils at each level present a different picture. First difference occurs in the increase of volume of funds to the school councils of elementary and secondary level. The amount of funds disbursed in 2011-2012 i.e. 35, 830 has increased to 36,688 in 2012-2013. Likewise, the amount of funds disbursed to secondary level school councils in 2011-2012 i.e. 355,997 has increased to 476,300 in 2012-2013. Secondly, decline in the transfer of funds at the primary level is alarming which has dropped from 27,090 to 23,743.

## **Funds Raised from Other Sources**

This subsection delineates the collected data regarding funds raised through other sources, sources other than regular

transfer by the district government, by the school council. The other sources include Faroog-e-Taleem Fund, Government special projects funds, Community support, local philanthropists, NGOs, International organizations, and other sources. The raising of funds in terms of percentages of school councils at each level, amount of funds raised for 2012-2013, and the maintenance of record against the funds have been presented in this subsection.

The incidence of raising funds through this source appears to be significant for the primary level institutions with 47.73 percent institutions using it as a source of resource generation. The situation is not promising at the elementary level where only 10.87 percent institutions turn to Faroog-e-Taleem fund for resource addition. Since generation of the fund is outside the scope of secondary level institutions therefore 100 percent of them do not use it for resource generation. The percentage of institutions not using this fund for additional resources stands at 52.27 and 89.13 percent at the primary and elementary levels respectively. Measures may be taken to encourage the use of this source at the school level.

The situation of funds raised through the government special projects at the primary, elementary and secondary levels is a cause of concern due to very low percentage of schools receiving funds under this head. The funding provided by the government at each level is indicative of the priorities attached to education of a particular level. 93.18 percent institutions at the primary level, 93.48 percent institutions at the elementary level, and 88.37 percent institutions at the

secondary level received funds for government special projects. The non-receiving of funds is alarming at each level. Although secondary institutions have relatively ranked high on government priority i.e. 11.63 percent secondary institutions received funds yet the figure is alarming with respect to the school needs. The percentages of primary and elementary institutions at 6.82 and 6.52 cause deeper concerns regarding this source of funding as a proxy for priority attached to these institutions by the government.

**Community Support** has been deemed as an integral factor for raising the quality of education by providing the necessary support in monitoring and management of school affairs. However, the financial support extended by the community towards schools is a question of affluence within the community. The situation of funds raised through community support clearly demonstrates the low support by the community in district Swabi. At the primary level, none of the institutions studied received any financial support from the community. The elementary and secondary level institutions that received funds from the community were only 4.35 and 6.98 percent respectively. The situation is alarming as 95.65 percent institutions at elementary level and 93.02 percent institutions at the secondary level did not raise any fund through this means. However, as noted earlier the affluence level of community stands as the decisive factor in this regard and makes the schools look away from the community for financial support.

**Funds raised through local philanthropists** can be an important source of resource generation by schools but like

the previous factor of community support, it depends upon the level of affluence and efficacy of outreach of the school. Since the latter is not a part of school functioning and the former is beyond the control of schools so we cannot expect much from this source of funds. As Figure 3.12 clearly presents that institutions at all levels reflect a low percentage as recipients of this resource. Mere 2.17 percent and 4.65 percent institutions at elementary and secondary levels received funds from local philanthropists whereas no primary institution was able to generate funds through this source. The situation calls for looking into the priorities of philanthropists and the outreach of school for mobilizing resources through this source.

**Support by NGOs** can be important with respect to addition of financial resources to school funds at the primary, elementary and secondary levels. However, this source of funds also stands low in terms of supporting institutions. Although the elementary level institutions show the highest percentage i.e. 21.74 on account of being recipient of funds yet the cumulative situation is not very promising. 93.02 percent secondary institutions, 88.64 percent primary institutions and 76.26 percent elementary institutions did not receive any funds from NGOs. The situation is indicative of weak financial base of NGOs and lack of subsequent financial support for the public sector schools. Elementary and primary institutions received priority in receiving funds from NGOs.

**Financial support by international institutions** can be another important source of revenue for public sector

schools. In case of school of district Swabi, the contribution to the financial resources of institutions of different levels is very low in terms of the percentage of institutions that received funds from international organizations. In contrast to the NGOs, international organizations have relatively extended more support to the primary level institutions with 6.82 percent primary schools receiving whereas the elementary schools display lowest percentage as recipients of funds.

For other sources of funds, only elementary and secondary level institutions were able to utilize other avenues of funding. It is encouraging to note that majority of institutions of all levels maintain record for all types of funding received and are willing to share the record for transparency sake.

### **Utilization of Funds by School Councils**

It is important to look at the utilization of funds by the school councils to gauge their capacity of expenditure of funds. Figure 3.9 of this section has already presented an overview of the transfer of funds by the district government and its utilization by the school councils which indicates a high capacity for the utilization of funds. This subsection presents an overview of utilization of funds raised through all sources to better understand the financial capacity of school councils. It is evident that except the primary level school councils, all other school councils have increased their utilization of funds over the two years under study. Utilization by primary level school councils has increased from 44, 761 to 61,798 whereas utilization of funds by

secondary level school councils has increased from 81,052 to 111,323. It is strange to observe the decline in the utilization of funds by primary level school councils which may be attributed to lower volume of the funds raised. Overall financial capacity of school councils with respect to utilization of funds may be termed satisfactory.

Cumulative funds utilized for all levels given by donors / International NGOs are the biggest in volume followed by funds given by the community & parents, and funds from the district government. The utilization of funds by school councils has increased over the following year with an increase in the volume of funds received. It has already been noted that expenditure by the school councils indicates a good capacity for financial management with low amount of funds. Gradual increase in funds by the district government may prove beneficial for the school.

**Heads of Utilization** make it clear that construction work took precedence over all other expenditures followed by provision of temporary employment to the teachers. Other expenses, utility supplies, payment of utility bills, learning material for students, and furniture for school follow the list of expenditure in terms of volume of funds spent. The incidence of learning material including audio-visual aids gathering low rank in priority of expenditure speaks for the grave nature of issues faced by schools of all levels. The construction work required in the school on account of extension / repair of current infrastructure and ensuring the presence of teachers for taking classes will certainly take precedence over budgetary items like sports equipment and

stationery. Likewise, is the case of utility supplies and payment of utility bills as compared to the provision of other material. It is not easy to discern and prioritize the needs of a school with such resource constraints. The decision to spend the available funds on things other than the learning material and stationery for students and teachers is indicative of the functionality problem with respect to the goal of imparting education. It is noted that the basic infrastructure and utilities along with ensuring the presence of teachers in schools can create the necessary space for the school councils to make expenditures on education related expenses.

### **Recommendations**

District Swabi is one of the top five performing districts with respect to the availability of resources and infrastructure facilities in public schools. Provision of drinking water, electricity, furniture, white board, and play ground is an appreciable feature of the educational profile of Swabi district. The public schools of Swabi surveyed under this study have qualified teachers at all levels. However, the educational qualification of teachers of primary level institutions is on the lower side as compared to the educational and professional qualification of teachers of elementary and secondary levels. The average strength of teachers and students at each level especially primary level is quite high and calls for rationalization of class size in accordance with the number of available teachers. It has been further noted that the schools heavily rely upon the transfer of funds from the district government for

maintenance of infrastructure and provision of educational aids. The arrangement of utilities and payment of bills is also carried out from the limited funds available to schools leaving them with meagre resources for providing stationery to students and acquisition of learning aids and sports equipment. The dire need of maintaining the infrastructure, building new class rooms, arranging for utilities, payment of utility bills, and purchase and repair of furniture are the major expenses for which funds are utilized by school. Although the volume of funds available to schools is small yet their capacity for utilization of funds is quite adequate.

On the basis of above inferences and the information shared in this study, following recommendations are being made to improve the quality of education in public schools of Swabi district:

1. Funding by government under the special projects fund may be increased to meet the infrastructure, furniture, and utility supply requirements of school so that the other resources available to schools may be spent on learning materials for improving the quality of education.
2. Schools need to be encouraged to explore avenues of funding other than the district government transfers. The most important of which is the Farooq-e-Taleem fund for the primary and elementary level students.
3. In order to make optimum use of funding sources provided by the NGOs and donor agencies along with



community mobilization, schools need to have outreach programs that could apprise the stakeholders of educational performance and needs of the schools.

4. Student teacher ratio in the public schools needs to be improved. Staff rationalization may be initiated by the government to ensure adequate instruction / learning in the school. As stated in the introduction, the size of class room is closely linked with the quality of learning outcomes.
5. Capacity issues of the school councils with respect to financial management and outreach may be addressed through introduction of bi-annual training programs.
6. The budget allocation process may be made more transparent with the inclusion of community representatives while taking into account the budgetary requirements to match the learning needs of students.

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## **Chapter 5: Education Reform and Parent Teacher Councils of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**

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### **Introduction**

**T**he role of communities to help improve the state of education in schools is considered vital and extensive literature explores different aspects of community involvement in schools. Diverse models of community involvement have been adopted in Pakistan and the forums thus created have been recognized through different names such as School Management Committees (SMCs), Parent Teacher Committees, Parent Teacher Councils (PTCs), Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) and School Councils (SCs). This chapter draws its content from a study that attempts to assess the capacity of Parent Teacher Councils (PTCs) of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) with respect to their assigned responsibilities. The assessment is aimed to review the existing policy, including mandates and mechanisms for capacity building of PTCs. Furthermore, the study analyzes the capacity gaps of PTCs and develops a strategy and broad guidelines for preparing an action plan for capacity building of PTCs. The study builds on the quantitative data presented in the Third Party Validation (TPV) of Parent Teacher Councils

of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and adds qualitative value to gain insights into the working and capacity gaps of PTCs.

The KP government has displayed keen interest in making PTCs deliver their desired benefits and support measures have been adopted to facilitate the working of PTCs. A Third Party Validation was done to validate the presence and functioning of the PTCs established in KP. Capacity building initiatives by the government and development partners were also undertaken to strengthen PTCs. The TPV highlights the areas of improvement for PTCs; yet the shortcomings in their working need to be thoroughly analyzed.

The present study attempts to analyze the capacity of PTCs with regard to their assigned functions in the KP province and points out required actions to improve their capacity. The analysis considers the interest level of community in school matters and interaction between PTCs and the community so that community involvement may be better understood. The relationship between value attached to education by the community and subsequent interest is well established.<sup>50</sup> This study tries to gauge the value and interest attached to education by the communities. The poor interest shown by communities towards PTCs in KP province was alarming and required follow-up measures so that people

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<sup>50</sup> See for example Ishmael Mkhabela, *The Role of Community in Education: A Practitioner's Reflection* "A community that values education jealously claims ownership of the process as well as educational institutions."

could value education and their role in bringing improvements in local schools. This study gauges the interest level of the community in PTCs and sees improvements in the interest level. It is pertinent to note here that interest level of the community and parents is correlated to their education, status and level of skills<sup>51</sup>. This aspect becomes most relevant when we deal with low income communities and parents hailing from such communities. Hence, given the educational and skill level of parents belonging to different communities in the KP province, the development of social capital necessary to provide the required impetus to PTCs may require prolonged efforts on account of time and capacity building initiatives.

## **Findings and Analysis**

### **a. Composition of PTCs and Membership Preferences**

Further to the findings of the TPV Report of PTCs, the present study assessed the composition of select councils and perceptions of the members regarding their functions in the sample districts of Battagram, Buner, Karak, Lakki Marwat and Mardan. The composition of PTCs was largely found to be

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<sup>51</sup>See Henderson, Mapp, Johnson, & Davies, 2007; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997. Also see “Horvat, Weininger, and Lareau (2003) who showed that educated parents can deal with teachers and school management as equals and thus prove more effective.

satisfactory in accordance with the data provided by the TPV Report whereby schools with poorly structured PTCs were 41%, 35.41%, 28.41%, 26.34% and 30.35% in the aforementioned districts respectively.

The PTCs are mandated to undertake a wide range of duties and responsibilities. More significant among these responsibilities include: supervising teachers' attendance and regularity; organizing meetings and counseling parents as well as communities to increase enrolments and decrease drop outs; promoting extra-curricular activities; assistance to teachers in disbursement of free textbooks and stipends; building or repairing latrines, boundary walls etc.; arranging for drinking water, electricity, sanitation and first aid supplies; and arranging for substitute teachers as per needs of the school. In order to make a PTC effective and functional, it is important for members to know their roles and responsibilities.

During the assessment, majority members of PTCs were found to have limited understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Barring the Secretaries of PTCs, most of the other members consider themselves in the role of advisors and monitors of financial expenditure. They consider their



responsibilities confined to defining the priorities of financial expenditure in the light of consultations within the council. They think only head teachers are mandated to undertake all other responsibilities. The situation is even more alarming in the case of females' schools where even lower literacy level of the members feeds to poor understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the PTCs. The limited understanding of roles and responsibilities, in case of both male and female schools, was found to be a result of non-effective communication at the time of constitution of the PTCs. From the comments of the members, it was ascertained that verbal briefings given during the inception stages failed to inculcate true understanding of their roles and responsibilities in PTCs. Communities and parents seemed to have developed an understanding that the councils have been established to check the financial expenditure and other functions are the prime responsibility of the head teacher. Need is there to clearly communicate to all members of PTCs their roles and expectations from them.

The assessment further revealed that the secretaries and chairpersons of PTCs had a good understanding of their responsibilities. They complained most members are non-active and are unable to actively participate in the functions of councils due to lack of time and lack of orientation. They were of the

opinion that persons with plenty of spare time and a sense of social responsibility should be engaged as members. This highlights the need for policy change thereby providing a set criteria regarding eligibility of members for election of PTCs.

Further enquiry into this aspect revealed that a time suitable for all the members cannot be fixed for meetings because of the nature of engagements of the members and demands of their respective professions. Therefore, an effort is made to decide upon the meeting time through informal consultation with the members and those who are active members do manage to attend the meetings. Constraint of time carries different implications for female PTCs whereby housewives are bogged down by the household chores and family duties which are considered a high priority area as compared to PTC meetings.

Honesty and education were the two other attributes shared as necessary for members of PTCs by the chairpersons and the secretaries. Majority of the Secretaries were of the view that retired school teachers could be more helpful in taking up the responsibilities of PTCs due to better education and higher understanding of the expected role. From the discussions with the chairpersons and the secretaries it may be inferred that they prefer presence of

members with ample time, education and social activism, which can help boost the performance of PTCs. Moreover, the respondents did stress the need for increased number of leadership trainings for members of PTCs.

**b. Decision Making and Effective Functioning of PTCs**

The process of decision making in the PTCs was also assessed during this study. Moreover, transparency and wider participation in the decision-making process of PTCs were also gauged. It was heartening to learn that majority of PTCs have adopted an inclusive process of decision making whereby attempts are made to include all the members in decision making as opinions / suggestions are welcomed by the management of PTCs. This incidence was shared by the members of PTCs during the FGDs and they lauded the inclusive approach adopted by the management of PTCs.

Members are informed about the meetings of the council well in time (at least one week before the meeting and incidence of informal consultation with the active members over the meeting time was also reported during focus group discussions) and both formal and informal means of communication are adopted for this purpose. In majority of cases, members are informed through informal means whereas only a few councils resort to formal means

of communication like letter writing. It was further learnt that meetings are held in an open manner where members feel free to express themselves and can raise any point of their choice.

It has been noted with concern that mostly meetings were conducted without a formal agenda except for those where decisions about financial expenditure are to be taken. Members feel at ease to pick up issues of their choice and debate them at length. Decisions during the meetings are taken through consensus wherever possible (PTC office bearers try to build consensus by facilitating and encouraging discussions during meetings) otherwise opinion of the majority of the members is adopted as decision of the PTC. Members see a lot of value in being heard by the management of PTCs and consider PTCs as appropriate forums to raise their concerns about schools. However, they stressed the need for more funds and powers for PTCs.

It was shared during discussions that PTCs' office bearers consider PTCs responsible for carrying out all the required infrastructure development and repair work in the schools and hence demanded more funds. The demand for more funds was augmented by their perception of needing more powers regarding administration of the school particularly with respect to taking disciplinary actions against

staff members. It was also found that minimum requirement of four meetings in a year is met by majority i.e. 82% of the councils and in most of the cases the number exceeds by 100%. Some of the councils i.e. 45% also hold meetings on monthly basis and the respondents opined that higher frequency of regular meetings helps in improving the performance of PTCs.

The majority of PTCs assessed for this study (i.e. around 90%) maintain minutes of the meetings which are shared with members on a regular basis. Minutes are shared at the start of every meeting but in case if some members are absent, they are facilitated by the councils in accessing records of meetings. Only 17% respondents stated that minutes of meetings are not shared whereas an overwhelming majority i.e. 83% of the members stated that minutes of the previous meeting are shared at the start of each meeting. It is important to note that the incidence of non-sharing of minutes was found only in the male PTCs whereas all the PTCs of girls' schools assessed in this study were found to have adhered to the practice of sharing minutes at the start of each meeting. Only one female PTC reported that it sends minutes of the previous meeting with formal invitation for each new meeting. In cases where minutes are not maintained, members are verbally briefed about the proceedings

and even more so efforts are made to inform the members who were absent from the meeting. At this point the PTC makes distinction between active and non-active members, and only the active members are apprised of the proceedings through informal means.

The assessment also revealed promising incidence of follow-up meetings in the working of PTCs. Around 60% PTCs conduct follow-up meetings to discuss the implementation status of various decisions taken and any issues arising in this regard. Members of the councils (40% PTCs) not holding follow-up meetings were of the view that a meeting concluded after discussion over all the matters brought before the council is considered to have served its purpose and the need for follow-up meetings is not there. However, in order to inform any member absent from meetings for some reason, individual and informal meetings are held to share the proceedings and decisions. Occurrence of more formal meetings was dismissed by majority of the members on account of busy schedules and lack of time.

The incidence of individual and informal meetings by the PTCs was also gauged under the assessment to determine the level of interaction and efficacy of communication amongst the members. It was learnt that only pro-active members initiated requests of

such meetings or responded to request of meetings by the PTC management. The meetings are called to apprise the active members of the proceedings as they cannot take part in meetings due to some engagements of their own. At times formal follow-up meetings are held to discuss any issues arising during implementation of a decision taken such as procurements, quotations received, placing of order etc. Generally, respondents claimed lack of time and interest as prime reasons for not making themselves available for the meetings.

Equal percentage of the respondents stated that meetings on individual basis are held or otherwise. The finding corresponds to the interest level of the members as the secretaries and chairpersons of PTCs affirmed their availability for the members at any given day barring their official meetings. Focus Group Discussions also revealed that availability of time with members was a big issue in attending meetings. They reiterated their suggestion to have those members on councils who could spare ample time for the PTC.

Another aspect assessed with respect to the functioning of PTCs was the availability of its record for the members and the ease with which they could access it. It was learnt that majority of the respondents i.e. 70%, claimed to have been provided

easy access to records and members could see it any time whereas 30% of the respondents stated that PTC records is not shared. Record sharing requests pertained to financial records, attendance records of students and minutes of PTC meetings. Upon further probing it was learnt that a segregation of active and non-active members existed in this regard whereby the active members were provided easy access but the comparatively non-active members, who seldom attend PTC meetings, were not provided easy access.

The assessment also tried to gauge the process for review of decisions and main actions by the PTC with a view to understand the flexibility in decision making and change in actions due to school needs. It was learnt that decisions taken after long deliberations are considered final but in the case of majority of councils these decisions are subject to revision if members demand so or need arises to change the priorities set by the council. Decisions subject to revision are normally procurement decisions or about meetings with parents of students. For example, if a meeting with the parents of students is scheduled on a specific date or venue, this decision might be reconsidered to reschedule the meeting to facilitate the parents or to ensure maximum participation of council members. However, a significant percentage (i.e. 43.33) of the councils do not review the decisions and nor the main actions,



once decided, are revisited. Respondents from the latter category deem it necessary to reach a consensus / majority decision and then enforce it without further revision. This highlights the need to give orientation to PTCs regarding participatory and flexible decision making.

### **c. Community Involvement**

Community involvement rests at the heart of making PTCs successful in terms of controlling dropout rates, increasing enrollment and seeking cooperation for undertaking development activities for the school. Moreover, the much-needed social capital for improving the state of education in an area comes from the proactive involvement of the community and its displayed commitment to the cause of education.<sup>52</sup> This study assessed the involvement of community in schools from the standpoint of its engagement with PTCs. The level of disinterest in becoming members of PTCs clearly defines the gap in community involvement and the present study tried to look into the reasons behind this gap.

During the assessment, it was learnt that community knowledge about the nature and working of the

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<sup>52</sup> Beyond the Bake Sale: A Community Based Relational Approach to Parent Engagement in Schools by Mark R. Warren, Soo Hong, Carolyn Leung Rubin, Phitsamay Sychitkokhong UY; Harvard Graduate School of Education

councils is quite low. The common view amongst community members about the role of PTCs is limited to the perceived notion of development work that a PTC is required to supervise in school. The perception is fueled by lack of community outreach on part of PTCs and is further aggravated by the lack of knowledge of PTC responsibilities on part of its members. The need was felt that greater understanding of responsibilities of PTCs is required by its members and the same has to be properly communicated to the community through well-defined modes of involvement such as corner meetings and effective use of *Hujra* culture. Moreover, there is need to inform the community regarding roles of PTCs beyond making financial expenditure. The community needs to be sensitized about the potential benefits that an active PTC may bring to a school.

The study further assessed the mode of interaction adopted by PTCs to involve communities. Frequency of meetings of PTC with the community was gauged and it was learnt that majority of PTCs i.e. 36.66% claim to conduct quarterly meetings with community whereas the percentage of PTCs holding monthly and six-monthly meetings stood at 26.66% and 13.33% respectively. 6.66% PTCs stated that they hold meetings with the community after every two months whereas 10% PTCs hold such meetings on an

annual basis. Lastly 6.66% PTCs stated that community meetings are held on a need basis.

It is important to note here that all such meetings are informal and are limited to sharing the general state of the school. Only one incidence of non-occurrence of meetings with community was found in a girls' school in Battagram where the PTC made no attempt to even hold such informal meetings. It was further learnt that community involvement was a weak area as the PTC management and members did not take interest in involving the community in school affairs.

It is important to note here that three PTCs of girls' schools out of the sample for this study also had male members in the PTC, but female PTC members were of the opinion that presence of male members in their councils did not add value in terms of increased interaction with the community. The need was felt for adoption of separate strategies by male and female PTCs for engaging communities. On one hand male PTCs can make use of the *Hujra Culture* and mosques to provide monthly up-dates to the community and encourage them to suggest measures for increasing enrollment rate and curtailing dropout rate. On the other hand, female PTCs are restricted to hold meetings with smaller groups of community members and parents in the school premises instead of going out like male

members. This is important because the cultural values of KP need to be kept in mind while encouraging group interaction for female members of PTCs most of which i.e. around 80%, happen to be housewives. In order to build the required capacity of community engagement in female PTCs, gender sensitivity with respect to the cultural constraints for females of KP province has to be kept in mind. We must not ignore that people in KP have a certain mindset about women rights and interaction of women with men at large so it has to be kept upfront all the time as radical attempts at improving the situation may prove counterproductive. Before making demands on the female PTCs for community engagement, a detailed assessment (may be a perception survey in KP) is required about the limitations, and 'Dos' and 'Don'ts' for females of KP from urban and rural areas.

Fayyat Begum and Shaheen Begum, during FGD with the Chairpersons of female PTCs, opined that household chores also make it difficult for the females to attend to PTC duties. Community involvement is mainly done through the male members of the family. Members of female PTCs brief the male members of their respective households who in turn talk to other male members of the community at their pleasure. No incidence to verify community engagement in this manner could

be found. FGD with the Secretaries of PTCs revealed that they consider role of men very important in making PTCs successful. Hafsa Begum, Nusrat Waheed, Iqbala Begum and Robeen Bano opined that '*Ulema*' and husbands of members of PTCs should have an active role in PTCs for community engagement. The community's understanding about progress of children and learning outcomes with respect to their potential role in curtailing the dropout rate or increasing enrollment is minimal. Furthermore, absence of a clear plan on part of the PTCs as to how to engage the community and its ascribed role in improving the state of education also weakens effective involvement of the community. Therefore, lack of community involvement despite positive indicators of regular interaction between PTCs and communities may be better understood in the light of absence of effective community engagement strategies of PTCs.

It was further learnt under this study that none of the PTCs assessed have developed a social mobilization strategy or an awareness building campaign regarding community involvement. All the active members of PTCs share their different individual comments with the community on the state of schools which understandably has little bearing on the desired level of communication and outreach. Head teachers and chairpersons try to reach out to

people at a personal level but that cannot be a substitute for institutional outreach on part of PTCs. The need was felt during the assessment that members of PTCs need comprehensive orientation sessions about their role with respect to community involvement and an outreach strategy also needs to be developed which is shared and accepted by all / majority members of PTCs. Views of head teachers regarding the need of required trainings were also ascertained during this study. They identified social mobilization as an important training requirement for PTCs whereby 86.66% of the respondents termed it as a required training. Only 13.33% of the respondents stated that training on social mobilization was not required.

The gender perspective of the above data reveals some interesting information. 73.33% of the PTCs of girls' schools favored the need of training on social mobilization whereas 13.33% PTCs termed it as a non-requirement. As compared to the male PTCs, non-requirement of training on social mobilization is found to be high in female PTCs. In the light of discussions with head teachers of girls' schools it was learnt that aversion to community interaction on part of women is the main cause of non-acceptance of such training. Otherwise, an overwhelming majority (as evident from the quoted data in this sub-section) of the PTCs agreed to the need of this training. It was

further learnt from the survey data that 75% of the female PTCs that termed social mobilization training as non-required were from Lakki Marwat whereas the rest belonged to Battagram. Since data gathered under the survey has a very limited scope so these findings need to be taken as indicative only. However, it does call for a deeper and thorough investigation into the matter.

It is important to note that social mobilization trainings are perceived differently by male and female PTCs. Male PTCs shared that social mobilization trainings need to address the capacity gap of PTCs in formulating an outreach plan and means to effectively interact with the community on issues of education. Information about larger issues at the district and provincial level was termed as “likely to be useful” for perspective building by male PTCs. On the other hand, female PTCs were more concerned about finding ways to engaging with the community after fulfilling their primary responsibilities as housewives while adhering to the social norms of KP.73.33% of the PTCs opined in favor of conducting the social mobilization training whereas 13.33% of the PTCs deemed it unnecessary.

#### **d. Communication Strategy of PTCs**

Assessment of community involvement (as explained by the previous section) invariably led to assessing the communication strategy adopted by PTCs so that their use of information networks (both formal and informal) is better understood in the light of their communication needs. The assessment revealed that none of the PTCs has a formal communication strategy but they are cognizant of their primary stakeholders i.e. members of PTC, parents, community members, influential individuals of the area and relevant officials of the education department. Information sharing with these stakeholders is sporadic and largely informal with an exception for the officials of the education department. Besides record sharing and letter writing to the education department about the needs of the school, information sharing with all the other stakeholders is largely informal and without a coherent communication strategy.

It has already been stated in the previous section that frequency of meetings with the community despite being overall positive, falls short of delivering the desired results due to lack of proper information sharing mechanisms. The modes of communication adopted for information sharing with the community and the Education Department were analysed during this study and it was learnt that Group Meetings and Personal Meetings were the most common modes of



communication adopted by the PTCs. Being of the same neighborhood it is highly understandable that informal group / personal meetings can be a good means of information sharing yet positive bearing of such meetings on the performance of PTCs and improvement of educational indicators seems to be minimal.

An overwhelming majority of the respondents stated that group meetings are held with the community on regular and need basis but the absence of clearly defined needs / demands for the community makes them fall short of achieving their purpose. Moreover, in the light of feedback from the community, the informal mode of group meetings could be made more effective if *Hujras* are used for these meetings. Having acknowledged the need of the use of informal means of information sharing, it is important to understand that the nature of information to be shared, the desired messages to be communicated and required level of efforts on part of the community; all need to be well grounded in a holistic communication strategy. All the females PTCs assessed under this study held group meetings with the community except for one PTC which does not hold any meetings with the community because of non-interest of the members.

The study further assessed the information sharing mechanism adopted by PTCs for the Education Department. The most common mode was found to be sharing of records which is either inspected by the relevant ADO or is shared through a letter by the PTC. 66.66% of PTCs shared information through record sharing whereas 20% stated that they hold group meetings with the officials of the education department followed by 13.33% who declared personal meetings with the officials as information sharing mechanisms adopted by their PTCs. It is pertinent to note that the situation with respect to female PTCs is a little different whereby 78.5% of the female PTCs share information through records, 14.3% through group meetings and only 7.1% hold personal meetings. Personal meetings were held by the Secretaries. Another aspect assessed with respect to the Education Department was information status of PTCs regarding the Cluster Heads. Not a single PTC was found to have knowledge of creation of such an office. The need remains to share information in writing and in form of briefing sessions with all the PTCs.

Besides assessing the external communication of the PTCs, the study also assessed the internal information sharing mechanism of PTCs. Discussions with the secretaries and chairpersons of the PTCs informed that both realize the importance of close

coordination amongst them and open communication with other members for effective functioning of the PTCs. However, this realization is not backed by substantive actions to make the internal communication more effective. Internal communication of PTCs studied was found to be largely informal just like the external one, which on one hand is well grounded in communal relations but on the other hand is unstructured lacking on clearly defined communication messages. It was further learnt through the opinions of the secretaries and chairpersons that disinterest of the members causes problems in smooth flow of information. The study also revealed that the members are regularly updated about the activities of the PTCs and information about the meetings is conveyed well in time either through the students or other means including letter and verbal messages.

The study also tried to gauge the training needs of PTCs regarding communication and it was learnt that majority of the respondents deemed communication as a very important training area and declared it the foremost training requirement. During the survey, 96.66% of the respondents declared communication as an important aspect of the responsibilities of PTCs and demanded for elaborate training in this area. In comparison to this overwhelming majority being in favor of training on communication, a minority view

i.e. 3.33% stated that training in communication is not required. This minority view for not requiring training came from the female PTCs whereas no male PTC opined against the need of training in communication. From the findings stated in this section we may infer that communication is a very important but unfocused area with respect to the responsibilities of PTCs and it was deemed necessary for all the members of PTCs. It calls upon the concerned officials to attend to the communication needs of PTCs so that information sharing requirements of stakeholders are adequately met.

#### **e. Leadership Skills of Office Bearers of PTCs**

Leadership turned out to be the most important factor with respect to effective functioning of the PTCs during the course of this assessment. Stakeholders i.e. government officials, community members, parents etc., during this assessment shared their viewpoints regarding the importance of leadership in taking PTCs forward and making it work as an efficient body. They all agreed that it is just one person either the chairperson or the secretary of a PTC who can infuse a working spirit in its body. All other factors including the disinterest of members and lack of communication with the community cannot hamper a spirited leader from taking up the responsibilities assigned to a PTC.

Despite the stress on leadership and its importance, it is important to understand that PTCs are required to work as teams comprising of small organizations where each member shares the vision provided by the leadership and strives to improve things in the school. A leader alone cannot perform every function single handedly and thus requires a team of motivated and committed individuals. On this account of team work and taking others along towards a shared vision, the leadership of PTCs shared a common complaint about the disinterest of members and opined that only those persons who can spare ample time and are motivated to serve the community should serve on the council.

The study attempted to take into account the management training needs of PTCs and it was learnt that a realization exists on part of all the stakeholders that PTCs require management training. There is no differentiation between leadership and common members of the councils in this regard. They do acknowledge and demand the acquisition of much needed management skills to better discharge their responsibilities. Interestingly 26.66% of respondents thought that such trainings were not required as they alone can perform their assigned functions in a proper manner. Further query upon this factor revealed that there was a segregation of responsibilities between the PTCs' leadership. Mostly

chairpersons have left the management affairs of the school just to the head teacher who takes care of issues like enrollment, teacher absenteeism, routine maintenance etc.

On the other hand, things external to the management of schools like community involvement are handled by the chairpersons. Incidence of joint decision making on financial expenditure was found across the board and seemed quite encouraging for the working of PTCs. The need was felt for proper training on management with a focus on leadership and that too with a view to developing a sense of shared responsibility amongst PTC members so that they work towards achieving a shared vision.

**f. Monitoring Capacity**

Another important aspect highlighted during the assessment was that of lack of check on teacher absenteeism where a number of factors contribute to the inaction of PTCs on this account. Apart from considering it the head teachers' job, members interviewed were of the view that being from the same neighborhood and having personal relationships / rapport with the teachers makes it impossible for them to report against the non-performing teachers and thus curbing teacher absenteeism through PTCs becomes difficult. They declared it appropriate that the head teacher should keep the responsibility to himself instead of asking

them to do a function which might have big social costs.

Least attended area regarding the expected role of the PTCs was that of controlling the dropout rate and increasing enrollment. Members displayed least understanding of their role with respect to these aspects of improving education. Some members including the secretaries of PTCs opined that increased number of meetings with the parents of children attending their respective schools may prove helpful in this regard but no formal plan / schedule of meetings with the parents was found at any of the schools included in the sample. Some head teachers did share that they try to meet maximum number of parents given their busy work routine. The assessment revealed that greater understanding is required on part of all the members regarding the role of PTCs.

#### **g. Capacity to Prepare School Improvement Plan**

This study also collected views of PTC members regarding School Improvement Plans (SIPs). The survey data reveals that around 13% PTCs consider SIPs as important document which helps bring improvement in schools. Around 83% PTCs prepared SIPs regularly. Of all the PTCs which prepared plans, 17% shared that these plans are not implemented

completely. Information was also gathered regarding the focus and priorities set in school improvement plans. The field research and discussion inform that mostly the plans focus on minor repairing and maintenance as well as installation of water facility for students in schools. The plans termed as School Improvement Plans by the PTCs are primarily fund expenditure plans made during the meetings of PTCs and are also recorded in the minutes of the meetings. Other main activity under the plan is to hold parent teacher meetings.

#### **h. Procurement Procedures of PTCs**

Procurements form an important aspect of the financial expenditure to be incurred by the PTCs and this study analyzed the procurement procedures of PTCs from the standpoint of following five aspects:

1. Consultation over the expenditure plan
2. Expenditure plan is widely shared
3. Expenditure made is ratified by the members
4. Maintenance of record and availability for scrutiny
5. Checking of record by the ADO

Findings on the above-mentioned aspects are presented below.

#### **1. Consultation over the Expenditure Plan**



Since financial expenditure is considered the most important and rather the only main function of PTCs by a majority of the members so they take keen interest in all matters relating to finances and procurements. Minutes of the meetings regarding financial expenditure indicate discussion over the expenditure to be made by the PTCs. Needs of schools regarding infrastructure are the focus of these discussions and plans are made to make expenditure in accordance with the prioritized needs. Needs are prioritized in the light of views of the majority of members. Meetings scheduled to discuss the nature of expenditure to be made and the manner in which that expenditure is to be incurred are relatively taken more seriously by the members and each member participates with a view to inform the council about the best way of getting the job done. Procurements to be made are discussed in detail and all sorts of queries are raised by the members to ensure best value for money

Only 23.33% of the respondents stated that expenditure plans in their PTCs are made in the presence of minimal number of available members and since most of the members were not able to give time to PTC so they were unable to involve majority in such decision making. It was further learnt that none of the PTCs have a practice of making such decisions behind closed doors and are desirous of

maximum inclusion of members but the disinterest / non-availability of the members remains an issue. We can express satisfaction over the openness in formulation of procurement and expenditure plans.

## **2. Expenditure Plan is Widely Shared**

Formulation of the expenditure plan and then its wide sharing with majority of the members was assessed during this study. Majority of the PTCs were found to be following the practice of sharing the formulated plan with members afterwards. This sharing was done with members who were absent from the meeting where such decision was taken and also with the members who were present to clarify any doubts or after-thoughts. The practice helps in affirming the consent of the members and builds ownership of the procurement and expenditure plan. 70% of the PTCs share the expenditure plan with their members and attempts are made to involve the disinterested members as well. Only 30% of the PTCs assessed stated that they did not feel the need to take the plan back to members for review or sharing with members who were absent. The incidence of wider sharing may be termed as positive and needs to be promoted among other PTCs. Sharing, is done in the meetings of PTCs, so it is quite easy to adopt this practice for other PTCs also.

### **3. Expenditure made is Ratified by the Members**

Transparency in procurement and financial expenditure also requires that the detail of expenditure made is presented before the members and is ratified by them as being same as what was desired. The incidence of this practice was gauged during the assessment and it was found that majority of the PTCs have adopted the good practice of presenting the incurred expenditure over procurements before the members of PTCs.

63.33% of the PTCs replied in affirmative to the adoption of this practice and declared it necessary for building the confidence of members in the working of PTCs. They further shared that such practices are also helpful in sharing details with the interested parents and widespread word over the transparent working of the PTC adds to their reputation. 36.66% PTCs were found to be running their affairs without presenting the procurements and expenditure before the members for ratification. The practice needs to be promoted among all the PTCs.

### **4. Maintenance of Record and Availability for Scrutiny**

Maintenance of record by the PTCs and its subsequent availability for scrutiny of members and other stakeholders was assessed during the study. During this assessment, the incidence of record keeping was found to be high at 66.66% thus indicating a positive practice in majority of the PTCs. At the same time 33.33% were found to be ill-prepared in maintenance of record and could not present it in the required manner for scrutiny of the assessment team.

Since the present study adds qualitative value to the findings of the TPV report so seeing both in conjunction we can infer that the incidence of non-maintenance of record is likely to be higher than this in other PTCs of the same districts. Limited number of PTCs were assessed by this study and the need remains on part of PTCs to maintain their records more properly and keep them available for scrutiny of education department officials and other stakeholders.

## **5. Checking of Record by the ADO**

As part of monitoring mechanisms by the Education Department, ADOs are required to check the records of PTCs on a regular basis. Hence the incidence of record checking which includes inspection of all

records was assessed by this study. It is promising to learn that more than 73% of the PTCs were found to have been inspected by the relevant ADO over a period of one month to one quarter whereas 26.66% PTCs stated that the relevant ADO did not visit them regularly, consequently no checking of the record took place. The sheer size of the responsibility area of ADO and the lack of logistic support make it difficult to discharge the responsibility of field inspections. Hence, the need is there on part of the education department to ensure the routine inspections of PTCs and provide necessary support to its staff.

#### **i. Financial Management Capacity of PTCs**

Financial management capacity of the PTCs was assessed with a view to understand the constraints faced by them in making the expenditure and the kind of mechanisms that existed at PTCs which could ensure maximum authorized expenditure. First and the foremost feedback by the PTCs were regarding the scarcity of funds. The meager amount of Rs. 7,000/ room is considered too low to meet the required needs of the school and all the respondents and stakeholders were unanimous in voicing their concern over the small size of funds allocated to PTCs. The study concurs with the claim of PTCs that the nature of procurements required to meet the

educational needs of schools requires relatively more financial resources. These needs as perceived and defined by the PTCs are concerned with infrastructure development in schools and certainly require more finances due to the commonly observable unhealthy condition of infrastructure and other facilities in public schools.

Viewpoint of the government officials is also worth considering in this regard which laments the scarce financial resources with the government. The PTCs demanded that opening of bank account should be made easier for them as present formalities are hard to meet. Getting letter from the education department gets cumbersome for them and a lot of time is wasted in this process. Some facilitation on part of the government in this regard such as issuance of standing orders to the banks and introductory letters along with the notification of formation of PTCs would help in making things easier for the PTCs.

It was further learnt that financial record keeping rests with the secretaries and no other member shows willingness to share this responsibility. Moreover, the secretaries being government employees deem it too sensitive an area to be left with the untrained common members. They further consider themselves to be more accountable for the

finances received and spent as compared to non-governmental officials. However, incidences of assertion by some chairpersons were found during the assessment but that too is limited to the sharing and scrutiny of record. Chairpersons like other members shy away from taking up the responsibility of record keeping.

This study analyzed the trend of financial spending of PTCs over the last two years and found that major heads of expenditure include repair and maintenance of school building, procurement of furniture and stationery, meeting the costs of electricity and water connections, and where possible construction of additional room in the school for which assistance was sought from the government and the community.

PTCs consider these heads of expenditure as the most pressing ones while attending to the needs of the school. The received budget is allocated in consultation with the majority of the members of PTC. Out of the schools visited during this study, only two were found to have made expenditure on the hiring of a temporary teacher over the period of last two financial years with one school hiring a temporary teacher in one year's time each. Scarcity of funds and non-timely release were found to be the common complaints from most of the PTCs.

Role of the general bodies was found to be minimal in financial matters as general bodies were not that active in overseeing the functions of the PTCs. Financial statement of PTCs is not shared in the general body meetings, verbal comments are made about the needs of schools and scarcity of resources. Although meetings are held but the disinterest of members and lack of active participation in school matters renders them ineffective. It is noted with concern that the bodies responsible for providing impetus to the PTCs are largely ineffective and therefore do not cast a healthy bearing on the functioning of PTCs.

Respondents of the survey strongly advocated for the need of trainings on financial management i.e. record keeping, maintenance of cash book and preparation of formal expenditure plans, for the leadership and members of PTCs as they consider such training vital for better planning of expenditure and procurement. It was also learnt that there is a need to train the PTCs in matters of procurement so that their capacity for making more expenditure and getting bigger procurements done is increased. Concerns were also raised by government officials on the financial capacity of PTCs. 93.33% respondents stressed the need for training on financial management whereas only 6.66% considered such training to be not-



required. This 6.66% were the female PTCs who considered such training as not required.

It is pertinent to note that a few trainings on management and other aspects of the working of PTCs have been organized by the government and different organizations but in the light of the feedback by the PTCs, they proved to be standalone activities whereas follow-up trainings and review sessions were required to achieve maximum impact of the training.

### **Key Findings**

1. Majority of the PTCs visited during the assessment were found to be functional and active whereby regular meetings, as required on quarterly basis, were being held and the record was also being maintained.
2. Disinterest of the general body members and some members of the PTCs was found to be an important issue in realizing the true potential of PTCs. Therefore, all the stakeholders stressed the need for inclusion of motivated members on both the general body and the PTC.
3. Members who are educated and have ample time for the PTCs take greater interest in the activities of the

PTCs and are ready to contribute in whatever way they can. Even members of the general body who have time at their disposal ensure to visit the school on a regular basis and discuss pertinent matters with the PTC leadership.

4. Members of PTCs and general body members displayed limited understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the PTCs and generally considered it confined to making the financial expenditure.
5. Due to their focus confined to financial aspects, members tend to pay great attention to the procurement and financial expenditure of PTCs but at the same time have little knowledge of the government procedures of procurement and financial record keeping.
6. PTCs do not have communication / mobilization strategies to involve the stakeholders and most important of all, the community. The capacity to formulate such strategies was also found to be deficient.
7. Development of a school improvement plan was another deficient area and limited capacity was found on part of PTCs to formulate holistic development plans for their respective schools which

is highly attributable to lack of their own understanding.

8. Funds given to PTCs for meeting the needs of schools were found to be insufficient. Delay in release of funds was reported by PTCs in Lakki Marwat and Buner (four in number) and problems in opening of bank accounts were also reported by a few PTCs.
9. Major heads of expenditure were found to be repair and maintenance of building, procurement of furniture and stationery, and meeting the costs of electricity and water connections. In few instances where grants were received, construction of additional room was undertaken by the PTCs. Only two instances of hiring of temporary teachers were found during the course of this assessment.
10. Procurement procedure and decision making process about the procurements to be made are same in case of male and female PTCs with minor variation. As far as decision making about procurements is concerned, there exists no difference as both male and female PTCs gather for meetings and lay down the quantity of funds and school needs. After discussion among members, needs are prioritized and majority decision is reached about expenses to be made. In case of procurement procedure, both

male and female PTCs rely on administrative/support staff of schools for gathering quotations and relevant information.

11. Extensive capacity building plan and monitoring mechanism are required to improve the performance of the PTCs.

## **Recommendations**

Following are the recommendations in the light of above analysis and findings:

1. PTCs should be formed through wider consultation and members need to be carefully elected who could give time and are motivated to serve the school and the community.
2. Utilization of funds presently given to PTCs was noted to be satisfactory. Considering effective utilization of funds by PTCs along with financial constraint highlighted by the PTC office bearers, the government should consider increasing the funds given to PTCs as they prove insufficient to cater to the educational needs of schools.
3. Community and the general body need to be sensitized about the performance of PTCs and its members so that re-election of the members who do

not take interest in the activities of PTCs is not necessitated. Attendance in meetings may be made the initial criterion for gauging the interest level of members. Attendance of at least two out of the four mandatory meetings in a year may be made the criterion.

4. A holistic capacity building plan for the PTCs covering all its capacity requirements needs to be formulated by the Education department so that the members are better able to take up their responsibilities. Sporadic and one off trainings will not be helpful in this regard. Easy to understand toolkits and checklists of responsibilities may be developed which may also serve as monitoring tools.
5. There is a need to develop communication and community mobilization strategies for PTCs if active involvement of communities and interest level of community members has to be increased in PTCs. This is recommended as the most suitable way of building social capital from the standpoint of PTCs and their working. It is also recommended that these strategies should address different needs of both male and female PTCs.
6. Some PTCs have displayed competence in undertaking civil works of minor nature and

procurements. So training on these accounts may also be provided. These would enable them to take on procurements and works at a relatively larger scale.

In order to harmonize the capacity building activities of PTCs, the Education Department needs to take the lead and coordinate with all the development partners working for improving the performance of PTCs so that a concerted effort is made for strengthening the PTCs.

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## Chapter 6: Review – Pakistan’s Voluntary National Review

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### Introduction

In wake of SDGs, the challenges facing Pakistan are huge. Significant percentage of population faces multitude of issues due to poverty and poor governance. Cognizant of the enormity of the challenges, the government through multi-tier governance system has taken steps to address access, equity, quality and inclusiveness concerns. However, in many cases, these interventions are being implemented at a small scale. Expanding these interventions and designing new ones to provide inclusive and equitable development would require huge increase in the budgets earmarked for sustainable development. This calls for a major shift that is needed in the way resources for development are planned and used. Given the resource constraint and shrinking fiscal space, the importance of private sector’s contributions both in financial and non-financial terms can hardly be over emphasized. Whereas the role of for -profit sector is limited and needs to be enhanced by ensuring an enabling policy environment to create sustained and productive linkages with private and corporate sector. The corporations, industry

and businesses need to come forward and contribute towards development through financial and non-financial contributions, corporate philanthropy, and develop skills-base for youth and adults.

### **Review of Progress on Goals**

It is imperative to critically examine each goal with respect to progress on targets to develop an overarching understanding of the state of adoption and implementation of the SDGs. Therefore, this article benefits from the UN Report on the Sustainable Development Goals 2023 that accounts for the progress on individual SDGs. The UN report highlights that only 15% SDG targets are on track with 48% being moderately or severely off track while 37% targets show stagnation or regression. Our review is appreciative of the assessment undertaken by the UN and builds upon the findings to analyse the current situation covering the shortcomings and successes.

### **Progress Reporting**

Progress reporting on SDGs and their targets shows that considerable performance has been made on majority of the targets with omission of comments on the targets that require immediate attention by the policy makers and the government. It is encouraging to note that despite falling short of targets, progress is there on majority of targets and filing of VNR itself is a positive sign of commitment to progress reporting thus enhancing transparency and

accountability. The initiatives taken by the government under each SDG have been reported with a generalized understanding of their relevance to the SDGs targets and indicators. However, the contribution of each program towards SDGs even at the design or initiation level has not been quantified and neither their role in percentage increase in current performance has been mapped over the coming years. We understand that present structure and planning process do not take such considerations into account but nonetheless this is what Pakistan requires to achieve the SGs.

### **Identification of Key Issues**

Progress on each SDG is followed by the identification of key issues which range from institutional and organizational capacity to lack of resources i.e. financial as well as skilled human resource. In some instances, additional issues have been identified like that of in the section on SDG4 that restricts to highlighting out of school children followed by tirade of challenges faced by the education sector that are being highlighted by the national education policies over the past five decades. However, no reference has been made to any of the national policies especially in the context of their efficacy. Likewise, is the case of issues referred to in the health sector where district level capacity and data collection have been highlighted as primary issues followed by perennial issues of the health sector. We, the citizens, remain deprived of the effect or the impact of past initiatives with

respect to the highlighted issues. Challenges with respect to SDG5 have a cultural take on the issues and hardly spares any societal issue from inclusion as hurdle to progress on SDG targets. Case of other SDGs, with their specific variations, remain the same and one struggles to find appreciation of issues at policy level with specific attribution to SDG targets.

### **Silence over Solutions**

A unique aspect of VNR is its silence over solutions to the challenges / issues highlighted with respect to each SDG. The VNR does comment on the state's commitment to the Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) principle and further takes into consideration the policy and governance level efforts for achieving the SDGs followed by the challenges posed by COVID-19 and government's responses to the same. However, other than providing a general sense of relevance, these sections fall short of addressing target specific issues and even ignore mapping broad SDG level issues with policy and implementation orientated solutions. SDG-6 has been highlighted as a challenge but the issue of access to clean water has been shadowed with figures of access to improved drinking water which is no way equivalent to clean drinking water. National silence over issues of each SDG needs to be broken with detailed mapping of issues against the implementation status of adopted solutions.

## **Proposing Solutions: Developing Public-Private Partnership Strategy**

In many cases, the rules and regulations in the public domain bar the private sector to effectively contribute towards the cause of education, despite the good intentions and willingness to contribute. For example, the existing school council rules inhibit the community members, local philanthropists or private sector organizations to provide monetary support to the school councils. To facilitate and leverage both cash and in-kind contributions from the private sector, the SED should amend the existing rules and regulations for the school councils.

Public private partnerships (PPPs) play a significant role in the education sector of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa through active engagement of the Punjab Education Foundation (PEF) and the Elementary and Secondary Education Foundation (ESEF). While Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has a PPP strategy in place, the SED, Government of the Punjab should develop a PPP strategy to streamline and facilitate the role of the private sector in education. SDGs Unit Punjab can coordinate and support SED for the development of this strategy. The strategy will also help the private sector in knowing how the SED plans to take the sector forward and what contributions are needed from the private sector. It will also lay down as to what is required of the private sector and what potential areas (teacher training,

infrastructure development, school management etc.) are available for the private sector in this regard.

### **Governance: Monitoring the SDGs**

One of the major reasons for non-achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) was that there was no comprehensive monitoring system available for tracking the progress. Learning from this, the planning departments need to form SDGs Coordination Committee which will review the progress and track the implementation of SDGs using the data collected for the purpose and other means. The SDG unit will be the convener for this committee and membership from the education departments and private sector will be ensured. The committee will seek annual progress reports on SDGs implementation at district level from the district SDG committees and the contributions made by the private sector to support the implementation. This will be done through annual stock-takes with the district SDG committees, where representatives from the chamber of commerce and business community will also be invited to participate. Based on the data collected and other review mechanisms, the SDGs Coordination Committee will publish an annual report citing the progress made during the year, the financial and non-financial contributions made by the private sector, identify the steps to be taken in the upcoming years to achieve SDGs targets and outline the areas in which support is needed from stakeholders.



## **Mainstreaming SDGs in the Annual Development Planning Process**

The guidelines for Annual Development Planning (ADP) in provinces refer to SDGs and make it mandatory to align new schemes with SDGs. However, the guidelines in do not provide actionable guidance on incorporating and aligning the new development schemes with SDG targets. Additionally PC-1 and PC-4 are the basic planning and monitoring instruments, used by departments for planning and evaluation of the development schemes. However, these instruments do not require SDGs integration at planning, monitoring or evaluation stages. In order to address these gaps and align the planning process with SDG targets, the Planning departments need to revise the Planning Guidelines and also revise PC-1 and PC-IV proformas in order to incorporate SDGs and targets.

### **Conclusion: Systemic Reform**

Planning, activity design, financing and implementation of SDGs need to be rethought and redone to achieve significant progress on the SDGs. The way budgets at each tier of government are currently formulated and presented, it is not possible to see the extent to which each budget line is contributing towards achieving the SDGs and is pro-poor, inclusive and gender just. There is also no mechanism in place to view the financial and non-financial contributions of the private sector in this regard. Governance system altogether omits these contributions whereas it needs to

compile such information at the national, provincial and district level and present an SDG statement along with the budget documents. The needed documentation can start at the level of local governments and may be supported by the district level tier of government. This statement will demonstrate government's and private sector's commitment towards achievement of SDGs targets.

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## About this Book

School education governance in Pakistan presents an interesting case of interface between access, quality and service delivery mechanism over its entire history. The post-colonial inheritance of schools run by local governments, private sector, and religious entities formed major fragments for successive governments. The policy making and implementation process in its genesis originated from acknowledgement of the then existing landscape and taking cognizance of evolving realities for a developing nation. Questions of curriculum, learning outcomes, teaching standards, infrastructure, and other educational inputs under the umbrella of an effective governance system formed cornerstones of evolving realities requiring an appropriate response from the government. Disruptions in political governance and deprivation of agency for the people compounded the issues surrounding allocation of resources through prioritization by citizens and development of a robust system around it that could be accountable before people.

This book looks at school education from diverse theoretical perspectives ranging from legislative governance to school level budget analysis. The chapters present rigorous analysis of data collected through multiple sources and cases from Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces have been highlighted to inform the educational reform process generally in Pakistan and specifically in the discussed provinces. However, the case specific issues offer governance value for each tier of management and government whereby the plethora of identified issues may be answered in tandem through holistic efforts. Relevant policy instruments, governance mechanisms, management practices, and view points of stakeholders have been presented in an analytical manner along with recommendations for stakeholders. Policy makers may benefit from the adopted analytical approaches as tools for measuring efficacy of policies and for designing the future ones.

We hope that practical value offered by this book positively contributes to the educational reform process in the wake of Article 25-A of the Constitution of Pakistan which guarantees free and compulsory education for our children.

## About the Editor



Hamid Masood is an accomplished development sector professional with a rich background in institutional growth and reform particularly within education, health, urbanization, municipal services, and consumer rights. With a deep commitment to sustainable development, he has led and contributed to numerous initiatives aimed at improving public service delivery, policy implementation, and social welfare outcomes. Known for his strategic insights and ability to further collaborative partnerships, he consistently works to bridge gaps between policy frameworks and on-the-ground realities. His editorial work is a natural extension of his development expertise, enabling him to shape publications that inform and inspire meaningful societal advancements.

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