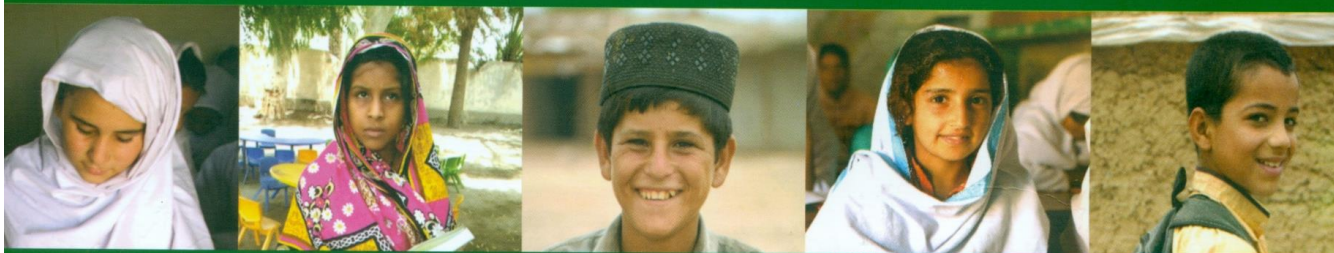




# NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY FRAMEWORK 2018



MINISTRY OF FEDERAL EDUCATION & PROFESSIONAL TRAINING, ISLAMABAD

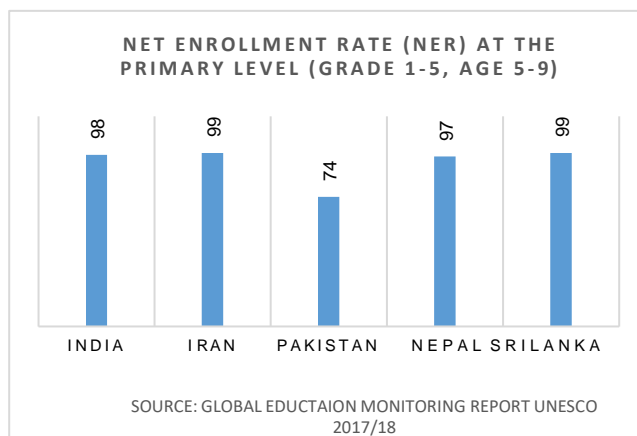
# Pakistan - National Education Policy Framework

## November 2018

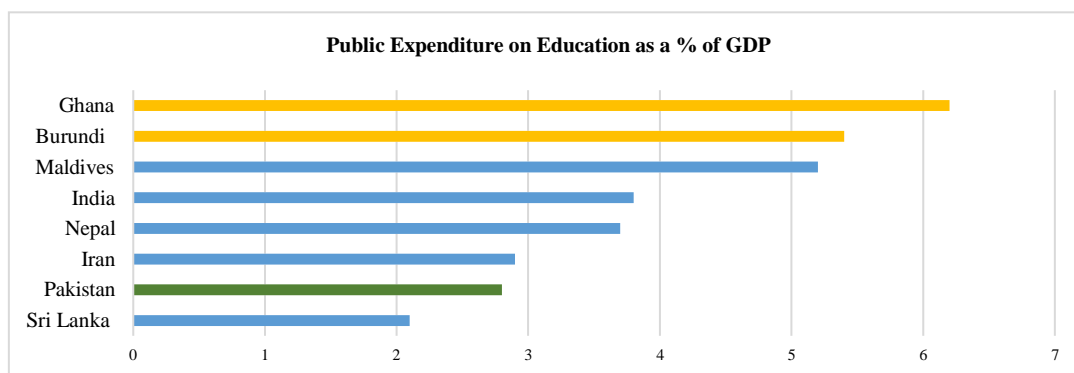
### THE CHALLENGE

**1. Education is a major contributor to the social and economic development of any country.** It has the power to unleash creativity and innovation amongst Pakistan’s more than 200 million human capital. Pakistan, thus has the responsibility, to equip its young people with knowledge, creativity, critical thinking and leadership skills so that they can make the right choices for themselves, their country and play a responsible role as global citizens. This requires a clear understanding of challenges and gaps related to the education system and find ways to address them.

**2. Pakistan faces significant education challenges in providing uniform and quality education for all children.** It systematically performs lower than its South Asia neighbors and countries with similar per capita income. Pakistan is also amongst the E9<sup>1</sup> countries that have the world’s highest out-of-school population.



**3. Pakistan’s progress in education indicators has been extremely inadequate over the past decade.** With more than half of its adult population unable to read and write, the country lacks a literate and skilled human resource that can contribute in the development of the country. Low financing coupled with inefficiency in budget spending and weak management have crippled the system, resulting in poor education outcomes. The graph below shows Pakistan’s low education expenditure as a percentage of GDP in comparison with its South Asia neighbours (Maldives, India, Nepal, Iran and Sri Lanka) and countries with similar per capita income (Ghana and Burundi).

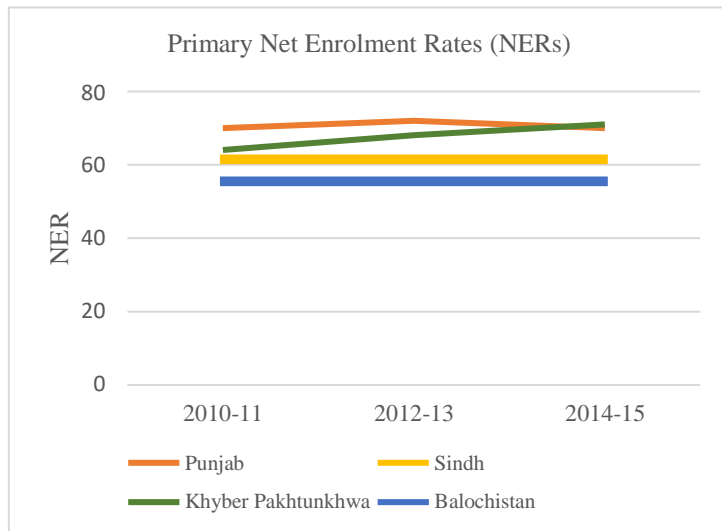


Source: UNESCO Global Monitoring Report 2017-18

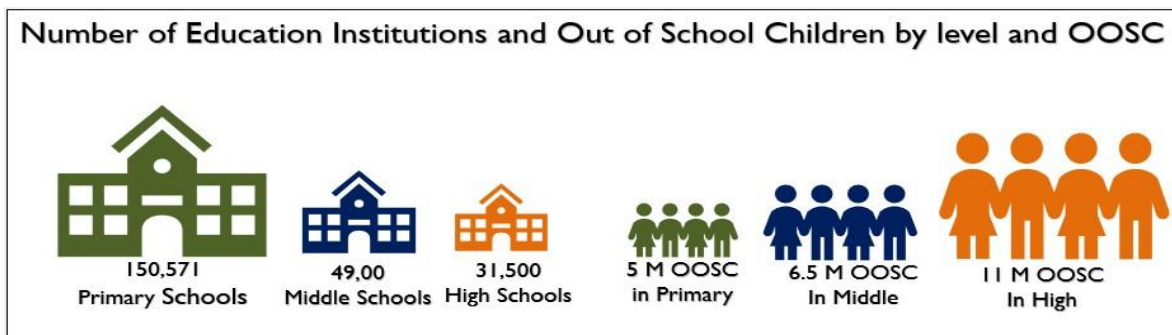
<sup>1</sup> In “E9”, E stands for education and the “9” represents the following nine countries: Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria and Pakistan, representing over half of the world’s population and 70% of the world’s illiterate adults

**4. The first and foremost education challenge that Pakistan faces is addressing Out of School Children (OOSC) and ensuring that enrolled children complete their education.**

The latest education data indicates that there are almost 22.5 Million OOSC, with more girls than boys out of school<sup>2</sup>. Increase in primary net enrolment rates (NER) across the country have remained static across the years and even show a decrease in some provinces<sup>3</sup>. There is a large gender, economic and geographic disparity in education enrolments across the country. The enrolment data when disaggregated by geographic areas is much more alarming for certain districts, for e.g. primary NER (age 5-9) is as low as 40% in Bhawalpur (Punjab), 26% in Tando Mohammad Khan (Sindh) and Harnai (Balochistan) and 30% in Kohistan (Khyber Pukhtunkhwa), against an average of 57% for Pakistan. This indicates that some parts of Pakistan are at a more disadvantage than others. Similarly, children from poor families and those residing in rural areas are further disadvantaged, also girls are more disadvantaged than boys. Most of the out-of-school children in Pakistan reside in rural parts of the country, with Balochistan and FATA having the highest percentage of OOSC<sup>4</sup>.



**5. The OOSC challenge when disaggregated by levels of education shows an alarmingly high number of OOSC at the middle (Grade 6-8) and higher level (Grade 9-10). This is not surprising as the number of middle and high schools available across the country are much less as compared to primary schools.**



**6. The second education challenge for Pakistan is addressing uniform education for all children.** In addition to a disparity in access across the country, there are huge differences in the standard and quality of education that enrolled children receive in various education systems across the country. Pakistan’s schooling system consists of three main school types-

<sup>2</sup> Pakistan Education Statistics (2016/17)

<sup>3</sup> Pakistan Social and Living Measurement Survey 2010-2015

<sup>4</sup> Alif Ailaan calculations based on NEMIS 2012-13 and Population Projections by NIPS

public sector schools, private sector schools and madrassah schools. These are further bifurcated into sub types, mainly due to curriculum, quality of textbooks, exam systems used in the schools and the language of instructions used by teachers.

7. Private schools predominantly use English as medium of instruction, with a very strong focus on active use of English language by children, while public sector schools mostly use Urdu and the regional mother tongue as a language of instruction. Although, English is taught in many public-sector schools but because of the low capacity of teachers to teach English as a second language, children are unable to achieve even basic competency levels. The disparity in acquisition of language skills is one of the most divisive factor when it comes to application of education skill for jobs. Children with better English language skills tend to have more opportunities because of its glorified status in society and its use as a de facto official language. Generally, students in high-cost private schools are more advantaged than children studying in public sector schools, low-cost private schools and madrassas<sup>5</sup>. Various reports comparing student learning outcomes in public and private schools across Pakistan find that private school children tend to do better than children in public sector schools. Most of the comparisons also find that management of private schools is better in terms of school leadership, teacher and student attendance.
8. To give equitable access to economic and social opportunities for all children, Pakistan needs to provide standardized education services across the various school systems. This entails a standardization of curriculum and textbooks, common standards of teaching and learning, multi-language proficiency and regular review of learning outcomes to determine uniformity of learning outcomes across, public, private and madrassa systems.
9. **The third education challenge is providing quality education to all children across the system.** Approximately 40% of the country's population (ages 10 and above) cannot read and write.<sup>6</sup> Although addressing quality in education requires that this must be tackled from all aspects including school infrastructure, curriculum, textbooks, assessments, financial efficiency of education budget, but the most important requirement is to address the quality of the 1.9 million teaching personnel across the country. Currently, the education outcomes of Pakistani children as measured through a sample national assessment survey (2014), show that children perform far below the required national standards in all provinces and do not achieve minimum mastery of mathematics, reading, and language (as defined by the national government). This is directly linked to the quality of instruction they receive in the classroom from the teachers. Various reviews of the top-performing education systems across the world show that the quality of an education systems is directly linked with the quality of its teachers<sup>7</sup>. Although, there have been several reforms to improve in-service teacher training, pre-service teacher preparation programs and recruitment of teachers, these have yielded few results in improving student learning. The disparity in quality and skills of teachers in the three systems of schooling (Public, Private and Madrassa) is a major reason for the differences in achievement levels of children across Pakistan.
10. **Tertiary education and skills training face serious challenges.** Pakistan ranks 125th out of 140 economies on the Global Competitiveness Index 2018, far behind other South Asian

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<sup>5</sup> Who gets the good jobs? Educational experiences that result in economic and social mobility, Alif Ailaan and SAHE, 2016

<sup>6</sup> PSLM Survey data 2014-15

<sup>7</sup> How the world's top performing systems come out on the top, McKinsey Report 2007



economies<sup>8</sup> and several other comparators such as Malaysia (24) and Indonesia (62)<sup>9</sup>. Pakistan faces significant skills shortages and mismatches, and there is a growing and as yet inadequately met demand for market-relevant, job-specific skills produced by the higher education and skills sectors, especially in emerging economic sectors<sup>10</sup>. Only half of employers surveyed in 2013 as part of a Pakistan Employers Survey<sup>11</sup> report that the general education and technical education systems produce people who meet the skills needs of employers to an adequate level, and almost a fourth of firms report a lack of skilled employees.

### Summary of Education Challenges

Out of School Children	Uniform Education System	Quality	Skills and Higher Education
<p>Low and inequitable access and participation</p> <p>High levels of poverty in certain disadvantaged areas resulting in high OOSC</p> <p>Limited investments in early childhood education resulting in high dropout in early grades</p> <p>Low Quality of Non-Formal and Accelerated Learning Programs</p>	<p>Lack of coordination in policy formulation and implementation across the country</p> <p>Lack of coherence and coordination in curriculum frameworks, textbooks and exam systems</p> <p>Discrepancies in systems of schooling, i.e. across public, private and madrasa education system</p> <p>Variation in management of school systems</p>	<p>Low student learning outcomes</p> <p>Poor teacher quality and accountability</p> <p>Lack of school leadership- School Principals/Head Teachers</p> <p>Poor school environment multi-grade teaching, limited facilities in schools and poor infrastructure</p> <p>Inadequate use of student learning outcome data to inform policy making</p>	<p>Low and inequitable access and participation</p> <p>Poor quality and relevance of teaching and research conditions.</p> <p>Weak linkages with Industry</p> <p>Inadequate sector governance and management</p>

## EDUCATION PRIORITIES AND THE WAY FORWARD

11. Pakistan has formalized its commitment to improving education sector outcomes through several actions in the recent past, including the insertion of Article 25-A in its Constitution which guarantees free and compulsory basic education for all children 5-16 years of age. Prime Minister Imran Khan reiterated this commitment in his inaugural speech on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2018, he said “We will raise the standard of Education in the schools and deal with the issue of 22.5 million out of school children”.
12. Human capital is being recognized across the world as the most important asset of a country, interestingly this was recognized by Prime Minister Imran Khan in his speech to the Parliament as far back as 2013, where he stated, “Pakistani’s are the most precious asset we have”. The

<sup>8</sup> Bangladesh ranks 116, India 96, and Nepal 106

<sup>9</sup> GCI Dataset 2018. World Economic Forum.

<sup>10</sup> Acute skills shortages are perceived by firms in the construction, manufacturing, and education sectors (Employer Survey 2013).

<sup>11</sup> Employer Survey, the World Bank, 2013

world around us is changing rapidly, technological advances require a completely different workforce and countries must quickly adapt themselves to these challenges, otherwise they will be left behind in the global competition. Pakistan faces the dual challenge of addressing basic issues of education access and significantly improving the quality of education to compete in the global arena.

13. The urgency to move forward in education requires the national and provincial governments to work together. The achievement of education goals is a shared responsibility of the national and provincial governments, with the provinces having the major responsibility of implementation after the 18<sup>th</sup> amendment to the constitution. However, to ensure the achievement of Pakistan's national and international commitments to Education, the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training (MoFEPT) has selected four priority goals as an important policy action for immediate implementation, in coordination and collaboration, with the provinces. These priority policy actions are expected to ensure that **“all children have a fair and equal opportunity to receive a high quality of education to achieve their full potential”**.
14. Putting Pakistan on a road to achieve high standards in education outcomes requires an ambitious plan backed by high political will. This also requires a special focus on disadvantaged areas, minorities, girls and children with disabilities to reduce achievement gaps amongst the various groups. Education improvements across the country will rely on five important pillars:
  - a. **National Cohesion**- close coordination and collaboration between the national and provincial governments on key aspects of uniformity and quality in education. The Inter-Provincial Education Ministers Committee (IPEMC) will play an active and decision-making role in setting common standards to enhance national unity.
  - b. **Effective use of Information**- using valid, timely and reliable information for decision making and course corrections. The National Education Management Information System (NEMIS) relies on data received from the provinces to produce a report depicting the national status of education. NEMIS will be transformed to do more than data consolidation and play an important role in informing policy through use of information systems including enhanced use of technology to improve data systems. Pakistan also has an international responsibility to report on SDG 4 indicators that require information on an enhanced set of indicators including early childhood education and student learning outcomes, in addition to school participation. This information is not regularly available, and mechanisms will have to be set up to collect reliable information across Pakistan.
  - c. **Improved Governance and Financial Efficiency of the education system.** Selecting the best officers to deliver education reforms and streamlining the ministry and departments of education to deliver results is one of the most important actions required at the federal and provincial level. The Federal Ministry's aspiration for improved access, equity and quality are ambitious targets and require a reorganization of the ministry to deliver these national education priorities. This is particularly important for

delivering results in the priority areas of OOSC and achievement of Uniformity in the education system.

The Ministry will also lead an active dialogue with the Finance Department, Accountant General and Controller General of Accounts to remove financial bottlenecks and bring efficiency in the education budgets and audits.

- d. **Innovative use of Technology**- using the power of ICT to maximize implementation and achieve results. Considering the urgency to achieve better learning outcomes in a short time period, use of computers powered by internet technologies is an obvious solution. Use of ICT can enhance teacher training and build their content knowledge, enabling them to play a more powerful role in the classroom. One of the most commonly cited reasons for using ICT in classrooms is to better prepare the new generation for a workplace that relies heavily on ICT. It is also a powerful tool to enhance access by transferring new knowledge to teachers and children in remote areas. The MoFEPT will harness the power of computers, mobile applications and internet tools for quick gains in Quality and Access.
- e. **Active Communication Campaign** to promote Equity and Quality in Education and to sustain strong political will for implementation. One of the biggest impediments to education reforms in Pakistan has been a lack of continuity in implementation and weak political will in implementing challenging reforms that impact teaching quality and accountability. A national impetus to address the quality of public sector schooling and

### The Delivery System for Education Priorities

The Ministry will ensure that it has the capacity and capability to deliver on the education priorities. This will be achieved by:

- Refocusing roles and responsibilities to lead policy dialogue and implementation
- Strengthen core functions at the federal level
- Setting an example in schools under the Federal Ministry.
- Evidence-based decision making by improved use of information

### **CHAMPIONS OF EDUCATION**

*PRESIDENT OF PAKISTAN*

*PRIME MINISTER OF PAKISTAN*

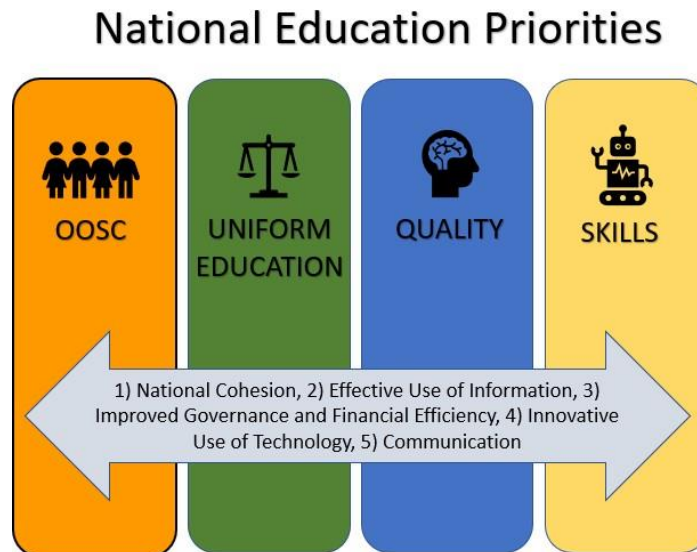
*FEDERAL MINISTER OF EDUCATION*

*FINANCE MINISTER OF EDUCATION*

to enhance teacher motivation and accountability is required to drive implementation. The Ministry will work with the Champions of Education to raise awareness about quality education, motivate communities to support education of their children,

especially in remote and rural areas and generate energy and political will for challenging reforms.

**15. Governance and management of the education sector has been cited as one of the biggest stumbling blocks in achievement of education targets in Pakistan.** The Federal Ministry will set an example for the other education departments by restructuring itself around the priority areas and implementing all priority policy actions in the Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) schools. Another key action by the Federal Ministry will be to enhance the capacity of education information systems for better policy making and implementation.



The strategic priority areas are:

**Priority 1: Decrease OOSC and Increase School Completion**

**Priority 2: Uniformity in Education Standards**

**Priority 3: Improve the Quality of Education**

**Priority 4: Enhance Access to and Relevance of Skills Training**

### **Priority 1: Decrease OOSC and increase school participation**

**Why?**

Pakistan continues to struggle with high numbers of out-of-school children and limited access to schools particularly at the secondary level. Government primary schools in some areas are underutilized, while other areas lack a qualified teaching force. Access to middle and high schools is very low resulting in a disengagement of communities from schooling. 28% of towns and villages in Punjab are located more than 2 km from the nearest government girls' middle or high school, making it difficult for poor families to send their children to a higher education level. 17% of households in Punjab, 12% of households in Khyber Pakthunkhwa, 13% of households in Sindh, and 18% of households in Balochistan cite school distance as the primary reason for never sending their girls (ages 6-15 to school). Lack of quality public schools and low teacher presence in schools in rural areas also results in a low utilization of existing school facilities. Data has clearly shown



that girls are more disadvantaged both in schools and out of schools, there are approximately 2 million more girls out of school and there are less girls middle and high schools as compared to boys.

### ***How?***

This will primarily require a special focus on disadvantaged districts with the highest number of OOSC. This information can be easily calculated from existing data sources (education census and household surveys) and further validated by sample surveys in selected disadvantaged areas to reconfirm the numbers of OOSC and the reason for them being out of school. Understanding the reasons why children are out of school in an area would be the key to the selection of the intervention to bring OOSC into the school. Considering the diversity across Pakistan there will be a need to use a variety of interventions based on the research findings and especially target girls and minorities. Some of the key actions would be:

### **Infrastructure**

- (i) Maximize existing school infrastructure by consolidating primary, middle and high schools
- (ii) Introduce afternoon shifts where feasible to address school shortage
- (iii) Improve missing facilities in existing schools to attract and retain children
- (iv) Increase access to secondary schools particularly for girls, either through the establishment of new schools, through school up-gradation, and through the provision of transport in remote areas
- (v) Redeploying unused public buildings as education facilities (this has been successfully implemented in certain parts of Balochistan)

### **Removing Financial Barriers**<sup>12</sup>

- (vi) Better targeting of the Waseela-e-Taleem (conditional cash transfers for education under BISP) to increase primary enrolments and completion
- (vii) All provinces are already providing girls stipends for transition to secondary and will consider better targeting of stipends for improved results
- (viii) Catalytic funds to support provincial implementation, especially in disadvantaged areas.

## USING TECHNOLOGY



Several innovative initiatives across Pakistan are making use of technology to improve teaching, student learning, student assessments and school monitoring. These include online and offline free content, literacy programs for adults, virtual classrooms in remote areas. Management of education has been supported by real-time school monitoring and complaint redressal systems. Social media platforms and infiltration of mobiles in rural remote areas provide a wealth of opportunities that can be used for educational gains. The Ministry will play a leading role in harnessing the potential of ICT by providing a platform for showcasing good practices and their expansion in selected schools.

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<sup>12</sup> All provincial governments provide free textbooks to children and no fee is charged in public schools from grade k-10.

- (ix) Active coordination with finance departments for timely fiscal transfers to education departments and efficient utilization of existing budgets

### **Innovative Solutions**

- (i) Taleemi Razakar/ Teach for Pakistan internship programs for young graduates to teach in schools, especially to fill the gap of Science, Mathematics and Language teachers. The Taleemi Razakars will fill an important gap in teacher numbers and capacity across Pakistan.
- (ii) Integration of basic skills programs with non-formal programs

### **Non-Formal Programs**

- (i) Restructure and improve existing programs to deliver Non-Formal Education and Accelerated Learning Programs in targeted areas
- (ii) Community mobilization for bringing OOSC in schools, increased school enrolment and retention

### **Use of Technology**

- (iii) Technology interventions to improve teachers and student content knowledge
- (iv) Online web-portals for free education content
- (v) Offline content solutions and options in remote areas
- (vi) Use of technology to improve education management systems

### ***Tracking Results!***

- Increased numbers and proportion of children enrolled in school (by school level, gender)
- School completion rates

## **Priority 2: Uniform Education System**

### ***Why?***

The school education system in Pakistan has witnessed a huge expansion over the years with an increase in a diverse student population. The expansion in schools has also created a diversified system divided broadly into a) public b) private and c) madrasa school system, with several internal variations within the systems. The complexity of the context (rural, urban, poverty profiles, geographic diversity, multilingual, cultural and social variations) are some of the major challenges that the country needs to address for the delivery of equitable quality education. Article 25A categorically stresses the need for equal opportunity, thereby mandating the national and provincial governments to remove all barriers to uniform, equitable education.

Since public sector schools cater to all diverse groups, especially the most-disadvantaged, it will be especially important to raise the quality of these schools significantly for maximum results. An important divisive factor is the medium of instruction and quality of teaching across the systems. The IPEMC will engage with education professionals under the leadership of the Federal Ministry of Education to determine ways and means of making the Pakistani children multi-lingually proficient and ensuring a level playing field for all children across the three systems of education.

## Strengthen Information Systems and their Use

Timely, reliable and accessible information is the key to the efficient functioning of any good system. The Ministry will promote evidence-based decision making by strengthening existing education sector data and consolidating and integrating information across systems. Data must be used to facilitate planning, and decision making for key actions related to, for example, budgeting, teacher placements, and infrastructure improvements. The Ministry will also regularly disseminate information to the public to increase transparency and accountability in the sector.

### **How?**

- i) Curriculum reforms: Review and revision of curriculum frameworks and selection of a common curriculum framework across the country. Set up a National Curriculum Council.
- ii) Common national teaching and learning standards: Identifying common standards applicable across provinces and school systems
- iii) Core subjects to be agreed across school systems with a common curriculum framework
- iv) Agreement on a multi-lingual policy, with English to be taught as a second language
- v) Establish and strengthen regulatory bodies to ensure cohesion and coordination across school systems
- vi) Strengthening of Inter Board Committee of Chairmen (IBCC) and adoption of common assessment and examination standards
- vii) Build capacity of the National Education Assessment System (NEAS) to inform about student learning outcomes across the various systems.
- viii) Active campaigns and reforms to raise awareness about the quality of education in public sector schools.
- ix) Education information dissemination for community action and accountability of systems

### **Tracking Results!**

- Adoption of common standards for curriculum, teaching learning and language
- Public dissemination of report on school improvements and student learning outcomes

## **Priority 3: Quality**

### **Why?**

Quality of learning across the country is very low, this is especially true for public sector and low-cost private schools. National level students' assessment surveys have, continuously over the years, indicated low mastery in science, mathematics and languages. Low learning outcomes are directly linked to low instructional quality by teachers. Teachers across Pakistan have low content knowledge and weak pedagogical skills. There is also a lack of qualified subject specialist teachers particularly in mathematics, science, and English across all provinces. An assessment of teacher's education degrees shows that there are less than 10% science and mathematics graduates in the basic education teaching force. Teacher training, both pre- and in-service remains weak compounded by the absence

of an effective accreditation and certification mechanism. Existing teacher development programs lack standardization and do not provide adequate incentives for the improvements of the qualifications of candidates. The placement of teachers also shows wide variations: some schools have fewer than five students per teacher, and others more than 100. Political interference in teacher placement and transfers is the main contributor to the imbalance.

Low student learning is also associated with poor teaching and learning in early years. Children's cognitive development is at its highest peak in the early years. Focusing on quality learning environments in the early age group would support development of lifelong learning skills.

### ***How?***

- (i) ***Improving teacher management:*** all provinces have initiated robust teacher recruitment mechanisms, these need to be further improved for better quality at entry, focusing on the recruitment of teachers with Math, Science and English backgrounds, and provide continuous professional development support to teachers to manage multi-grade teaching and improve math and science instruction.
- (ii) ***Lead National action and development of political will for teacher certification and licensing reforms*** by the provinces
- (iii) ***Increasing equity in teacher placement:*** Use data to rationalize teacher placement and ensure an equitable distribution of teachers across government schools.
- (iv) ***Improve learning in Early Grades:*** Lead national dialogue on implementation of Early Childhood Education and Development by the provinces
- (v) ***Strengthening student assessments:*** Introduce rigorous national student assessments surveys, and strengthen existing systems to improve the quality of assessments, test administration, and the utilization of assessment data to improve student learning outcomes
- (vi) ***Improving the school environment:*** Improve infrastructure as well as ensure adequate teaching and learning resources are available and utilized in schools
- (vii) ***Improving nutrition and health outcomes:*** Increase access to information for students and mothers on nutrition and stunting.

### ***Tracking Results!***

- Improvement in recruitment, deployment and professional development processes for teachers
- Equitable teacher distribution, and overall reduction in Student Teacher Ratios
- Improvement in student learning outcomes (by level, subject and gender)
- Improvement in basic school facilities and student to classroom ratios

## **Priority 4: Skills - Enhance access to and relevance of skills training**

### ***Why?***

The indicators of both skills training and higher education in Pakistan are low, the technical and vocational education sector lacks the capacity to deliver market oriented technical training. There are approximately 357,00 places available in the formal technical and vocational education sector

for an estimated 1.8<sup>13</sup> million new labor market entrants each year. Given Pakistan's economic aspirations, investments in postsecondary education and training systems are imperative.

Several factors contribute to the poor relevance and quality of **skills education**: (i) a lack of clarity on the roles and functions of key skills and higher education institutions since the passing of the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment; (ii) a shortage of qualified faculty, combined with a lack of incentives and adequate accountability mechanisms; (iii) outdated curricula and inadequate and often insufficient teaching learning materials and resources; (iv) a lack of competency-based training and assessments, which is the norm in more developed skills sector around the world; (v) nascent and un-coordinated efforts to develop national qualifications, without pathways between general education and skills training programs (vi) weak linkages with employers in terms of design, delivery, research, and employment placement, and consequently unresponsive to labor market needs; and (vii) weak linkages between the public sector and industry, marked by distrust and/or lack of trust in relationship with the private sector as whole.

### ***How?***

- (i) Common certification framework, regulation and licensing at the national level
- (ii) Leverage multi-source funding, tapping into resources like the -Industry, Public-Private Partnerships and Donors.
- (iii) Capacity Enhancement - Increase the number of skilled workers in priority sectors, identified for their potential contribution to economic growth;
- (iv) Communication campaign to raise a 'Skills Brand' for e.g. "*Hunarmand Pakistan-Kamayab Pakistan*"
- (v) Improve the quality and relevance of courses offered, and supporting improvements in certification and testing mechanisms; and
- (vi) Strengthen the institutional framework of the sector, including improving the efficiency and effectiveness of public sector skills training provision (testing, accreditation, competency-based curricula and adherence to a newly development National Vocational Qualifications Framework).
- (vii) Industry led Skills Councils in key economic sectors
- (viii) Industry engagement enhanced in TVET authorities
- (ix) National Skills Information System for better planning, student placement and setting priority skills areas

### ***Tracking Results!***

- Percentage of graduates employed after training
- Increase in the number of skilled workers in priority economic sectors
- Establishment of credible and reliable testing and certification systems

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<sup>13</sup>Source: NAVTTC, National Skills Information System (NSIS)



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