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Introduction

The year 2013 marked a change in policies as a new government was sworn in that promised more attention to the needs of children across Pakistan. In the year 2014, the promises made during emotional election campaigns seem to have withered away as the economy demanded more attention towards providing basic amenities and security to the citizens. Ravaged by militancy as evident from countless attacks on public places including schools and culminating in the gruesome attack on APS Peshawar on December 16th 2014, the need to focus on making the country secure will remain the number one priority. However, despite these challenges, the provincial governments have made considerable strides toward improving the education sector of Pakistan. A major shift was seen in the budget of 2014-2015 wherein all provinces doubled the amount of funds given to their respective education departments; focusing more on infrastructural development, enrolment and retention of students. Yet more needs to be done, particularly concerning the implementation of Article 25-A of the Constitution. Punjab, Sindh and ICT have all passed bills regarding free and compulsory education while KPK and Balochistan still lag behind in formulating legislation. However, the Rules of Business have yet to be drafted to ensure implementation of the bills passed. Moreover, the provincial governments must set the stepping stone upon which future governments will build to ensure Pakistan reaches its Millennium Development Goals; or at least comes close to its required targets by 2015. Goal 2 of the MDG's obligates its signatories to ensure free primary education for all children, especially those belonging to vulnerable groups like girls and minorities. Pakistan's progress towards achieving its set targets is impeded by historically embedded and multipronged complications in its educational system, exemplified by social disparities and economic constraints.

Apart from the legislations that need to be enacted by provincial governments, there is also a dire need to revise the curriculum taught at public sector educational institutions especially in Madrassahs. The three varying forms of schooling in Pakistan has created wide gaps in the educational attainment of children as the curriculum taught varies from school to school. It is now imperative that all forms of schooling be mainstreamed by the government and a set curriculum be enforced across the country. The year 2015 heralds the end of the targets set out in the EFA goals according to the Dakar framework. Pakistan being a signatory to these goals is far behind in achieving even a single one out of the six.

The chapter gives a concise breakdown of the provincial budgets and corresponding enrolment figures to gauge the amount of work still needed to increase enrolment in schools. Moreover, it highlights the progress of Pakistan towards achieving the six EFA goals and compares it with other developing countries across the world. Lastly, some recommendations have been listed by SPARC that would aid the provincial governments in formulating a concrete education policy for the future

Punjab

Budgetary Allocation

For the year 2014-2015, the provincial government had declared a budget of Rs.273 billion for the education sector which included development/non development expenditures at the provincial and district levels. According to the budget documents presented in the Punjab Assembly, Rs. 48.31 billion out of the development budget has been earmarked for higher education, school education, technical and special education, Daanish schools and laptop schemes. Moreover, Rs. 1070 million has been allocated towards pre-primary education, Rs. 18.99 billion towards secondary education and Rs. 22.82 billion for tertiary education affairs and services. The amount accrued for development in these areas dwarves that which is allocated for salaries and pensions of government employees in the provincial/district education department.¹

Also, as part of other development initiatives, the Punjab government has allocated Rs. 2 billion for the Punjab Educational Endowment Fund (PEEF) which awards scholarships to merit students in government schools. A sum of Rs. 8 billion has been given to provide missing facilities in schools while another 28.10 billion has been handed out for school education in general. Furthermore, Rs. 7.5 billion has been earmarked for the Punjab Education Foundation (PEF) so as to increase the distribution network of education vouchers to needy students and enhance private school registration.²

Statistics

Though Punjab receives a large portion of funds from the federal government, it still accounts for the most number of out of school children among all the provinces. Government authorities point to the burgeoning population and parental attitude towards education as major reasons for increasing drop-out rates. According to Alif Ailaan's recent publication '25 million broken promises', the province of Punjab accounts for nearly 47% in relative terms and 52% in absolute terms of the total number of out of school children. Nearly 13 million children aged 5-16 are out of school in the province out of a total 25.02 million out of school children in Pakistan. A further breakdown reveals that out of the total out of school children, 6.2 million are boys while 6.8 million are girls. Independent researches and civil society initiatives blame the provincial government for its lack of interest in the education sector over the years owing to low budgetary allocations, corruption, debilitating school infrastructure and teacher absenteeism to name a few.

The Net Enrolment Rate (NER) in government schools across Punjab stands at 62% in primary schools, 25% in middle schools and just 15% in high schools. A further breakdown of the statistics shows a great divide between the NER of boys and girls. According to the Pakistan Social and Living Measurement Survey (PSLM) 2013-2013, the NER for boys and girls in Punjab primary schools aged 6-10 years stood at 74% (boys) and 70% (girls). However, the number declines significantly when we see the NER for children aged 10-12 years in middle

¹ Siddiqui, Shoaib-ur-Rehman. *Punjab Govt Allocates Rs273bn for Education*. Business Recorder. 13 June 2014. Web. <http://www.brecorder.com/budget/budget-2014-15/budget-news/178621-punjab-govt-allocates-rs273bn-for-education.html>

² Ibid

schools wherein 24% boys and 20% girls are formally enrolled.³ This great divide between enrolment ratios stems from an array of factors ranging from quality of education provided to access/availability of government schools and affordability. Also, the socially and culturally entrenched gender bias towards female education adds to low enrolment rates especially in the transition from primary to middle schools and later on to high schools. Moreover, low enrolment rates coupled with poor quality of education and increasing number of out of school children have greatly contributed to increasing illiteracy in the province.

The provincial government introduced the Punjab School Education Sector Plan (PSESP) 2013-2017 which would serve as an action plan to implement school reforms, improve quality and access to education and formulate guidelines to develop legislation in light of Article 25-A of the constitution. According to the plan, the provincial government aims to complete 100% enrolment and uplift infrastructure and quality of schools by the end of 2017. Moreover, the Chief Minister of Punjab initiated the 'Students Enrolment Campaign 2014' to ensure 100% enrolment of boys and girls by May 31, 2016 across all schools of Punjab.

Legislation

The Punjab Free and Compulsory Education Bill 2014 was introduced in the Punjab Assembly on October 28th 2014 and has replaced The Punjab Compulsory Primary Education Act 1994 (IX 1994) and The Punjab Free and Compulsory Education Ordinance 2014.

Under the new legislation, every child has a right to free and compulsory education from class one to 10, non-formal education, vocational education or a combination of all considering the needs, capability and age so as to ensure completion of education. It states that a child or parent shall not be liable to pay any fee or charges or expenses for completing education in a school owned or controlled by the government or local authority. The act also binds parents ensure their children attend schools and if a parent fails to admit his child in school, they would not be entitled to any subsidy or poverty-targeted support of the provincial as well as federal government, the new law says.⁴

The act has also made it obligatory for private schools to admit 10 percent students of the strength of each of class one to 10, including disadvantaged children of the neighborhood or other children determined by the government, and provide them free and compulsory education.⁵

Sindh

³ *Pakistan Social and Living Measurement 2012-2013*. Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. Web. http://www.pbs.gov.pk/sites/default/files/pslm/publications/pslm_prov_dist_2012-13/education/2.13b.pdf

⁴ Bashir, Itrat. *PA passes 'Punjab Free and Compulsory Education Bill 2014'*. Business Recorder. Web. <http://epaper.brecorder.com/m/2014/10/28/17-page/463830-news.html>

⁵ Ibid

Budgetary Allocation

For the year 2014-2015, the Sindh government has allocated Rs. 145.02 billion (21% of the total budget) towards education; a Rs. 10 billion increase from last year's allocation of Rs. 135.55 billion. The budget puts aside Rs134.32 billion for current expenditures, which is up from Rs118.66 billion in 2013-14 budget and allocates Rs.10.7 billion for development, which is less than last year's Rs16.88 billion. As per budget documents, Rs. 500 million has been set aside for the SEMIS (Sindh Education Management Information System) while another Rs. 1.25 billion has been given to establish 23 English medium schools across various districts of Sindh.⁶ Moreover, Rs 1 billion for student scholarships, Rs 1.75 billion for school management committees, Rs 1.54 billion for free distribution of books and Rs 13.30 billion for the second phase of the Sindh Education Reform Program have been allocated in the budget.⁷

Statistics

The government of Sindh receives the second highest amount under the NFC award apart from major contributions by international donors such as the World Bank, USAID and DFID for development work across Sindh. Yet, over the past decade or so, the social and economic indicators in the province have seen no visible change and in some aspects have worsened owing to poor allocation and bad governance. The status of the education sector in Sindh has not seen any considerable improvement; in fact, there are most ghost schools and ghost teachers in the province than the country as a whole. As per latest statistics by Alif Ailaan, there are 51% children in relative terms and 25% in absolute terms who are out of school in the province from a total of out of school children in the country. A provincial breakdown reveals that approximately 6.1 million children aged 5-16 are out of school in Sindh out of a population of 12.1 million children (5-16 years) in the province. These statistics however do not reveal the gender disparity prevalent in terms out of enrolment and out of school children. As per latest statistics, 2.8 million boys and 3.3 million girls are out of school while 3.5 million boys and a meager 2.4 million girls are enrolled in schools.⁸

The Net Enrolment Rate (NER) in government schools across Sindh stands at 52% in primary schools, 19% in middle schools and just 12% in high schools. A further breakdown of the statistics shows a great divide between the NER of boys and girls. According to the Pakistan Social and Living Measurement Survey (PSLM) 2013-2013, the NER for boys and girls in Sindh primary schools aged 6-10 years stood at 67% (boys) and 56% (girls). However, the number declines significantly when we see the NER for children aged 10-12 years in middle schools

⁶ Hasan, Shazia. *Rs 145 bn Allocated for Education in Sindh Budget*. Shazia Hasan. Dawn News. 14 June 2014. Web. <http://www.dawn.com/news/1112618>

⁷ PPI. *Rs 680 bn Sindh budget 2014-2015 to be Presented Today*. Daily Times. 13 June 2014. Web. <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/sindh/13-Jun-2014/rs-680bn-sindh-budget-2014-15-to-be-presented-today>

⁸ *25 Million Broken Promises*. Alif Ailaan Report. 2014. Web. https://d3n8a8pro7vhm.cloudfront.net/alifailaan/pages/540/attachments/original/1422009988/Alif_Ailaan_report_25_million_broken_promises.pdf?1422009988

wherein 20% boys and 18% girls are formally enrolled. However, the NER increases when we see statistics of children aged 14-15 years in high schools wherein 28% boys and 21% girls are enrolled.

Though many factors are responsible for this increase in enrolment rates from middle to high school, the most commonly cite is access to high schools in comparison to middle and primary schools. Most government schools are an amalgamation of middle and high schools but primary schools are stand alone in majority of areas. Children, especially girls find it difficult to travel long distances to enroll in these schools. Sindh has 49,605 institutions from primary till higher secondary level. Around 90.8% of the total numbers of institutions are primary schools followed by middle schools at 5.4%, secondary schools at 3.3% and higher secondary a meager 0.5%.⁹

Legislation

In February 2013, the Sindh assembly passed the ‘Sindh Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Bill 2013’ and was the first province to enact and pass legislation in light of Article 25-A of the Constitution. According to the law, all children whose parents cannot afford to pay for education, or have become victims of terrorism shall be enrolled for free in private schools, where they will form 10 per cent of the total class. Every school will now have to constitute a management committee of government representatives, teachers and school principals to ensure that the policy is implemented. Both the school management and the parents can be fined or imprisoned if the law is not followed. Moreover, children would also be exempted from paying any extra fee or expenses that may prevent them from pursuing secondary education.¹⁰

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Budgetary Allocation

For the year 2014-2015, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government allocated Rs111 billion which is approximately 27.4% of the total budget; the highest percentage of budget allotted to the education sector amongst the provinces. According to budget documents, Rs. 30 billion is earmarked under the head of development expenditures for the uplift of the education sector (total Rs 139 billion) while another Rs. 81 billion under the head of the current expenditure (total 265 billion). Moreover, Rs 93 billion for elementary education, Rs 13 billion for higher education, Rs 3 billion for technical education and Rs 2 billion for special education initiatives have been allocated from the budget.¹¹

⁹ Dr. Ali, Sajid. *Policy Analysis of Education in Sindh..* UNESCO. 2011. Web.

http://www.unesco.org.pk/education/documents/situationanalysis/Policy_Analysis_Sindh.pdf

¹⁰ Tunio. Hafeez. *Bill Passed: Free Education for all children up to 16 years.* 14 February 2013.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/506910/bill-passed-free-education-for-all-children-up-to-16-years/>

¹¹ Amin. Tahir. *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Budget 2014-2015: KP allocates highest percentage to education.* Business Recorder. 17 June 2014. Web.

<http://www.brecorder.com/business-and-economy/189:pakistan/1193455:khyber-pakhtunkhwa-budget-2014-15-kp-allocates-highest-percentage-to-education/?date=2014-06-17>

Furthermore, Rs. 14.31 billion have been allocated to fund 112 projects in the province where 68 ongoing projects have been given an amount of Rs. 8.8 billion while 44 new projects have been planned with an amount of Rs. 5.5 billion.¹²

Statistics

The province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has been plagued by insecurity, terrorist attacks and uncertainty since over the past few years especially after the Swat operation and subsequent operations in the adjoining Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA). Schools and colleges have been attacked and under threat from religious extremists, the latest being the deadly attack on Army Public School in Peshawar where 132 children were martyred by terrorists. Such insecurity and instability has hindered the growth of the education sector apart from budget constraints, lack of teachers and so on. According to statistics by Alif Ailaan, 34% children in relative terms and 10% in absolute terms are out of school in the province. A breakdown of the statistics reveals that out of the 7.1 million children aged 5-16 years; approximately 2.4 million children are out of school. A gender breakdown of the number of out of school children reveals the high gender disparity prevalent across the province. According to estimates, there are only 0.7 million boys of out of school as compared to 1.7 million girls in the province. Moreover, there are only 1.74 million girls aged 5-16 in school as compared to almost 3 million boys. In order to achieve Universal Primary Enrolment (UPE), there has to be an increase in enrolment from the present 3.77 million to 5.55 million by 2015-16, a total increase of about 1.61 million.¹³

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has 32,276 schools in which 24,719 are primary, out of which 7858 are for girls and 2,010 are co-education, 4504 are middle schools in which 1,043 are for girls and 1,781 are co-education, 3,161 are high schools in which 565 are for girls and 1,190 are coeducation schools and there are 624 higher secondary schools in which 134 are for girls and 223 are co-education. Around 76.6% of all institutions are primary schools followed by middle schools at 13.9%, secondary schools at 9.8% and higher secondary at 1.9%.¹⁴

The Net Enrolment Rate (NER) in government schools across KPK stands at 54% in primary schools, 21% in middle schools and just 10% in high schools. A further breakdown of the statistics shows a great divide between the NER of boys and girls. According to the Pakistan Social and Living Measurement Survey (PSLM) 2013-2013, the NER for boys and girls in KPK primary schools aged 6-10 years stood at 76% (boys) and 60% (girls). However, the number declines significantly when we see the NER for children aged 10-12 years in middle schools wherein 23% boys and 17% girls are formally enrolled. The NER increases but only for boys (31%) aged 14-15 years in high school while that for girls (18%) increases by only 1%. Substantial efforts have been made by the provincial government to encourage enrolment of girls

¹² Wajidullah. *14pc Increase in Education Budget of KP*. The Nation. 15 June 2014.

<http://nation.com.pk/national/15-Jun-2014/14pc-increase-in-education-budget-of-kp>

¹³ See supra note 16

¹⁴ Mustafa, Ghulam. *Education Policy Analysis Report KP*. UNESCO. 17 January 2012. Web.

http://unesco.org.pk/education/documents/situationanalysis/Policy_Analysis_Report_of_KP.pdf

into primary schools, yet the deteriorating law and order situation and cultural/ religious barriers have deterred any progress in the matter.

Legislation

No legislation regarding the right to free and compulsory education has been formulated in the province. The provincial government has stated that they are looking at the financial implications and allocations before presenting the bill in the assembly.

Balochistan

Budgetary Allocation

For the fiscal year 2014-2015, the Balochistan government has allocated Rs.40.7 billion which represents one-fifth of the total budget and amounts to a 17% increase over the allocation in 2013-14. However, 71% of the education budget has been earmarked for recurrent expenditure and the remaining 29% for development initiatives. Moreover, 36% of the budget has been allocated for secondary education, 24% for primary education, 19% for higher education and 21% for other educational projects.¹⁵

As per the budget documents, the Balochistan provincial government has allocated Rs. 5 billion to establish a Balochistan Education Endowment Company which will aid in infrastructure development of schools across the province. Moreover, Rs. 324 million has been allocated for the provision of facilities to schools and colleges, Rs.400 million for the provision of furniture and scientific equipments to schools, Rs.750 million for repair and renovation of schools and Rs.500 million for the Chief Minister Endowment Fund. The budget also includes Rs750 million to upgrade 200 primary schools to middle schools and Rs. 425 million for upgrading 50 middle schools to high schools.¹⁶

Statistics

The status of education in Balochistan has been in a dismal state for many years owing to militancy and instability in the region coupled with low budgetary allocations, teacher absenteeism, lack of school infrastructure and facilities and so on. It has been estimated that the province will miss all its targets set out under the EFA and MDG goals. According to Alif Ailaan statistics, Balochistan has the most out of school children in relative terms (66%) while approximately 10% in absolute terms. A breakdown of the statistics reveals that there are 2.6 million children aged 5-16 years in the province out of which 1.77 million are out of school. Moreover, a gender breakdown shows that around 0.87 million boys and 0.9 million girls are not

¹⁵ *Post-Budget Policy Dialogue on Balochistan Education Budget 2014-2015*. Institute of Social and Policy Sciences. 2014. Web.

http://i-saps.org/upload/news_events/docs/1421054881.pdf

¹⁶ APP. *Balochistan Government Presents Budget of Rs 215.7b*. Express Tribune. 19 June 2014. Web. <http://tribune.com.pk/story/724123/balochistan-govt-presents-budget-of-rs215-7b/>

enrolled in any form of schooling. Balochistan is also the only province where the out of school children outnumber those that are in school; 0.5 million boys and 0.3 million girls. However, it is surprising to note that the gender disparity in Balochistan is at par with provinces like Sindh and Punjab even though the province is plagued with insecurity and corruption in the education sector.

The Net Enrolment Rate (NER) in government schools across Balochistan stands at 45% in primary schools, 14% in middle schools and just 6% in high schools. A further breakdown of the statistics shows a great divide between the NER of boys and girls. According to the Pakistan Social and Living Measurement Survey (PSLM) 2013-2013, the NER for boys and girls in Balochistan primary schools aged 6-10 years stood at 65% (boys) and 42% (girls). However, the number declines significantly when we see the NER for children aged 10-12 years in middle schools wherein only 18% boys and 9% girls are formally enrolled mostly in urban districts. The NER increases but only for boys (19%) aged 14-15 years in high school while that for girls decreases from 9% in middle school to 7% in high school.

Legislation

The governor of Balochistan on 12th of March, 2013, approved the Ordinance on Free & Compulsory education for Balochistan. The Ordinance makes all five to sixteen year old children residing in the Balochistan province for free and compulsory education by law. The Act is now also in place titled " Balochistan Compulsory Education Act" officially passed on February 6, 2014 , implementation of which will be dependent on "Rule of Business" which still need to be formulated.¹⁷

Education For All Goals 2015

Pakistan is obliged under various national and international commitments to provide quality education to children irrespective of their gender, class or religion. At the forefront of these declarations is the Dakar Framework of Action, signed by 163 other countries in April 2000. The EFA goals consist of six broad objectives which include: provision of early childhood care and education, provision of primary and secondary education, improvement in adult and youth literacy rates, provision of vocational and technical education, eradicating gender discrimination and enhancing the overall quality of education. Pakistan's progress towards achieving the aforementioned goals has been stunted due to the government's inefficiency and negligence. It is therefore vital to ascertain where Pakistan stands in achieving set EFA goals and what might be hindering its prospects to ultimately meet the criteria set out in the Dakar Framework.

Goal 1: Expanding and Improving Comprehensive Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Especially for the Most Vulnerable Disadvantaged Children

¹⁷ *Legislation: Balochistan.* Right to Education Pakistan. 2014. Web.
<http://rtepakistan.org/legislation/balochistan/>

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) aims to enhance the social development of children by amalgamating various child friendly programs to bolster their transition into primary schooling while also focusing on the basics of health, nutrition and learning capabilities. Effective healthcare and access to good preschool facilities can mitigate social disadvantage and lead to improved learning achievement. Moreover, it is a veritable fact that ECCE has a pronounced impact on the cognitive abilities of children that are needed to achieve greater learning outcomes. The pre-primary education gross enrolment ratio increased from 33% in 1999 to 50% in 2011. Almost 60 million more children have been enrolled in pre-primary schools over the period. The enrolment ratio more than doubled in South and West Asia, from 22% in 1999 to 50% in 2011. Low income and sub-Saharan African countries lag behind, however, with gross enrolment ratios of 17% and 18%, respectively.¹⁸

In Pakistan, early childhood programs continue to suffer due to inadequate resources and a lackadaisical attitude of the government towards such programs. The impact of ECCE on child growth has long been neglected in developing countries that focus more on educational programs at the high school and university level. There has been no survey or research conducted at the national level by the government to ascertain the number of children not enrolled in pre-primary education thereby making it difficult to stage interventions in this sector. Preprimary education is given to children aged between three to five years in both public and private schools. Early childhood education was well organized in the 1970s with *Katchi* or preprimary classes introduced in formal primary schools. The practice was discontinued after the 1980s. Realizing the role and significance of ECCE especially for improving learning achievement, specific provisions have been made in the National Education Policy 1998-2010 to reintroduce *Katchi* as a formal class in primary schools. The National Plan of Action (2001-2015) has also highlighted the importance of ECCE in Pakistan's education system. According to the NPA, "Early Childhood Education is defined as both formal and informal as well as the public or private education services for children aged 3-5 years."¹⁹

According to the latest ASER 2014 report, approximately 60.8% of children aged 3-5 years in rural areas and 42.2% in urban areas are out of school. This is an alarming figure given the fact that most of the children who do enter school either drop out or do not progress further on thereby increasing the number of out of school children. There is a dire need for an intervention whereby the provincial governments form legislation that will ensure that early childhood education is made mandatory and out of school children are brought back into school. The government does not give consideration to the integration of early childhood education with health and nutrition facilities. Moreover there is no specialized training in early education and care for teachers especially in case of public sector. ECCE aims to facilitate the most vulnerable

¹⁸ EFA Global Monitoring Report 2014. UNESCO 2014. Web.
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002256/225660e.pdf>

¹⁹ Early Childhood Development Initiatives in Pakistan: A Mapping Study. Sindh Education Foundation 2010. Web.
<http://www.sef.org.pk/about.php>

disadvantaged children of the country but despite this, access to and facilities of early child care programs are still limited. Limitations in terms of finances, trained human resources and a general apathy towards preprimary education are holding back the required growth of ECCE in Pakistan.

Goal 2: Ensuring that by 2015 All Children with Special Emphasis on Girls and Children in Difficult Circumstances and those belonging to Ethnic Minorities have Access to Complete, Free and Compulsory Primary Education of Good Quality

According to the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2014, the goal of universal primary education is likely to be missed by a wide margin, as 57 million children were still out of school in 2011. In order to achieve 100% enrolment as outlined in the goal, countries must ensure that they provide primary education to every child regardless of class, gender, religion or disability by no later than 2015. Developing countries are lagging behind in achieving this goal as current trends indicate that though the numbers of out of school children declined from 107 million in 1999 to 57 million in 2012. Of the countries furthest from UPE, 27 had enrolment ratios below 80% in 1999. In 2015, 15 countries are still expected to be in this situation, including 10 in sub-Saharan Africa: Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, the Gambia, Lesotho, Liberia, Mali, Niger and Nigeria. Djibouti and Pakistan.²⁰

Girls make up about 54% of the global population of children out of school. In the Arab States the share is 60%, unchanged since 1999. In South and West Asia, by contrast, the share of girls in the out-of-school population fell steadily from 64% in 1999 to 57% in 2011.²¹ Yet, this decrease does not reflect ground realities as credible data is not available especially in conflict affected zones in countries like Pakistan and Afghanistan. Globally, the gender gaps in the out of school population have narrowed, but girls still made up 53% of the out of school population in 2008. These disparities are most prevalent in South and West Asia, where girls account for 59% of children who are not enrolled in school.

Pakistan is one of the many low income developing countries where concrete steps need to be taken in order to achieve the MDG and EFA goal of universal primary education for all. Current enrolment statistics at primary level indicate that Pakistan is not on the track to achieve universal primary education by 2015. Large social disparities exist at all levels of average enrolment in Pakistan. Inequalities based on wealth, location, ethnicity and gender are consistently hindering the efforts of raising the enrolment rates to the desired level.

²⁰ See Supra Note 18

²¹ Ibid

Level expected by 2015	Target reached or close ($\geq 95\%$) 76	Algeria, Aruba, Australia, Bahamas, Belgium, Belize, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Malawi, Maldives, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Oman, Panama, Peru, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zambia		
	Far from target (80-94%) 31	Bhutan, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Mauritania, Senegal, Yemen Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, British Virgin Islands, Cape Verde, Colombia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Jordan, Lithuania, Malta, Namibia, Palestine, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Lucia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Suriname		
	Very far from target (<80%) 15	Burkina Faso, Djibouti, Eritrea, Lesotho, Mali, Niger, Pakistan Cayman Islands, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, Jamaica, Liberia, Nigeria, Saint Kitts and Nevis		
Strong relative progress		15	Slow progress or moving away from target	31
Change between 1999 and 2011				

Table 1: Expected Primary Enrolment by 2015 (UNESCO 2014)

According to the National Plan of Action to Accelerate Education MDG's 2013, Pakistan was to achieve 100% net enrolment for boys by 2010 and for girls by 2015. As it stands, according to official statistics of the PSLM 2012-2013, Pakistan has a net enrolment ratio (NER) of 57% for children enrolled either in public or private primary schools. In Pakistan, there are a total number of 177,724 primary education institutions in the country. Of these, 75% are public sector schools; 10% private sector schools. The highest net primary enrolment rate is in Punjab (61%) followed by Sindh (53%), KPK (51%) and Balochistan (47%). These figures are based on children aged 5-9 and excludes those enrolled in early childhood education.

Pakistan ranks second with the most out of school children in the world. According to the National Education Management Information System (NEMIS), around 22.5% of children in the primary school age category are out of school; approximately 5.1 million out of 22.6 million children aged (5-9).²² It is estimated that 23% of rural and 7% of urban children are not enrolled in any form of schooling. Population projections show that nearly 60% of children between the ages of 5-16 currently reside in rural areas. Out of the total number of out of school children in Pakistan, 14 million reside in rural communities, compared to 11 million who live in urban areas; meaning 57% of out of school children reside in rural areas.²³

Provincially, Punjab has the greatest percentage of children who have been enrolled in primary education (62%) followed by KPK (54%), Sindh (52%) and Balochistan (45%).

Goal 3: Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programs

²² See Supra Note 8

²³ Ibid

Given the dismal condition of the country's education system, coupled with a crippling economy and worsening security situation, many have been forced to forgo education in search of a stable source of income. This goal envisions equal opportunities of technical and vocational education to young adults who were unable to enroll in formal education or dropped out due to various reasons. These informal programs aim to develop income generating skills especially for the disadvantaged and handicapped.

Participation in lower secondary education increased globally from 72% in 1999 to 82% in 2011. The fastest growth was in sub-Saharan Africa, where enrolment more than doubled, albeit from a low base, reaching 49% in 2011. Of the 82 countries with data, 38 are expected to achieve universal lower secondary enrolment by 2015. But three-quarters of the countries in sub-Saharan Africa are not included among these 82 countries. Given most of these countries have not yet achieved universal primary education; it is extremely unlikely that they will achieve universal lower secondary education by 2015 including Pakistan.²⁴

The introduction of technical and vocational education during secondary schooling is essential in honing and developing the skills of adolescents needed for work and life. Given the prevalence of out of school children due to varying circumstances across the world, it is important to focus on skill training apart from basic education. In Pakistan, around 30.1 percent of lower secondary school age children are out of school. This equates to 2.7 million children (1.1 million boys and 1.6 million girls).²⁵ Furthermore, some 15.9 percent of the total population of adolescents is engaged in some form of child labor; with the number estimated to increase due to the ongoing economic crisis in the country.

More than 68 per cent of Pakistan's population is under the age of 30.4. The country's demography is experiencing a rare youth bulge, which could represent both opportunities and challenges as considerable number (32 per cent of youth) are uneducated, possessing no life skills. Despite a deceleration in the country's population growth rate (from 3 per cent to 1.55 per cent) in recent years, the youth cohort (age 15-29 years) has increased by 1.8 million in 2008-09 from that of 2006-07 figures constituting 27.63 per cent of the total population.²⁶

The limited number of vocational and technical centers is consistently hindering the prospects of increasing youth enrolment rates in such institutes. With the current rate of progress, it is difficult for Pakistan to achieve the targeted EFA goals. Therefore, renewed efforts are required to increase the share of marginalized groups in technical and vocational education programs.

²⁴ See Supra Note 18

²⁵ *Global Initiative on Out Of School Children*. UNICEF. 2014. Web.
<http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Documents/OOSCI%20Reports/pakistan-oosc-report-2013-en.pdf>

²⁶ *UNESCO Country Programming Document 2013*. UNESCO. 2014. Web.
http://unesco.org.pk/documents/2013/PAKISTAN_CPD.pdf

Goal 4: Achieving a 50% Improvement in Levels of Adults Literacy by 2015, Especially for Women, and Equitable Access to Basic and Continuing Education for All Adults

This goal sets the objective of improving adult literacy with special emphasis on providing equal educational opportunities to all adults, especially females. The adult illiteracy rate fell from 24% in 1990 to 18% in 2000 and 16% in 2011. However, the number of illiterate adults remains stubbornly high at 774 million, a fall of 12% since 1990. Sub-Saharan Africa together with South and West Asia, accounts for three-quarters of the global population of illiterate adults. The number of illiterate adults is projected only to fall to 743 million by 2015. In 32 out of 89 countries, the adult literacy rate will still be below 80%.²⁷

Over the years, the global literacy rate has steadily increased to almost 84% whilst Pakistan's lags far behind at 60%. No substantial progress has been made thus far to increase the literacy rate in the country. This rate of progress represents the dearth of facilities needed for enhancing the literacy level of adults in Pakistan. A significant level of disparity is evident on the basis of class, religion and especially gender. Only 48% of females are literate as compare to 71% of males in the ages 10 and above.

Figure 1.4.4: Goal 4 – At least one in five adults will be illiterate in a third of countries in 2015
Number of countries by level of adult literacy rate, 2000, 2011 and 2015 (projected)

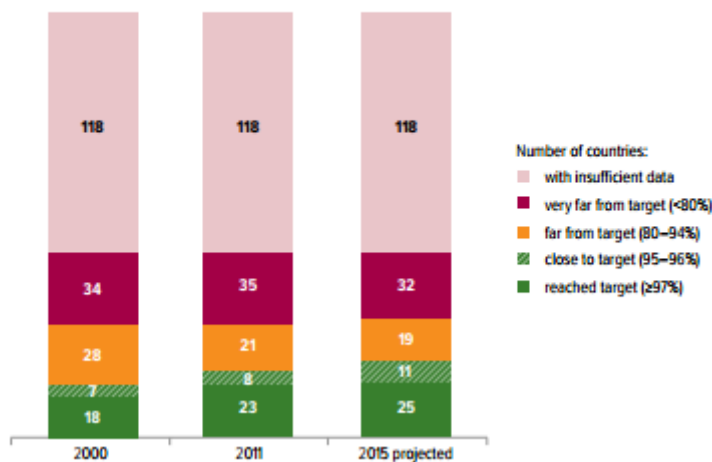


Table 2: Level of adult literacy rate (UNESCO 2014)

A provincial breakdown reveals that Punjab has the highest literacy rate (62%) followed by Sindh (60%), KPK (52%) and Balochistan (44%). Pakistan is obliged to raise the literacy rate to 86% for the age group of 10 and above by 2015.²⁸ Currently, the literacy rate stands at 60%; a

²⁷ See Supra Note 18

²⁸ See Supra Note 3

2% increase from 58% in 2010-2011.²⁹ Along with provincial disparities, the rural-urban divide is also evident in literacy rates as it remains much higher in urban areas than in rural areas. Moreover, like other developing countries, women are far less likely to be literate than men, reflecting past and present inequalities in accessing educational opportunities. Current statistics reveal that there are around 51.2 million adult illiterates in Pakistan. Females constitute the major proportion of this estimate as they form 63% of the total. It is projected that if the current trend continues, Pakistan will have 54 million adult illiterates by 2015.

Goal 5: Eliminate Gender Disparities in Primary and Secondary Education by 2005 and Achieve Gender Equality in Education by 2015 with a Focus on Ensuring Girls Full and Equal Access to and Achievement in Basic Education of Good Quality.

Gender parity and equality in education constitute a basic human right, as well as an important means of improving other social and economic outcomes. Narrowing the gender gap in primary enrolment is one of the biggest EFA successes since 2000. At the primary level, only 60% of countries with data had achieved gender parity by 2011. Among low income countries, just over a fifth have achieved parity. It is projected that by 2015, 112 out of 161 countries will have achieved parity in primary education, but also that 12 countries will still have fewer than 9 girls enrolled in school for every 10 boys. At the secondary level, only 38% of countries with data had achieved parity by 2011. It is projected that by 2015, 84 out of 150 countries will have achieved parity in lower secondary education, but also that 31 countries will still have severe gender disparities.³⁰ Pakistan however it seems will not achieve either target of gender parity in primary and secondary schools.

Among the South Asian countries, Pakistan has some of the largest gender disparities in education. According to the Global Gender Gap report 2014, Pakistan ranks second to last (141) in terms of gender equality worldwide, narrowly beating out Yemen. Although there has been progress, it is impossible for the country to achieve the EFA target of eliminating gender disparity without radical shifts of policy and priorities in education planning. A Gender Parity Index (GPI) of 1 or above indicates that female enrolment is at par with or exceeds male enrolment, while a GPI lower than 1 implies the opposite. At a value of 0.80, meaning roughly three girls in school for every four boys, the GPI for primary education in Pakistan has hardly moved over the past five years. Data shows that gender parity for primary schools in AJ&K is close to 1 (0.96), indicating effectively no difference in the attendance of boys and girls. The GPI for Punjab stands at 0.93 and the province does relatively better than others in maintaining gender disparity at the primary level. GPI in Balochistan stands at 0.77, in Sindh at 0.81, in KPK at 0.54 while in FATA it is around 0.61.³¹ It is noteworthy that the GPI for KPK is lower than that of FATA even though the tribal areas have been historically overlooked in terms of budget and infrastructure development, not to mention ongoing military operations in various agencies across FATA.

²⁹ Ibid

³⁰ Ibid

³¹ *Pakistan District Education Rankings 2014*. Alif Ailaan. 2014. Web http://www.alifailaan.pk/district_rankings

Differences of wealth, location, language and other factors are increasing the gender disparities in the country. Gender disparity in school attendance among urban households is often small as compared to rural households or households belonging to minorities (ethnic or religious). With little or no progress owing to lack of development in schools, Pakistan is set to miss its target of achieving gender parity by 2015.

Level expected by 2015	Target reached or close ($\geq 95\%$)	Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Bermuda, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cook Islands, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Palestine, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Serbia, Seychelles, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, United States, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zambia		126	
	Far from target (80-94%)	Benin, Burkina Faso, Djibouti, Guinea, Mali, Mozambique, Yemen	Aruba, Belize, Botswana, British Virgin Islands, Cape Verde, Cayman Islands*, Comoros, Congo, Guyana*, Jamaica, Kiribati, Malawi*, Mauritania*, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Vanuatu	23	
	Very far from target ($< 80\%$)	Afghanistan	Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominican Republic, Eritrea, Niger, Pakistan, Senegal*, Swaziland	12	
		Strong relative progress	8	Slow progress or moving away from target	27
Change between 1999 and 2011					

Table 3: Expected level of gender parity by 2015 (UNESCO 2014)

Several factors have played a role in hindering progress towards achieving the goal of eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education. In Pakistan, the stereotypical perception of women as confined within the household hinders girls from going to school. This condition is aggravated by the distance of school from the household (especially in rural areas) and presence of male teachers in educational institutes. Our government must develop and implement effective policies ranging from offering financial incentives for female education to developing girl friendly school environments, improving access to technical and vocational programs, and providing non formal education wherever possible. These initiatives can help to overcome the gender disadvantages that are limiting the development of women's skills and education in Pakistan.

Goal 6: Improve All Aspects of the Quality of Education and Ensure Excellence so that recognized and Measurable Learning Outcomes are achieved by All, Especially in Literacy, Numeracy and Essential Life Skills

Budgetary allocation, educational infrastructure, pupil-teacher ratio and the availability of qualified teaching staff are just some of the indicators used to measure progress towards achieving this goal. Furthermore, UNESCO has recommended that the various setbacks faced by

marginalized children in classrooms and schools need to be addressed by countries through provision of additional support, including extra learning time and supplementary resources.

At the primary education level, the pupil/teacher ratio exceeded 40:1 in 26 of the 162 countries with data in 2011. Less than 75% of primary school teachers are trained according to national standards in around a third of the countries with data. At the secondary education level, the pupil/teacher ratio exceeded 30:1 in 14 of the 130 countries with data in 2011. Less than 75% of secondary school teachers are trained according to national standards in half of the countries with data. Globally, between 1999 and 2011, average pupil/teacher ratios have barely changed at the pre-primary, primary and secondary education levels. In pre-primary education, the average pupil/teacher ratio remained at 21:1; in primary education it improved slightly, from 26:1 to 24:1; and in secondary education, from 18:1 to 17:1.³²

Pakistan's progress towards achieving this goal has been slow to say the least. The education system of the country is emasculated by an inadequate number of teachers, insufficient infrastructure, lack of teacher training, biased curriculum, and a constant threat of conflict, especially in FATA and parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. Pakistan's military expenditure stifles budgetary spending on education. The discrepancy is so large that just one-fifth of Pakistan's military budget would be sufficient to finance various projects in attaining universal primary education. Of course, Pakistan's military budget reflects political decisions taken in light of national security concerns, yet increased investment in education would do a great deal to enhance Pakistan's long term national security.

Teacher absenteeism in Pakistan plays a large role in affecting the quality and participation in education. The student-teacher ratio in Pakistan is high. At the national level it stands at 47:1 (compared with a recommended international standard of 25:1). Punjab has a student-teacher ratio of 42:1, Sindh 32:1, KP 38:1 and FATA is 31:1 which implies naturally that all students are unable to receive proper attention in a suitable learning environment. Primary schools most often have only three teachers on average, each taking multiple classes simultaneously. Discipline and quality of teaching both suffer and like everything else in Pakistan, the recruitment of teachers can be highly politicized.³³

Recommendations

- Immediate steps are required to improve the status of female education in the country. For this purpose, distance issues and lack of institutions for girls especially in remote areas must be addressed.
- Early childhood education must be integrated with programs of nutrition and health facilities as directed in the EFA goals. Moreover, these programs must be provided equally in all public-private schools of rural-urban areas.
- More technical and vocational institutes should be established in the country to increase the capabilities of the disadvantaged population who have either dropped out or never attended school.
- Efforts are required to improve the literacy rate of the country, especially of females.

³² See Supra 18

³³ Annual Status of Education Report

- The education system must be equipped with proper infrastructure at all levels to reduce the increasing risk of dropping out of school and to maintain the overall education system.
- Hiring local teachers and providing opportunities for training and professional career growth is critical. Furthermore, an internal incentive structure should be built to reward teachers for their progress and hard work so as to ensure complete teachers attendance.
- Teacher recruitment, training and deployment procedures are vital in improving the overall education system of the country.
- The government must take effective steps to implement Article 25-A of the Constitution, which guarantees free and compulsory education for all children of ages 5-16 years and by allocating sufficient resources, upgrading existing facilities and by introducing/ updating laws.
- Budgetary allocations for education must be consistently and substantially increased each year to meet the target of 7% of GDP by 2015, as committed in the National Education Policy 2009. The government must ensure that the education budget is released in time and are not subjected to random cuts.
- Resources must be spent not only on improving infrastructure development but also on ensuring that teaching quality and standards are improved through better teacher training and provision of learning/ teaching material.
- Steps should be taken to ensure that children with disabilities have easy access to public service buildings including schools and recreational facilities.
- Provincial governments must ensure that district governments disclose any information on budget and public spending to the population and not withhold any information