

# EDUCATION REFORMS AND COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS

## STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES

### KEY INQUIRIES



What factors affect community access and participation in education?



Are schools providing quality education relevant to the needs of children in the community?



How satisfied are community members with:



Preparedness of learners?



Quality of teaching?



Provision of learning focused inputs?



Management and governance?

### RESEARCH TOOLS AND AREA OF FOCUS

#### Geographical focus

- 11 districts in Punjab
- Qualitative data sampling from Bhakkar and Rawalpindi

#### Key respondents

- Key respondents - 236 school and community level respondents including:
- Service Providers at the school level
  - School Management Committee Parents of both in and Out-of-school children
  - Local leaders

#### Research tools

- Informal observations
- Focus group discussion
- Key informant interviews



## 1: Community Perceptions on Access and Participation

Schooling decisions in communities are influenced by the following factors:



### DECISION MAKERS

In urban settings, the mothers are the primary decisionmakers when it comes to children's schooling

In rural environments, fathers are more involved, particularly where schools are gender-segregated



### DEMAND FACTORS

Socioeconomic conditions of the household; parental awareness; child health, interest, and gender; security considerations; expectations on girls in society especially at transition points; and perceptions on the returns to education



### SUPPLY FACTORS

Availability, proximity, perceived quality of schooling, often defined by observable characteristics of the school such as infrastructure, quality of personnel and enrolment campaigns to ensure participation and attendance in schools.

Proximity of school and the gender of teachers and management team members are especially important for girls



### ACHIEVEMENTS

Enrolment efforts in Punjab appear to be bearing returns, as both school and community respondents reported nearly complete enrolment at primary level, and almost no children never enrolled



### CHALLENGES

Some children, especially those with physical and mental disabilities, remain side-lined with a drop in retention at transition points

Family requirements for child labour, lack of student motivation, and family migration result in children dropping out of school or not attending consistently

Parents remain less willing for girls to travel long distances



## 2: Community Perceptions on Quality

Community understanding of quality and how it has changed over time



Visibly attractive school infrastructure especially in government schools led to community's perception of increased quality education



The Roadmap reform process has resulted in greater parental satisfaction due to:

- Recruitment of more qualified teachers
- Increased monitoring
- More regular literacy and numeracy drive (LND) assessments



Improved community trust in public schools

## CHALLENGES WITH QUALITY ACCORDING TO SCHOOL-LEVEL ACTORS



Issues related to the operationalisation of some government policies and monitoring indicators related to the Stocktake and Roadmap reforms persist, such as the 'No Fail Policy', 'No Hitting Policy', and the subjectivity of some monitoring indicators



Gaps in learning measurements and teacher effectiveness: teachers were critical of the excessive focus on LND assessments and 'observables' which skewed teaching in favour of selected student learning outcomes (SLOs) covered in the assessments; not enough focus on quality and ground realities



Medium of Instruction – shifting government priorities; varying levels of proficiency among students



Continued shortage of teachers



Gaps in teacher training



Curriculum changes and complexity - teachers expressed that the curriculum has complex concepts which is beyond students' level of understanding



Low parental engagement - not corroborated by parents themselves but according to school level actors - limits learning among children



### 3: Community Perceptions on Provision of School-level Inputs



#### QUALITY OF TEACHING

Overall, community members satisfied with improvements in quality of teachers and their performance, behavior, communication, and responsiveness over time

However, concerns expressed by school leaders about being overburdened and demotivated due to a perception of excessive monitoring, changing teacher-student dynamics, and lack of responsiveness of policies to school level concerns



#### PREPAREDNESS OF LEARNERS

Better educated parents more likely to engage in school activities and send their children to some form of organised learning before Grade 1



#### PROVISION OF LEARNING FOCUSED INPUTS

Community members satisfied with improvement in infrastructure, such as school buildings, classroom furniture, and drinking water facilities over the last few years



#### EFFECTIVENESS OF MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

Community members largely unaware of School Management Committees (SMCs) or any formal process to select SMC members, although they had good relations with the school administration

Head teachers served as the key point of contact for parents to discuss any school-level issues, but these interactions were limited



## KEY CONCLUSIONS



### Perceptions

- Overall positive perception about recent changes and reforms
- However, substantial difference in the perspectives of different stakeholders for their role in education – such as parents, teachers and different groups within communities
- Different stakeholders quick to hold each other responsible for issues that remain. For example, parents felt teachers needed to be more regular, while teachers believed that parents' perception of their responsibility was limited to getting their children to school



### Equity

- Gaps identified in access and quality of education by gender, disability, socio-economic status, and geography
- Girls face greater difficulties because of distance, societal expectations and limited avenues of social mobility
- Resourcing differences also evident in urban versus rural areas such as in school infrastructure, facilities and formula-based funding



### Prioritization

- Community members have different priorities regarding quality and ingredients of good learning
- School-parent communication dependent on the gender of the school and the parent
- Gender mismatch between the child, parent, and school leadership can create a barrier to parent's involvement in the learning process, as well as the importance placed on schooling
- The stakeholders were aligned in prioritising the performance and wellbeing of children but high expectations from teachers along with limited support affects their morale and performance



### Communication

- Consistent lack of feedback loops between communities, schools, district officials and education managers at higher levels
- Lack of effective communication between schools and communities beyond the need to increase and maintain enrolment



This infographic is based on the community study report done as part of FCDO's evaluation of PESP2 in Punjab undertaken by the e-Pact Consortium which includes Oxford Policy Management (OPM), the Institute for Development and Economic Alternatives (IDEAS), and the Consortium for Development Policy Research (CDPR)