

Policy Brief

Adult Education & Development
Nexus in Pakistan

Pakistan Coalition for Education (PCE)
an initiative of
Society for Access to Quality Education

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Pakistan Coalition for Education
an Initiative of Society for Access to Quality Education
Flat # 1, 3rd Floor, Al-Babar Center, F-8 Markaz, Islamabad
Ph: +92-51-2855002- 2855288
Fax:+92-51-2855001
www.pcepk.org

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FOREWORD

Pakistan is bound by its constitution and international commitments to meet the educational needs of all its citizens including the out of school youth and illiterate adults. All education policies of Pakistan have resolved to elevate literacy rate. However only since 1970, specific targets and strategies to launch movements for adult literacy were taken up. In the 1970's, two major education policies (1972 and 1979) laid particular emphasis on adult literacy. In 1981, a Literacy and Mass Education Commission was established to promote literacy. In the mid-1980s, to provide incentives to literacy, a number of measures were proposed which were provided with a legal cover by the Literacy Ordinance #XXVII of 1985. Literacy Act was enacted in 1987 but implementation is still pending because the enforcement date could not be announced yet by the Federal Government. The salient features of literacy Act are as follows:-

A passport other than a Hajj passport, a driving license or an arms license shall be issued only to literate person; and

Only literate person shall be eligible for employment under a local body or an establishment or institution under the control of the Federal Government

Intentions to launch literacy campaigns were part of all legislations but not backed by financial allocations.

The Article 25A, according to the 18th Constitutional Amendment, declares "education free and compulsory for all children of the age of 5 to 16 years, in such manner as may be determined by law. With promulgation of the 18th Amendment, the concurrent list has been abolished which makes education a provincial subject. It implies devolution of legislative powers for subjects mentioned in the concurrent list i.e. curriculum, syllabus, planning, policy, centres of excellence, standards of education and Islamic education. As these were federal subjects earlier and were dealt by the federal government, now the new shift of legislative power raises numerous questions. The new constitutional revision has generated a debate among policy makers, CSOs and concerned groups about capacity of provincial departments to deliver on the mentioned items. The government(s) cannot have a viable plan without thinking through the financial, legal, technical, and systemic implications of the promise made to the people of Pakistan through 25A.

Although Pakistan is a signatory to various international conventions and treaties, its international commitments are not translated into effective strategies and corresponding funding allocations. Pakistan displays the lowest indicators for education in the region and reformation of the education sector is clearly not the Government's principal priority. The UN Development Programme's Human Development Report gives Pakistan the lowest "education index" score of any country outside Africa. Pakistan is one of only 12 countries in the world that spends less than two percent of its annual budget on Education.

Between 1980 and 2010 Pakistan's HDI rose by 1.5% annually, from 0.311 to 0.490. The HDI of South Asia as a region increased from 0.315 in 1980 to 0.516 while Pakistan remained below the regional average.

In keeping with the focus of Pakistan Coalition for Education's work and to add to the existing repository of research in the country, this study focuses on the nexus between Adult Education and Development in Pakistan, which are two inter-related but distinct and complex phenomena. The study can be seen as an attempt to investigate their connectedness and help contribute towards enriching the discourse on enhancing Pakistan's economy through better education, with a particular focus on Adult Education. Methodology of this study was mainly dominated by literature review including a critical reading of related governmental policy documents and reports; media reports; and researches published by local and international NGOs and coalitions working in the area of literacy and adult education.

Contents of the study include background information to contextualize the need to do more for the achievement of EFA goals with a special focus on Adult Education. The country's education policy has been reflected upon in terms of brief history along with an overview and critical analysis of the current National Education Policy of 2009. The document attempts to connect the dots and establish the need for aligning the educational and development paradigms in Pakistan. The study also takes stalk of the status of financing of education, international obligations and best practices. Moreover, the delivery of education in light of the Constitution of Pakistan and recent changes with regards to the 18th Amendment are discussed in detail followed by conclusion and recommendations. The recommendation are mainly drawn and compiled from various credible sources including the Government of Pakistan, UNESCO, relevant donor agencies, NGOs and other civil society groups and activists including PCE members.

BACKGROUND

According to the National Education Census 2005, there are 245, 682 educational institutions in Pakistan. The over all enrolment in the institutions is recorded as 33.380 million with teaching staff of 1.357 million. The public and private provision is at 67% and 33% respectively. In 151,744 Public institutions, the enrolment and teaching staff have been reported as 21.258 and 0.724 Million respectively, whereas the 76,047 institutions in Private sector have 12.121 million enrolment and 0.633 million teaching staff. Out of these institutions, 51% are in the rural areas and 49% in urban areas.

	Institutions	Enrolment	Teachers
Pre-Primary	1081	61364	3,807
Mosque School	14123	802904	22,603
Primary	122349	12433240	399,517
Middle	38449	6652870	313,797
Secondary	25090	9473525	418,376
Inter and Degree College	1882	1158489	59,097
General Universities	49	194971	11,434
Technical / Professional	1324	361534	30,334
Vocational / Poly Technique	3059	238687	15,339
Madrasa	12153	1549242	58,391
Others	8232	452752	24,107
Total	227791	3291353	1356802

Source: Education Census, 2005

It is widely accepted that literacy opens doors to better livelihood, improved health and expanded opportunity. It empowers people to assume an active role in their communities and to build more secure future for their families. In contrast, illiteracy traps people in poverty and lives of diminished opportunity, and as a consequence, it undermines national prosperity. Growing research in the field of literacy and development traces the evolving notions of literacy from a narrowly defined concept to one embracing a holistic view of educational development that includes the building of literate and prosperous societies. Ultimately, literacy's crucial role in achieving the EFA and MDG goals may also provide a key to improving the lives of millions of people living in extreme poverty, and especially vulnerable groups including women and minorities.

Worldwide, nearly a billion adults, at least 600 million of them women, are illiterate. Over 70 percent of these live in nine large countries: Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, and Pakistan. Most have never gone to a school while others are illiterate because of early drop out or inefficient schooling. The number of adult illiterates worldwide is larger than the number of primary-school students that amounts to roughly more than 700 million.

According to the National Institute of Population Studies (NIPS) Islamabad, the projected Pakistani population for 2010 was 167 million of which, 51.9% are males and 48.1% are females. More than three fourth (78%) population of Pakistan falls in the age group of more than 15 against two third (66%) in the age group of more than 10 i.e. adult literacy age groups being focused in Pakistan in the literacy programmes. Presently more than 50 million people in the 10+ age group are illiterate in Pakistan. The 10+ age group adult literacy rate of Pakistan as per national census 1998 was 45% which increased to 57% (male 69: female 45%) according to the findings of the Pakistan Social and Living Measurement (PSLM) survey 2008-09.

Adult literacy is highly relevant to poverty alleviation efforts worldwide, because in the 21st century much of the information needed to make decisions and improve one's economic, personal, family, or political conditions is presented in written form. People must be able to decipher a script code quickly, understand the contents of the documents, and decide upon options transmitted in them. For these reasons, reduction of adult illiteracy is an important component of the Education for All (EFA) initiative which is a global effort to achieve universal completion of primary education by 2015 and eliminate gender disparities in education by 2005.

ADULT LITERARY AND EDUCATION - DEVELOPMENT PARADIGM

The concept of development has transformed and extended from the traditional indicators of economic growth, GDP, or per capita income of a country to cover human resource development as an ultimate objective. Education is seen as a vital investment for human or socio-economic development. Human Development Index (HDI) is based on numerous key indicators, including literacy rate, and enrolment rates at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Since 1990's, UN is ranking human development in countries of the world based on HDI. Unfortunately, Pakistan has not been able to improve its HDI ranking which stood at 141 out of 206 countries in 2010.

An analysis of factors that accelerated development process in the leading economic powers of the world establishes education as the most common and major catalyst. Most of the countries enjoying economic and political stability had first attained higher levels of education for their people, which in turn helped them achieve their development goals. The world map of poverty and illiteracy largely coincides.

There can be no economic progress without education. Economic growth requires trained human resources. Sustainable economic growth in a country needs peaceful environment, merit, social justice and most importantly, political stability based on democracy and participation of masses in decision making, cannot be achieved when majority of the voters are illiterate. There can be no denying of the fact that education and development are inter linked and inter dependant phenomena.

Literacy is a prerequisite for most forms of learning irrespective of the age group. As stated in the preamble of the UN General Assembly resolution which proclaimed the UNLD, "...literacy is crucial to the acquisition, by every child, youth and adult, of essential life skills that enable them to address the challenges they can face in life and represents an essential step in basic education and literacy, which is an indispensable means for effective participation in the societies. Literacy is an indispensable means for effective social and economic participation, contributing to human development and poverty reduction".

Literacy empowers and nurtures inclusive societies and contributes to the fair implementation of human rights. In the case of mothers, literacy leads to an enhanced quality of life for their families and improved educational outcomes for their children. Societies at large need basic skills in reading, writing and numeracy to have access to information about health, environment, education and the world of work, and, most importantly, to learn how to learn throughout life.

Literacy programmes also have a wider role to play in promoting equity because they target populations that have a history of marginalization in education and in society (UNESCO, 2010). That is why progress in adult literacy is of vital importance both for the Education for All agenda and for the achievement of the wider Millennium Development Goals (UNESCO, 2005). Yet literacy is a low priority on the development and education agendas in many countries including Pakistan and consequently is a weak link in the global movement towards achieving Education for All (EFA).

INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS AND FRAMEWORKS

Pakistan is a signatory to various international obligations regarding adult literacy and education, following are recent significant international commitments made by Pakistan:

World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, 2000): At the World Conference on Education for All, held in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990, about 1,500 Delegates from over 150 countries met to discuss major aspects of Education for All. Besides emphasizing the achievement of universal primary education, the Conference also called for a commitment towards reduction of adult illiteracy rate to one-half of its 1990 level by the year 2000, with emphasis on female literacy:

“Reduction of the adult illiteracy rate (the appropriate age to be determined in each country) to, say, one-half its 1990 level by the year 2000, with sufficient emphasis on female literacy to significantly reduce the current disparity between male and female illiteracy rates.”

World Education Forum in Dakar (2000): A decade after the Jomtien Conference, the World Education Forum was held in Dakar, Senegal in April 2000 where delegates from over 180 countries and representatives of international agencies adopted the Dakar Framework for Action, committing themselves to a set of EFA goals and targets. These goals and targets included expansion and improvement in early childhood care and education, ensuring universal primary education, improvement in adult literacy, elimination of gender disparities in education, fulfillment of learning needs and improvement in quality of education.

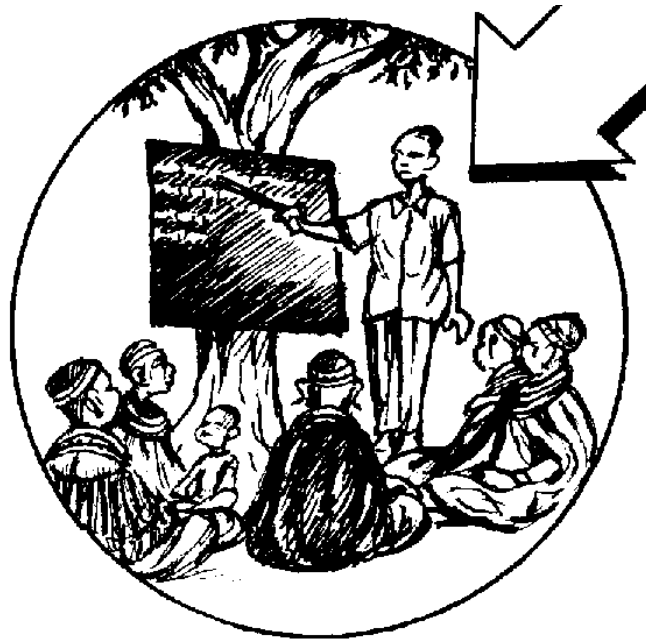
In the context of adult literacy and learning, the Dakar Framework goals state the following:

- *Achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults;*
- *Ensuring that the learning needs of all adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skill programmes.*

The United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-12): The United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-2012) was adopted unanimously by the United Nations General Assembly in a resolution in December 2001 and UNESCO was asked to coordinate the work of the Decade. The resolution recognizes the collective will of the international community, including those who face a big literacy challenge and those who may be in a position to give assistance in meeting it. The nations of the world recognize that the promotion of literacy is in the interest of all, as part of efforts towards peace, respect and dialogue in a globalizing world. In particular, the Decade aims at addressing the poorest and the most marginalized populations under the banner of *“Literacy for all: voice for all, learning for all”* and according to its draft proposal, *“Literacy policies and programmes today require going beyond the limited view of literacy that has dominated in the past. Literacy for all requires a renewed vision of literacy.”* The Literacy Decade is also a part of broader international work in education and development.

The Education for All (EFA) goal of increasing literacy rates by 50% by the year 2015 provides the overall target for the Decade, and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set the Decade in the context of poverty reduction. Priority groups include non-literate youth and adults, especially women; out-of-school children and youth especially girls, adolescent girls and young women; and children in school without access to quality learning.

Outcomes expected by the end of the Decade include significant progress towards the Dakar goals related to education and literacy; attainment by all learners of a mastery level of learning in reading, writing, numeracy, critical thinking and other life skills; a dynamic literate environment and improved quality of life. It has been emphasized that Literacy for All interventions must not suffer or languish on account of insufficient funding and governments should make all efforts to seek adequate funds from both national and international channels.



ADULT LITERARY AND EDUCATION IN THE NATIONAL CONTEXT

Adult Literary and Education - Constitution of Pakistan: A review of education related constitutional provisions prior to the 18th Constitutional Amendment establishes that the state of Pakistan is responsible for eliminating illiteracy and providing free and compulsory secondary compulsory education to all its citizens. Beyond secondary education, the constitutional role of the State is to make technical, professional and higher education available to all on the basis of merit. The Articles 37(b) & (c) of the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan state that:

The State shall:

- (Article 37-b) remove illiteracy and provide free and compulsory secondary education within minimum possible period;
- (Article 37-c) make technical and professional education generally available and higher education equally accessible to all on the basis of merit

Furthermore, Article 38 d, as part of social and economic promotion calls it state responsibility to:

- (d) provide basic necessities of life, such as food, clothing, housing, education and medical relief, for all such citizens, irrespective of sex, caste, creed or race, as are permanently or temporarily unable to earn their livelihood on account of infirmity, sickness or unemployment
(Chapter 2: Principles of Policy, The Constitution of Pakistan, 1973)

The Constitution leaves little room for confusion or misinterpretation that provision of education is the core responsibility of the State, and must be accessible to all citizens; irrespective of gender, class, colour, race or ethnicity on a compulsory and free basis up to the secondary level i.e. grade 10, or at least elementary level, which is grade 8.

In line with the above constitutional provisions, several legislations have been enacted to provide legal coverage to literacy efforts in the country, which include the following:

1. The West Pakistan Ordinance No. XXIX of 1962;
2. The Literacy (Amendment) Act, 1986;
3. The Punjab Compulsory Primary Education Act, 1994;
4. The NWFP Compulsory Primary Education Act, 1996;
5. The Sindh Compulsory Primary Education Ordinance, 2001;
6. The ICT Compulsory Primary Education Ordinance, 2002.

Balochistan is the only province that has not framed any law on education. However, even though the other provinces which have promulgated the above-mentioned Literacy and/or Primary Education Acts/Ordinances, the executing agencies have yet to implement them in letter and spirit. Therefore, the provincial governments cannot take any legal action for not abiding by the law. Hence, there is a dire need to mobilize the relevant executing agencies to implement the laws for promoting the cause of literacy.

¹ <http://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/constitution/part2.ch2.html>

The National Education Policy (1998-2010): The salient provisions regarding adult literacy under the Education Policy (1998-2010) are as follows:

- The policy envisages democratization of education through the expansion of elementary education including formal and non-formal methods and expanded programmes of adult education, literacy and functional literacy programmes, as a basic requirement for economic development, modernization of social structure and for providing equal opportunity to all citizens.
- Pakistan's international commitment to double the rate of literacy by the year 2000 cannot be accomplished without achieving universal primary education (UPE). This will be achieved by complementing the formal primary school system with a strong non-formal basic education initiative.
- A massive Non-formal Basic Education Programme on a war footing will be launched to provide access economically and expeditiously to all the primary school age (5-9 years old) children who are at presently out of school. The 10-14 years old adolescents and youth who have missed primary education will be given a second chance through a crash condensed course to enable them to complete primary education cycle in 2 to 3 years time.
- In the context of literacy, the National Education Policy (1998-2010) aimed to raise the literacy rate to 70% by the year 2010. Strategies to achieve this target relied upon:
 - Establishment of 82,000 non-formal basic education schools;
 - Prime Minister's Literacy Commission (PMLC) to be established and strengthened and creation of a literacy corps comprising students and teachers.
 - A National Literacy Movement was to be launched in every village. Tehsil and district under the auspices of the Prime Minister's Literacy Commission (PMLC). The implementation of most of the literacy measures was however stalled when the PMLC was wound up in June 2001.

The Education Sector Reforms (ESR) 2001-05: The Education Sector Reform Action Programs 2001-2005 was formulated as a part of the National Education Policy of 1998-21010 and is committed to the achievement of EFA goals and targets. It has set following sub-sector targets:

- Literacy from 19% to 60%
- Net Primary Enrolment from 66% to 76%
- Middle School Enrolment from 47.5% to 55%
- Secondary School Enrolment from 29% to 40%
- Higher Education Enrolment from 2% to 5%

The National Plan of Action on Education for All (2001-15): The National Plan of Action (NPA) was prepared in cooperation with UNESCO, by the Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan, Education for All Wing (2001-2015) as a follow up to the Dakar Framework of Action (2000). Focused on three themes i.e., elementary education, adult literacy and early childhood education, the NPA is based on three five-year phases with the following literacy targets for each phase:

- Phase I: 2001/02 to 2005/06: 61%
- Phase II: 2006/07 to 2010/11: 68%
- Phase III: 2011/12 to 2015/16: 86%

The NPA envisages that these literacy targets would be met at a total cost of Rs. 180 billion, of which 28% would be development and 72% would be recurrent costs.

The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP): In the context of education and literacy, The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (summarized draft: May 2003) endorses the targets set by the Education Sector Reforms (ESR), based on the six EFA goals and reinforced by the Millennium Development Goals.

The National Education Policy 2009: The Government of Pakistan finalized the current National Education Policy (NEP) on August 1, 2009 which was subsequently approved by the Cabinet on September 9, 2009. This document sets out the future vision for Pakistan's educational system and takes note of the dire need for ambitious shifts necessary for the country to progress and meet the economic and social demands of the future. The current National Education Policy (2009) gives due importance to promotion of literacy and non-formal education. In order to achieve literacy goals and targets number of policy provisions has been included in the education policy.

The current education policy is wide-ranging, comprehensive and seeks to ensure clear aims and demarcation of responsibilities, notwithstanding the effects of the 18th Constitutional Amendment discussed later in this document. It stresses the need for coherent federal and provincial action for a holistic approach to bring all age ranges in the ambit of literacy. While identifying commitment and implementation related gaps in the current system, the policy stresses both the need for uniformity in standards and the requirement to cater for diversity on ethnic, social, religious, economic and political grounds. It also identifies the need to improve access, quality, affordability and relevance by addressing gaps in commitment and implementation.

A significant portion of the policy is based on increasing standards and governance across the educational system. The main areas of focus are teacher quality; curriculum reform; texts and learning materials; improving student assessment; standards in learning environments; and matching education to the needs of the labour market. As for curriculum reforms, importance has been given to learning outcomes and inculcation of critical thinking, as opposed to the rudimentary methods of rote learning.

For matching education to the needs of the labour market, the policy recommends a review of educational courses to ensure relevance and identifies the need to evaluate and improve technical and vocational training. The ideas of a "window to the world of work" and job shadowing are introduced as policy objectives with an emphasis on career guidance and counseling. To this effect, the policy examines the low skill levels amongst the Pakistani

population and the resulting damage to economic growth. Improvements in the skills base are identified as means of improving competitiveness, attracting foreign investment and facilitating increased remittances by sending workers abroad.

It should be noted that a National Vocational and Technical Education Commission is already in place and has prepared various strategies, such as a national qualifications framework; industry's involvement and public/private partnerships; a national university of technology; and coordination between schools, universities, vocational and technical sectors.

The main literacy provisions included in the policy are as follows:

- Literacy rate shall be increased up to 86% by 2015 through up-scaling of ongoing programmes of adult literacy and non formal basic education in the country.
- Sustainability of adult literacy and NFE programmes shall be ensured by strengthening organizational structure, coordination and enhancing budgetary allocation for this neglected sub sector.
- Government shall develop a national literacy curriculum and identify the instructional material, teacher training modules and professional development programmes to support the curriculum. The curriculum shall be objective driven, so as to facilitate assimilation of trainees into mainstream economic activity, by imparting skill training as per local needs and market trends.
- Government shall develop and enforce minimum quality standards for organizations involved in literacy in the form of literacy certification and accreditation regime. The literacy providers shall be required to offer the literacy programmes according to the specified standards.
- A system shall be developed to mainstream the students in non-formal programmes into regular education system, and a system of equivalence shall be developed to permit such mainstreaming. New literates shall receive formal certification so as to facilitate their entry into government schools.
- Provinces and district governments shall allocate a minimum of 3% of education budget for literacy and non-formal basic education (NFBE).
- Linkages of non-formal education with industry and internship programmes shall be developed to enhance economic benefits of participation.
- Horizontal linkages between schools and vocational/skills training centers shall be established.
- in awareness programmes, content, design and availability of facilities, shall be mobilized.

- Government schools shall initiate Non-Formal Education (NFE) stream for child labourers. Children involved in various jobs or work shall be brought within the ambit of non-formal education system with need-based schedules and timings.
- NEF programmes, currently in practice up to grade 5 shall be expanded up to grade 10, where required.
- Special literacy skills programmes shall target older child labourers, boys and girls (14 to 17 years). Special educational stipends shall be introduced to rehabilitate child labourers.
- Arrangements shall be made to use school buildings (where available) for adult literacy after school hours.
- Government shall develop guidelines for post-programme initiatives. Regular follow-up shall be made a part of the literacy programs.
- Steps shall be taken to ensure that teachers for adult learners and non-formal education are properly trained and have a well defined career structure allowing them to move into mainstream education.
- International Development Partners, community and private sector involvement in awareness programmes, content, design and availability of facilities, shall be mobilized.

ANALYSIS OF ADULT LITERACY RELATED PROVISIONS IN PAST AND PRESENT EDUCATION POLICIES OF PAKISTAN

During the last 63 years, all education policies of Pakistan have expressed a commitment to adult education, however proper implementation has always been found wanting. Adult literacy has been part of almost all education policies. Yet at the same time it has remained a neglected area particularly with respect to concrete strategies, holistic plans and financing. No clear cut sustained policy could be adopted for promotion of adult literacy and non-formal education. As cited in the GMR 2009 EFA Monitoring Report, reviews of adult literacy programmes confirm a low level of political engagement. The report takes note of an official document prepared by Pakistan's Ministry of Education "No clear-cut policy could be adopted for promotion of adult literacy and non-formal education. Policy makers could not be convinced about the importance and significance of adult literacy" (Saleem, 2008, p. 28).

Adult literacy has always faced resource constraint in all governmental policies and plans. A very low portion, less than 1%, of the education budget has been allocated in past for literacy programs. Even with the low financial commitment, a low level of utilization of available budget is also an area of concern owing to non-availability of technical staff, delays in release of funds, late submission of proposals/reports and lack of full time project staff.

Similarly at an institutional level, there is an absence of a coherent, persistent and ongoing coordination, organizational structure and institutional mechanism for literacy/NFBE with the results that interaction among the principal actors has usually remained weak and ad-hoc. Issues pertaining to the qualitative aspects have not been fully addressed in any policy/plan thus it still remains an unanswered domain.

Lack of community, civil society participation and donor support; irrelevance of literacy programmes and non-availability of teaching learning material on literacy/post literacy are some other challenges. Local languages are being ignored or not even taught to learn basic literacy and numeracy skill which hinders participation of people in literacy programmes.

The government is also cognizant of the fact that the link between basic and post literacy is missing in the literacy programmes, which resulted in ad hoc situation on the part of learners and teachers. The demand of basic literacy need to be equipped with functional and skill based post literacy programmes, that may support learners/teachers to go beyond reading, writing and numeracy towards achieving income generating skills and sustainable improvement in their lives. Otherwise one time short duration literacy programmes will not have a lasting impact on the learners. Public private partnership is also a missing link in literacy/NFBE programmes; the government needs to play its due role in streamlining an effective and cost efficient partnership that is properly facilitated and coordinated. Political instability and insecurity coupled with a fragile economy and a huge population bulge in the country in the past years are some additional issues that pose serious threats to implementation of whatever policies and plans have been put in place.

Where do we currently stand? In Pakistan, the definition of “literacy” has varied across decades, leading to statistics of literacy rates which, technically, are not comparable. The following chart depicts the position since 1951 in the light of changing definitions of literacy.

Year of Census	Definition of Literacy	Age Groups	Literacy Rate %	
1951	One who can read a clear print in any language	All ages	Both sexes	17.9
			Female	13.9
1961	One who is able to read with understanding a simple letter in any language	Age 5 and above	Both sexes	16.9
			Female	6.7
1972	One who is able to read and write in some language with understanding	Age 10 and above	Both sexes	21.7
			Female	11.6
1981	One who is able to read newspaper and write a simple letter	Age 10 and above	Both sexes	26.2
			Female	16.0
1998	One who can read newspaper and write a simple letter in any language	Age 10 and above	Both sexes	43.92
			Female	32.02

Source: Literacy Trends, UNESCO, Islamabad Office 2003

The table indicates how literacy declines from 17.9% during 1961 due to the changed definition used for the 1961 census. Subsequent census modified the definition which affected the national literacy rates and specially the female literacy levels.

According to the latest Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement (PSLM) Survey 2008-09, the overall literacy rate (age 10 years and above) is 57% (69% for male and 45% for female) compared to 56% (69% for male and 44% for female) for 2007-08. The data shows that literacy remains higher in urban areas (74%) than in rural areas (48%), and is more prevalent in men (69%) as compared to women (45%). However, it is evident from the data that overall female literacy is increasing over time, but progress is uneven across the provinces. When analyzed provincially, literacy rate in Punjab stood at (59%), Sindh (59%), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (50%) and Balochistan at (45%). The literacy rate of Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has improved considerably during 2007-08 to 2008-09

The main concentration of illiterates in Pakistan are in remote rural areas; mountainous regions such as Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), Federally Administered Northern Areas (FANA), the rural areas of Balochistan province and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; slum areas (Katchi Abadies) in urban areas; deserts of Sindh and Balochistan provinces and pockets of refugee population in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan provinces.

Around 81 million population of 10+ age group were to become literate during the period (2000-15). The inputs and programmes planned to be initiated, interalia, include opening of Literacy Centres, opening of Non-formal Basic Education Schools (NFBES), Vocational and Trade Schools, Quranic Literacy Centers, and Community Viewing Centers. Total cost (development and recurrent) worked out to achieve 86% adult literacy rate is Rs. 180 billion or US\$ 3 billion (Munir 2009).

According to the latest documents submitted by the GoP in the 2010 Ministerial Conference organized by UNESCO, the 10th Five Year Country Plan (2010-15) sets the following development goals, targets and strategies to promote literacy and non-formal education in the country.

- The plan envisages that all out efforts shall be made to achieve 86% literacy rate as proposed in the Education Policy. These include sealing of addition of illiterates through achieving universal primary education and ensuring zero drop-out rates at primary level.
- National Education Foundation and National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) with the help of volunteers shall ensure educating the drop outs of formal system for achieving anticipated literacy rate.
- Existing school infrastructure wherever feasible shall be used for literacy and non-formal education.
- A portion of district and provincial budget shall be allocated for literacy and non-formal education.
- Literacy Departments shall start adult literacy programmes. NGOs and Allama Iqbal Open University – AIOU - (with the help of Tutors/retired teacher) shall be encouraged to run literacy programmes for adults on need basis.
- Mosques/religious institutions shall be utilized for promotion of literacy. Post literacy job-relevant materials/newspapers shall be developed for Neo-literates to save them from relapsing into state of illiteracy.
- All children of age group 6-10 shall be enrolled by the year 2015 which will help in enhancing the literacy rate to 86% as per plan target.

Under the Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE) framework 5-year literacy and non-formal education plans for all the four provinces and federating units have been drafted/prepared. Based on the provincial plans national literacy and non-formal education plan is being prepared. The literacy target set in these plans is 86% literacy rate both for male and female by the year 2010. The major inputs of these plans is opening of adult literacy centers, opening of skill development centers and establishment of non-formal basic education schools for out of school children.

However it should be noted that the enactment of the 18th Constitutional Amendment poses some threats to national institutions including NCHD and the NEF who are in doldrums as the provincial governments are not willing to own them due to their federal stature. There has also not been a budget earmarked for the current year to ensure that these institutions could be sustained for the achievement of the EFA and MDG goals. A recent report "Education Emergency in Pakistan" by the Pakistan Education Task Force (PETF) reveals that only 35% of school children aged 6-16, can read a story, while 50% cannot read a sentence. Their performance is slightly better than that of out-of-school children, of whom 24% can read a story. The PETF in its March 2010 campaign has compelled the Prime Minister to declare 2011 as a year of education emergency claiming that there is a 0% chance that the government will attain MDGs by 2015. War footing strategies have been demanded by this task force along with other civil society organizations that have long been advocating policy reforms to improve the abysmal state of education and literacy in the country

Another issue that has frequently been pointed out by the UN, donors and now also being recognized by the government is the national reporting system. The system often makes it difficult to establish levels of public spending for adult literacy, a problem that reinforces the invisibility of the sector. Where data is available, it points to chronic under financing. Literacy and adult education typically receives less than 3% of the education budget – and less than 1% in countries such as Chad and Pakistan where a large proportion of adults are illiterate (UIL, 2009). It is important for government agencies to recognize that large-scale illiteracy is seldom amenable to quick fixes and partial interventions. Intensive but brief campaigns are unlikely to succeed. Governments need to set clear long-term targets and underpin them with viable institutional arrangements.

An All Parties Conference on 'Education for All' was organized on February 05, 2008, by PIDLAT and UNESCO, where seventeen major political parties of Pakistan (including parties in the government) signed a Joint Declaration on Education for All and pledged to bring positive changes in the education sector. Another attempt was again made with Parliamentarians on 'Education for All in Pakistan' by PILDAT on January 29, 2009 to review the state of education in Pakistan and the pledges made in 2008. The parliamentarians again pledged to focus on quality, gender equality, and improvement in literacy, learning opportunities for the young and adults, free and compulsory basic education and early childhood education. They also recognized the need to increase accountability in the educational system and putting in place mechanisms which encourage priority budget allocations. They also reiterated the need for reappraisal of educational priorities and resource allocation in keeping with the global development scenario. They also agreed on the need to increase the public budget allocation to 4 to 5 per cent of the GDP. The event spelled out the need for the parliamentarians to convince the political leadership of their respective parties to focus on education. After the passage of more than a year no concrete steps have been taken by the federal or provincial governments in this direction and hence the status quo remains.

LINKAGES BETWEEN LITERACY AND OTHER NATIONAL POLICIES

The Government of Pakistan has established a separate ministry for the empowerment of Pakistani youth. The National Youth Policy of Pakistan, approved in 2008, acknowledges the increase in working age population and envisages offering a window of opportunity to turn this demographic transition into a "demographic dividend" to steer the energies of youth for Pakistan's economic growth and well being. For Pakistan the population in the age group of 15-29 years is taken as the young population. The National Youth Policy was prepared to mainstream youth, harness the talent and energies of youth and address the challenges being confronted by today's youth. A number of Ministries and Organizations are already working in various areas related to youth. The policy aims at integrating their programmes and aims to provide overall sense of direction consistent with the needs of the country. The policy takes note of the challenges ahead to groom and guide the youth of Pakistan to live in peace and harmony following the cardinal principles given by the founder of the nation; Unity, Faith and Discipline. It places specific emphasis on removing the gender imbalance in accessing facilities and economic opportunities and to facilitate education and youth literacy programmes, especially for those who have missed childhood education.

The thrust of the National Youth Policy is on inculcating a sense of pride of being Pakistanis, good citizenship, interregional harmony, building well rounded personalities and to prepare the youth for income generation in their practical life. Some of the key principals with regards to adult education of the National Youth Policy include enabling prospects of income generation in consistence with other related policies of the government for rapid economic growth which should create opportunities of income generation for Pakistani Youth. Among these are aspirations for developing skills by undertaking target oriented programmes for development of new and enhancement of existing skills to cater for the need of the youth in the specific area/regions (e.g. coastal, agriculture, industrial, urban, rural areas etc.). These programmes also envisage training for foreign job markets where Pakistani youth can find jobs along with entrepreneurship assistance and support for the youth in establishing self-employment businesses and start up of new ventures. To this effect, provision of financial resources in the form of micro finance has also been planned in the policy. As for job seekers, enhancement in internship programmes and provision of job counseling in collaboration with corporate sector and universities etc. have also been laid down as a policy principal. Other related policy principals pertain to academic and intellectual development by promoting scholarships, enhancing availability and access to academic material, participation in conferences and undertaking talent forming programs. Emphasis has also been given to mentoring by supporting and guiding youth in identifying their potentials, overcoming their failures, adopting the traits of good citizens and boosting their morale for high achievements in life. Lastly, balancing the gender imbalance is emphasized by providing greater opportunities and decent environment for the female youth to play their role in socio-economic development of the country.

¹ <http://www.moya.gov.pk/>

² http://www.moya.gov.pk/national_youth_policy.html

Similar to the National Youth Policy, the National Employment Policy, developed in 2008, aims at practically linking education, especially adult education, to employment and development. It calls for placing employment issue at the core of all development and sectoral policies as well as allocation of resources. The policy suggests developing linkage with other policies for better synergies and avoiding duplications. Creation of decent employment, this policy emphasizes, should not be treated as a “residual”; rather as a central point of all policies and programs.

As per the first ever Employment Policy of Pakistan, generation of productive employment requires an in-depth analysis of each sector/sub-sector to identify potential, taking stock of issues hampering its growth and devising policies to translate potential into reality. Targeted programs are designed for those left-out to share the benefits. The policy “focus” on employment, Human Resource Development (HRD) and raising vocational and technical competence is the only way of ensuring a fairly dispersed, beneficial and sustainable development. Moreover, it also demands an institutional mechanism capable of responding effectively to the challenges, goals and targets.

Pakistan's labor market is confronted with five main issues, namely;

- 1) high dependency ratio,
- 2) low Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) especially of women,
- 3) growing size of the informal sector,
- 4) low quality of employment in terms of wages and hours of work, and 5) low educational and skill attainment of the labor force.

Thus the policy focus is on;

- i) raising the female LFPR by matching work with “preferences,”
- ii) tackling unemployment of illiterates and educated,
- iii) developing a comprehensive and well coordinated Labor Market Information System (LMIS) to generate reliable and timely data on demand and supply of labor,
- iv) raising productivity and technical/vocational competence of the workforce; and
- v) generating decent employment opportunities for all to reduce dependency ratio.

Different measures have been proposed in the policy to promote growth and employment in agriculture, industry and services sector. The policy suggests a sustained growth rate of more than 5 percent for the overall agriculture sector by focusing on major and minor crops, horticulture, milk and dairy sector, and fisheries. The growth of this sector ensures food security along with employment generation. In the industrial sector, made-up garments, textiles, leather, engineering goods, surgical instruments, medical devices and appliances industry, electronics industry and mining are chosen for policy intervention because of their forward and backwards linkages. On the similar considerations, education, telecom, Information Technology (IT), housing and construction, transport, domestic commerce and tourism are chosen in the services sector. These activities/industries demonstrating significant development and employment potential - would have to be appropriately tapped.

The overall analysis of growth-employment-poverty nexus clearly suggests that whereas growth is a necessary condition for employment generation and poverty reduction, it is not sufficient. Only if the pattern of growth embraces those sectors where the poor work and is accompanied by an increase in employment, reflected partly in increases in real wages as the labor market improves, will growth have a favorable impact on labor market and reducing poverty. Indeed, the issue of unemployment is amenable by a combination of policy instruments having direct and indirect impact on labor market. The policy suggests short and long run measures as well as targeted programs to generate employment opportunities on sustainable basis. It also provides recommendations on institutional as well as implementation mechanism to monitor the progress on regular basis.

FINANCING OF ADULT EDUCATION

UNESCO's EFA Global Monitoring Report of 2011 states that countries at similar levels of per capita income allocate highly variable shares of national income to education. For example, Pakistan allocates less than half as much of gross national product to education as Viet Nam, and the Philippines half as much as the Syrian Arab Republic. It is important to recognize that the national commitment to education measured in terms of GNP or percentage growth in education spending is a partial measure of Education for All financing capacity.

Nevertheless financing of education in general, and especially in the context of EFA has emerged as a key area which needs urgent attention. Unfortunately, Pakistan does not allocate and spend enough on education and in fact is the lowest when compared with other countries in the region with similar status and social scenario. Education opportunities cannot be expanded without increasing education budget. Similarly, low quality of education in public schools cannot be enhanced without construction of more rooms and provision of missing facilities, provision of incentives to students, better training of teachers, determination of syllabus and supply of textbooks which are relevant to the needs of the society and well as the economy, efficient monitoring of schools and accountability of their performance from various angles.

The current allocation for education of around 2% of the annual budget of Pakistan is not enough to scale up educational facilities and improve quality of education in the public sector. As for adult education, a mere 1% or less of the total budget for education is currently being spent as opposed to the globally established benchmark of at least 3%. Moreover, Pakistan is one of the 35 countries on UNESCO's Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE) which is a global strategic framework for implementation of the United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-2012) designed to meet EFA goals particularly on adult literacy. The recommended allocation for adult literacy programs in all LIFE countries is at least 6% of the national education budget.

In past, budgetary allocations for education have always been low and never exceeded 2.5% of GDP. In the initial three five-year plans, adult literacy was not provided any allocation at all. During the 1970-78 non-plan period, literacy received Rs.0.5 million. During the 6th plan, literacy allocations were 4% of the education budget but this reduced to 1% during the next plan. Highest allocations (8.6%) to literacy were recorded during the 8th plan but the 9th plan earmarked only 1% of education allocations to literacy. For non-formal out-of-school children, funds were provided in the late 1980s and in the 1990s but the number of schools have more or less remained the same i.e., around 10,000, despite the initial plan to increase them ten-fold. However the post Dakkar period witnessed allocations to the adult literacy and non-formal basic education under National and Provincial Annual Development Programmes (ADPs). The allocations have been raised every year, but the gap is still more than 80%.

Allocation to Adult Literacy & Mass Education in various Plans

Plans	Total Allocation to Education (Rs. M)	Allocation to Literacy & Mass Education (Rs. M)	Literacy Allocation as % of Education Allocation	Actual Expenditure (Rs. M)	% of Actual Expenditure on Literacy to Total Literacy Allocation
1 st to 5 th Year Plan (1995-1983)	15,578	-	-	-	-
6 th Year Plan (1983-88)	18,830	750	4.0%	724	96.53% (0.038%)
7 th Year Plan (1988-93)	22,685	300	1.32%	510	170.10% (0.020%)
8 th Year Plan (1993-98)	20,233	1.75	8.60%	409	23.34% (0.02%)
7 th Year Plan (1988-93)	133,500	1	.74%	-	-

Source: Guidelines for the Strategic Framework for Action for the United Nations Literacy Decade (2003 -2012), Same information was used by the MoE in the CONFENTIA 2009 Meeting.

The following table is a forecast of the financial resources required for adult literacy by the GoP to achieve the EFA target of literacy:

Adult Literacy	Phase I (2001-02 to 2005-06)	Phase II (2006-07 to 2010-11)	Phase III (2011-12 to 2015-16)
Developing	16,582	16,775	17,811
Recurring	36,857	41,246	50,705
Total	53,439	58,021	68,516

During the CONFENTIA 2009 meeting, ASPBAE presented a study "Pursuing Adult Literacy-The cost of Achieving EFA Goal 4". The GCEAA benchmarks were used to establish the per learner cost of delivering quality literacy courses and includes facilitators salary, group size, contact time and course duration. A premium cost was also added to consider the multiple barriers faced by women. The study assumes three year duration to ensure full literacy and to integrate Goal 3 component in the program. The cost calculated for Pakistan to meet the target of providing literacy courses to 24,298,500 learners out of which 18,466,860 are women was calculated to be 3,091,142,425 US\$ which comes to around 28.9% of the share of education budget required to meet the literacy target. The annual cost spreading over 5 years (2015) thus becomes 618,228,485 US\$. The above mentioned target of adult learners has been taken from the GMR 2008, which covers 15+age group for the course combined with the UNESCO Institute of Statistics Database 2008.

Pakistan will face a tough challenge in mobilizing the resources needed to meet the EFA literacy goal. The funding gap still remains huge. Even if Pakistan meets the 6% benchmark of GDP allocated to Education, we still need external assistance to meet the financing requirements to achieve the EFA adult literacy targets by 2015

ESR 5 year (2001-05) federal funded programme was launched by the Federal Ministry of Education in 2001. It has seven thrust areas Adult Literacy is one of these seven thrust areas. As per need of the literacy sector 8.3 billion rupees (138 million US\$) were planned to be allocated to raise the literacy rate from 49% to 60% in 5 years. The programme has been extended to further five years till 2010. Actual allocation against the planned/ targeted 8.3 billion rupees during the year 2001-02 to 2005-06 was only 630 million rupees which is only 7.6% of planned allocations. The province-wise and year-wise details of adult literacy allocations under ESR are given below:

Province-wise and Year-wise Adult Literacy Budget Allocation under ESR Programme (2001-02-2006-07)									
S.#	Areas	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	Total	Utilization
1	Punjab	93.76	60.439	46.458	46.458	46.458	0	293.573	Overall utilization of ESR Literacy Budget as reported by the provinces is 72%
2	Sindh	37.71	24.986	19.206	19.206	19.206	0	120.314	
3	KPK	30.94	20.417	15.696	15.696	15.696	0	98.447	
4	Balochistan	17.59	11.24	8.64	8.64	8.64	0	54.750	
5	FATA	6.0	5.334	4.1	4.1	4.1	0	23.634	
6	AJK	2.0	4.944	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	22.154	
7	FANA	4.0	4.0	1.432	1.10	1.10	1.10	9.831	
8	ICT	8.0	8.0	1.301	1.0	1.0	0	11.901	
	Total	200.0	130.094	100.0	100.0	99.0	5.510	634.604	

18TH CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT & EDUCATION

Various constitutional amendments made to the 1973 Constitution resulted in a hybrid system of governance that operated through a presidential system within the guise of a parliamentary structure. It had a President at the top who was responsible to no one other than himself and provinces with only small amounts of authority (Burki, 2010). With the basis in Charter of Democracy first discussed in 2005, the political parties and players of different ideologies came together to review and reconfigure the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan. The consultative process among the political parties led to the enactment of 18th Constitutional Amendment in April, 2010.

The 18th Amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan is considered an important step towards strengthening the parliamentary system in the country. It provides more autonomy to the provinces which has been a popular political demand. Apart from the political restructuring, the amendment holds some major implications for the country's system of education. It is through 18th Amendment, that for the first time, the State of Pakistan in its constitution declares Education as the fundamental right. The 1973 constitution did emphasise that State shall be responsible for providing free compulsory secondary education. However, it was stated in the chapter of Principles of Policies in the Constitution prior to 18th Amendment. The reason this constitutional reform becomes important for people of Pakistan, especially those trapped in the poverty ambit, is that they can demand for good quality of education as their right through insertion of clause **25A**:

Right to education: The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of five to sixteen years in such manner as may be determined by law.

The Concurrent Legislative List basically gives legislative powers to the federal government and the provincial governments. Once some of the items are deleted as part of the 18th Amendment package, the federal government will obviously not be in a position to legislate on any matter that is currently mentioned in the Concurrent Legislative List; the power of legislation shall devolve exclusively to the provinces. As part of empowering provinces, the Concurrent List item 1-47 stand abolished. Among these, two entries (38 and 37) were directly concerned with Education hence giving provinces a major role in the following aspects:

- Entry 38 entailed curriculum, syllabus, planning policy, centers of excellence, and standards of education.
- Entry 39 covers Islamic education. Both have been transferred to the provinces. It is important to note that provinces have role in above mentioned aspects of education for Basic, Primary, Secondary and Higher Secondary levels of Education.

Bilal Soofi, Concurrent List – Some Issues. Available at:

<http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:EAOPTvK84xkJ:www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/editorial/concurrent-list-some-issues-130+%22concurrent+list%22+and+%22Pakistan%22&cd=8&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=pk>

The text of the 18th Amendment clearly specifies aspects that shall be looked at Federal level. Under 101-2 Part II the federal lists retained and re-numbered are entries 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 shall be renumbered as entries 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17, thus the federal list entails the following:

- All regulatory authorities established under a Federal law.
- National planning and national economic coordination including planning and coordination of scientific and technological research.
- Census.
- Standards in institutions for higher education and research, scientific and technical institutions.
- Inter-provincial matters and co-ordination.
- Furthermore the retained renumbered areas in the Federal Legislative List (Part I) Legislation Vide Article 142(a) is that of
- Entry 3. External affairs; the implementing of treaties and agreements, including educational and cultural pacts and agreements, with other countries..."
- Entry 15. Libraries, museums, and similar institutions controlled or financed by the Federation
- Entry 16. Federal agencies and institutes for the following purposes, that is to say, for research, for professional or technical training, or for the promotion of special studies
- Entry 17. Education as respects Pakistani students in foreign countries and foreign students in Pakistan
- Entry 32. International treaties, conventions and agreements and International arbitration.
- Entry 57. Inquiries and statistics for the purposes of any of the matters in this part.

The deliberations of Ministry of Education (see MOE website and presentations), meeting of PCE and ITA with and Ministry Officials and Concerned Citizens to discuss 25-A and 19-A implementation, and the Public Litigation filed by PILER and Islamabad Resolution endorsed at Girls' Education Conference by PCE and OXFAM-GB form an important basis for areas that need serious thinking and planning at the policy level.

There is almost a unanimous consensus that the positives of greater provincial authority in educational planning, management and provision are far greater than its adverse implications. Therefore, the provisions offered by the 18th Amendment should be seen as an opportunity to revamp and bolster education in Pakistan rather than making it an issue of turf and territories. However, the national level effectiveness and gains from these constitutional reforms is entirely dependent on how aptly and ably the reforms are understood, contextualized and implemented. Rushing into devolution without considering the areas of concerns and most importantly past experiences will be detrimental to the spirit of constitutional reforms and will make the enactment of Rights to Education Article almost impossible. The Federal Ministry of Education, using its acumen and experience, has identified the following areas where greater clarity ought to be achieved:

1. What are international pacts and agreements and what is their implementation status? Which agency will honor and implement these international commitments? How will these international commitments be implemented and which agency will coordinate and report the progress of implementation? Which agency will report country statistics for national and international level reports and documents published annually or biannually such as the Pakistan Economic Survey (PES), the Global Monitoring Report, the Human Resource Development Report and others? Will a single international report (EFA, MDGs, etc.) be prepared for Pakistan or separate reports from the four provinces and federally administered units?
2. What will be the *role and relationship with donors*, international development partners, UN Agencies and INGOs? Which agency will represent Pakistan in frequent international meetings, conferences and forums on education and literacy or will there be several international delegates representing the provinces and federally administered areas?
3. Which agency will *consolidate and report the national education and literacy statistics*? Which agency will gather information on and calculate the adult literacy rates, gross enrolment rates, net enrolment rates and the address the various issues related to the National Education Statistics? Which agency will set the national standards in education and literacy including the definition of literacy?
4. Which agency(s) will implement the historical and revolutionary step taken regarding *free and compulsory education up until matric*, which is a fundamental right of the presently 25 million out of school children of 5-16 years age group? Can the federal government absolve itself of this important responsibility by simply stating that its role is limited to the Islamabad capital territory? Can the provinces implement this huge responsibility? Can we deny this fundamental right to any of Pakistan's children?
5. Will there be an adverse impact on the *ideology of the nation*, i.e., ideology of Islam/ideology of Pakistan, which is the most effective cementing bond for national integrity, cohesion and unity? Which agency will be in a position to resolve the very serious issues of sectarianism in curriculum and text books in several provinces and federating units? What will be the future of the *Urdu language* (the second important cementing bond for unity and integrity of the nation) when each province will use its own language as the medium of instruction? What about the education of those children who need to migrate to other provinces due to various reasons?
6. Which agency will deal with the education of Pakistani students living abroad and foreign students in Pakistan, including scholarships and other matters? Which agency will prepare the curricula and approve the text books for the federal educational institutions including cantonments and garrison institutions, and Pakistani Schools abroad such as embassy schools?
7. Which agency will be made responsible for tracking of key indicators for 25 A and also EFA and MDGs integrated in the medium term frameworks and PRSP II etc? Will the Federal Bureau of Statistics through PSLMs (annex)/ MICS Planning & Development departments be charged with tracking and reporting on key indicators, provincially, nationally and internationally?

¹ In a number of union councils there is not a single girls' school, and the costs of establishing new schools and maintaining existing schools countrywide is monumental.

Consequently, various policy makers, researchers and academics discussed the possible ways of responding to the above mentioned questions. Following are proposed strategies, roles and more areas requiring clarity:

- National focus of the government should be on: Setting up of National Standards of Education with the consensus of provinces. These standards will encompass every aspect of education like assessment, teachers, access, equity, quality etc Standards setting is currently not accounted for in Schedule 4th Part II for school education whilst there is a provision for Higher Education (many underscored that this was never done pre 18th Amendment as well by the former MOE).
- Additional resource mobilization for implementation of 25 A (age group 5-16) when current GDP allocation/expenditure is not more than 1.5% contrary to the promised 7% by 2015 (NEP 2009)
- Consolidation and coordination of vital information on indicators and direction for national (Vision 2030, NEP 2009; PRSP II, EFA Action Plan), regional (SAARC) and international (EFA/MDGs) tracking obligations

Implementation of Right to Education Article 25A

- Needs a template which can then be adapted by each province. UNESCO has drafted one upon request from the former Education Standing Committee which is being shared with them formally. Once done the same can be shared with this committee as well for review and comments
- The law as in the case of India (March 30, 2010) may actually be a standard setting document with codes of education well articulated including obligations of the government, service providers and duty bearers.
- With the current UPE status so compromised with only 57% Net Enrolment Rate (NER) for 5-9/6-10 years age group, low learning levels; crisis of governance, how will the expanded age group 5-16 years old be addressed within the given current falling GDP allocations? What will be the role of the national government and that of the provincial governments to reorganize their development priorities and address the resource gaps?

Status of the National Education Policy 2009 – a consultative/consensus document driven by the provinces and federal government over 4 years.

- Will this be formally approved as a base document by the provinces?
- Will the NEP 2009 be vetted and cleaned for integrating major shifts on account of the 18th Amendment? If so by whom?
- Will the education sector plans being currently made in each province (often supported by development partners in reform/policy planning units) be aligned to the NEP 2009 as adapted in each province
- What is the role of the Pakistan Education Task Force whose TORs were the roll out of the NEP 2009?

Capacity Constraints/Gaps in areas of:

- Capacity Gaps mapping in light of the 18th Amendment shifts to the provinces need to be done urgently in terms of : new legislation and implementation; curriculum; textbook production, standards; resource mobilization and utilization; tracking targets and reporting, emergency management, and new structures/institutions at the provincial and district levels (Article 140 –A)
- Financing education at the provincial level through innovative budgets to account for capacity issues and new challenges. Can a mock budget be provided to the provinces by this Committee with relevant and most needed budget lines? This committee agreed to work on a mock budget for the provinces for consideration in the next four weeks.
- Curriculum development and textbook production completely at the provincial level is a welcome step. It however does need to consider:
 - i. New laws to institutionalize the decentralized mechanisms which are now working through a deregulated environment of multiple textbooks production (Federal Supervision Act 1976 and National Policy and Action Plan 2007)
 - ii. Disconnect between the Bureau of Curriculum and Textbook Boards in some provinces; the former work mostly for in-service teacher training and less for curriculum research/ feedback as inputs for textbooks production. How will this be overcome? Will there be new structures?
 - iii. The tragic story of the virtual non-implementation of the National Curriculum 2006 which is only in its second year of very minimal implementation due to the delays and complexity of procedures (over interference of technical donors). In Balochistan the NC 2006 will only be implemented if at all in 2012/13 academic year.
 - iv. The status of the NC 2006/7. Will the National Curriculum be accepted as a standard setting document for all subjects (already up for review after 5 years?)

Building on Institutional Memory and Intellectual Assets: The Ministry of Education has made valuable contributions during the recent past for the promotion of literacy and overall educational development in the country. Since 2006, developed/revised curricula in 56 different core disciplines/subjects in consultation with the provinces and federating units, with inputs in terms of human expertise and financial resources. Of these, the curricula of 17 subjects have been printed. Subsequently, the curriculum of 12 optional subjects has been developed during 2007-11, which was in the printing stage when Ministry was devolved. The cost involved in this activity was more than Rs.50 million. The Ministry also developed substantial supplementary reading materials for the following education related areas; health education, environment, human rights and population education. Moreover, the officials have recorded recommendations, suggestions, strategies, commission reports and policy decisions taken in high level meetings, conferences, seminars, workshops and by think tanks. Similarly, there is a series of country decisions, acts, ordinances and other legislation for education and literacy available that should be built upon. These intellectual and academic assets have to be shared with the provinces in an effective manner.

INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICES

Unfortunately not much research has been done in terms of learning from the experiences of countries where literacy rate has improved. Innovative literacy policies and practices of high quality require a continuous support, a strong knowledge and information base, research and impact assessment to help document the process and inspire others through innovative strategies. UNESCO under the LIFE initiative being carried out in 35 countries where the literacy rate is very low and need robust initiatives has initiated the creation of literacy learning networks. Under this initiative an effective knowledge management through the Literacy Portal has been strategized. This portal will also provide a basis for informing the countries' priorities and for monitoring the progress of literacy processes facilitated through LIFE. Once functional this portal will be better positioned to inform the policy makers and practitioners about innovative literacy strategies and practices being adopted around the globe.

This paper has however attempted to share some strategies adopted by countries and civil society organizations that are worth learning from.

Cuba:

In 1961, the Cuban literacy campaign aimed to (a) extend primary education to all children of school age in order to eradicate future illiteracy, (b) wage a national literacy campaign, and (c) wage a post-literacy campaign to prevent relapse into illiteracy through disuse and to introduce systematic lifelong education. In a single year, more than 700,000 people (in a Country of only 7.5 million) became literate. Fuelled by a social-justice-based orientation, the campaign provided many schoolrooms wherein 10,000 were opened in a single day, and qualified unemployed teachers were assigned to them, together with thousands of well-educated young people who responded to the revolutionary call to serve anywhere (e.g. in remote mountainous areas to which access was difficult) as volunteer teachers. In addition, parents, neighbours, community organizers, and the pupils and teachers themselves helped improvise premises and rudimentary furniture. Today, free from illiteracy (as Fidel Castro declared in December 1961), Cuba's schools are quite different; the teaching staff is well qualified and universal schooling is guaranteed. Moreover, a strong 'literate environment' has been set in place, with resources for sustaining and developing literacy, and the use of information and communication technologies (mainly through radio, television and video).

The Yo, sí puedo (Yes, I can) programme, begun in 2003 by the Cuban Government, has also been widely adopted. By 2008, it was operating in twelve of the nineteen countries of Latin America, and was part of wider strategies for achieving universal literacy in the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Panama and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (Croso et al., 2008; Torres, 2009).

Germany:

Germany has never been linguistically homogeneous. Yet, in the sixteenth century, a variety of High German began to be dominant, following the shift of the economic centres to the south. Only in the second half of the nineteenth century, with the massive redistribution of the population following industrialization and mass urbanization, did a universally spoken variety of High German come into use. This process was then accelerated in the past century by the electronic mass media first and then television.

Two factors greatly propelled the development of literacy in Germany: nationalization of culture (which established High German as the official language of administration, education beyond elementary school, and — along with Latin — the Church and literature), and public control of schooling (which, though mainly concentrated on reading, included, towards the end of the seventeenth century, bookkeeping and greater use of writing in activities such as journal and letter writing). In the nineteenth century, use of Latin diminished, and a German orthography was established and officially regulated. Following enforced compulsory schooling in the latter half of the nineteenth century, literacy rates, by the early twentieth century, reached 90% to 95% of the population. Key to the accomplishment of such high literacy rates was the introduction of a writing system based upon both national language knowledge and local oral varieties. While the more formal uses of High German allow access to literate structures, regional varieties of High German remain in use.

Japan:

Japan is a highly literate society with near universal literacy rates and a strong sustaining environment. Over its long history (more than one and a half millennia), Japanese literacy evolved in several steps of adapting imported letters. The art of writing first came to Japan in the form of *kanji*, or written Chinese. Over the course of several centuries, a new script called *kana* evolved, in a move to simplify the Chinese characters into sounds, rather than meanings. By the sixteenth century, when the Japanese first learned of Western-style alphabetic letters, a mixed *kanji-kana* orthography was firmly in place. Deliberate interventions for standardizing and simplifying written Japanese were numerous, especially after contacts with the West intensified in the nineteenth century and elements of the Roman alphabet were integrated into Japanese script. However, the alphabetic script has never been adopted and the old systems never fully discarded. Nevertheless, with new word processing and information and communication technologies, alphabetic letters must now be considered an indispensable part of Japanese literacy. The electronic media in Japan have thus both promoted the alphabet and reinforced the traditional writing system. The Japanese experience suggests two things: first, that writing systems evolve not just according to practical needs for recording and retrieving information, but also in response to other requirements, such as social control; second, that 'literacy' does not mean simply knowing a script. In Japan, several scripts are involved, each in its proper place; and, as such, the system continues to be too complex for universal literacy to be sustained in the absence of intensive schooling.

Sources: Coulmas (2001) and Maas (2001), in Olson and Torrance (2001); Keeble (2001).

Egypt:

Sustained progress in raising literacy levels requires a body of instructors equipped to impart skills. The experience of Egypt demonstrates the role that support for trainers can play. In the mid-1990s, the General Authority for Literacy and Adult Education (GALAE) launched an ambitious ten-year campaign focused on basic literacy skills in Arabic. The core literacy component was complemented by courses offering equivalency certificates for primary education and opportunities for vocational training. Secondary school graduates were offered a monthly stipend to train illiterate relatives, friends and community members, subject to government certification. GALAE provided textbooks and other materials, but lacked resources to offer systematic training or supervision. After initial successes, enrolment and completion rates declined and the campaign faltered, especially in poorer, rural districts and among women.

National authorities responded by reconfiguring the programme. With support from aid donors, GALAE developed the Capacity Enhancement for Lifelong Learning (CELL) programme. Textbook-based teaching was replaced by participatory teaching methods, with an emphasis on materials relevant to learners' lives and experiences. The programme was targeted at deprived villages in which the previous campaign had failed. Community leaders were recruited to help generate interest in the programme. Instructors were local secondary school graduates. Paid the same stipend as in the original programme, they received three initial residential training courses and a monthly support meeting with a CELL instructor. Strengthened support delivered results. In 2005, an evaluation found high retention rates, with 82% of entrants completing the first five-month phase and 62% the second one. Achievement levels were also high: 65% of CELL learners enrolled in the second year passed the final assessment, compared with less than 50% in the earlier campaign. The project also succeeded in enrolling women, who represented three-quarters of learners. The evaluation linked the improved performance to the local recruitment of facilitators, the adaptation of the curriculum to local needs and the quality of support to instructors.

Sources: McCaffery et al. (2007); Oxenham (2005).

Namibia & Senegal's Experience of Decentralizing Literacy:

Decentralizing management and design can help address the problem pertaining to literacy programmes being relevant to the needs of learners. In Namibia's successful literacy programme the functions of the Directorate of Adult and Basic Education are very decentralized, with curriculum development, design of learning materials, training of instructors, and monitoring and evaluation taking place outside the central ministry. The aim is to achieve a balance between national, regional and local content, and to provide the programme in eleven local languages as well as English (Singh and Mussot, 2007; UIL, 2007).

Under Senegal's highly decentralized 'faire-faire' programme, the central government is responsible primarily for setting the overall policy framework and contracting with local providers. Here, too, the aim is to align literacy programmes more closely with local needs. While there have been problems in implementation, with some providers submitting inflated funding proposals and diverting resources, 'faire-faire' is widely regarded as a success and has been adopted by other countries, including Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali (Diagne and Sall, 2009; Lind, 2008).

Brazil:

The Bolsa Escola Programme in Brazil which aimed at empowering mothers and women is also a good case. The programme was not a direct literacy enhancement programme but was geared towards empowering women to take charge of their lives. This programme however used literacy/adult education as a means to empower these women and has been a successful programme. The Bolsa Escola Programme is best known for its objectives and success of providing families with income subsidies, conditional on maintaining their children in school. However a second objective of the programme that was managed jointly by OXFAM GB and a local NGO was to empower women within the family.

A mother's level of education, her race, and her level of income are all factors that correlate strongly with the educational achievements of children in Brazil. The programme entitled "Education to confront Poverty" provides adult education to mothers and other members of the families and creates incentives for mothers to participate directly in school meetings and local education councils. The potential for women participation already exists in some context but there were no real incentives for the mothers to get involved. The programme provided them with an opportunity. By putting women in charge of receiving and allocating benefits of the programme, their self esteem was boosted and their decision making influence within the family was promoted. Merely by putting women in-charge of the Bolsa Escola Fund was not enough. Instead the programme helped them become agents of change in their families and communities and to develop skills that can transform their lives. In Brazil, another successful government initiative, the Programa Brasil Alfabetizado (Literate Brazil Programme), has provided literacy training to 8 million youth and adults who received limited formal education (UNESCO, 2010 a).

India: Another good case that can be used for programmes that have used literacy as a means to empowering women and yielded good results comes from India. From the late 1980s an NGO Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti (BGVS) worked in partnership with Government of India on the Total Literacy Campaign. The aim of the campaign was to mobilize women for literacy. The campaign which used messages that linked literacy with basic livelihood problems and questions of exploitation and discrimination against women provided a new hope and optimism for millions of women from all classes of India. It gave women a social sanction to come out of their homes and participate in activities organized in their villages. Today BGVS has created an institutional support at the village level for women working with self help groups. The objective of these groups includes providing a focus for activities for women empowerment, helping women to upgrade their literacy skills and through micro-credit enterprises, enhancing their status in the family and in the community

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

Over the long term, the most effective strategy for guaranteeing universal literacy is to ensure that all children enter school, leave it having acquired at least basic literacy and numeracy skills, and then have opportunities to strengthen those skills over time. But the importance of fixing basic education and ensuring that future generations are literate should not deflect attention from the near-term challenge posed by the inherited accumulation of adult illiteracy.

The analysis further concludes that literacy is a right as recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is also a means to achieving other rights. Following are some of the recommendations proposed in light of the review and analysis of various policy documents, current legislative and governance structures and researches conducted in the field of adult literacy and education:

- Political will is amongst one of the most important and effective factors determining the success or failure of literacy programmes. Therefore, steps need to be taken to mobilize those in higher echelons of the administrative hierarchy for gaining their political support to promote the cause of literacy.
- A unified holistic definition of literacy for Pakistan needs to be developed in keeping with the contemporary development paradigm. The same should be used consistently for census, other national surveys, during the policies formulation stages. Literacy should be geared towards active citizenship, improved health, improved livelihood and gender equality.
- Meaningful cohesion and linkages with the overall development paradigm of the country ranging from financing of education to appropriate strategies and allocations for technical skills and mainstreaming backed by realistic and relevant poverty reduction strategies.
- Government should critically and holistically review the existing policy documents on Adult Literacy (National Literacy Curriculum 2007 and National Literacy Guidelines) in line with the International Adult Literacy Benchmarks, the CONFENTIA Commitments and South Asia EFA Ministerial Commitments. A Comprehensive sustained legislation on adult literacy needs to be enforced through policies and plans with clear identification of short and long term goals with outcomes (on yearly basis) and a clear targeting of the groups. For that purpose, literacy will have to be depoliticized from all angles.
- In order to solve the current anomalies in the education sector with respect to the governance and administrative matters, there is a dire need to spell out and clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities between the federal government and the provincial government as well as the provincial government and the district level set-up under the devolved system.

- Government needs to take immediate steps to address the disparity in spending on adult literacy and education and ensure that needs based investment within education budget in line with the EFA goals is done. PCE reiterates its urgent call for the calculation of full cost of quality education and that the government should allocate atleast 6% of its GDP towards education. At least 3% of the total education budget needs to be spent on adult literacy and education in accordance with the International Adult Literacy Benchmark to achieve the committed targets.
- Donors should honor the international target of giving 0.7% of their GNIs in Official Development Assistance (ODA) each year, allocate atleast 15% of the ODA to education and ensure that this aid reaches in time. Donor countries should contribute a fair share to fill the financing gap. At the government level a full cost per adult literate should be worked out and budget allocation should be made accordingly. The same estimates should be used in all planning and implementation documents and financial monitoring should be undertaken on eth same estimates vis-à-vis progress.
- Transparency, accountability and reporting mechanism for all the concerned and responsible institutions and personnel need to be clearly laid down and enforced. Involvement of local community in implementation and monitoring of polices and projects is therefore recommended by PCE to develop more ownership and sustainability of literacy programmes at the grass roots level.
- While reviewing and analyzing the local literacy and education context with the international commitments the government should set standard of quality adult literacy programs based on basic features as agreed in the recently held CONFENTIA 2009 meeting such as:
 - Duration (minimum 3 years, 2 years for literacy and 1 year skill development and empowerment as per Benchmark no 11)
 - Possible Contents (production and dissemination of reading materials for the adult literates -- Benchmark no 10; Language for literacy courses shall be choice of the learners -- Benchmark no 8.)
 - Facilitator's wages (equal to primary school teachers' salary – Benchmark 5 / minimum wage rule)
- Complete and comprehensive database needs to be developed on different core indicators of literacy and non-formal education at the national, provincial, district, tehsil and union council levels. Concerted effort will have to be made to substantially expand capacity of district governments because the quality of data of literacy related aspects will ultimately be the responsibility of District Governments. One important tool could be greater use of Urdu in IT at the District level.

- An inbuilt mechanism needs to be evolved for continuous capacity building of literacy professionals. This would go a long way in augmenting the qualitative improvement and quantitative expansion of literacy activities in the country.
- Clarity on standard of equivalency of an adult literacy course needs to be ensured by the Government. According to the National Education Policy the adult literacy graduates are to be considered equivalent to class 3 graduates, therefore the same should be complied with and enforced. As recognized by the GoP, there is need for proper certification mechanism for the adult literacy graduates to prevent drop outs from literacy centers. Therefore, some form of Certification mechanism needs to be in place to encourage the learners. Certificates earned by learners at the end of literacy cycle need to be equated with some suitable level of the formal system so as to facilitate the entry of holders in the formal stream of education. This can become an incentive for learner and be an important impediment in retention of literates in a given programme.
- To effectively translate policy into action, a strong multi-stakeholder approach is crucial. National level multi-stakeholder structures need to be convened – all relevant ministries, donors, CSOs, learners, facilitators, unions, universities, and private sector – to mobilize public support to sustain adult education and learning. Civil society needs to be accorded a legitimate space for participation in the policy processes to promote adult education in a truly collaborative manner. UNESCO needs to attain coherence and coordination among the UN Literacy Decade (UNLD), Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE), and CONFINTEA initiatives, as well as with EFA and MDG processes.
- All relevant stakeholders need to have a strong and continuous coordination among each other to ensure that literacy programmes are on the right track and take timely measures where required. For this purpose the already proposed Co-ordination Cells at district level by the GoP need to be strengthened to ensure complete harmony and co-ordination among different actors functioning in adult literacy. Regular meetings are needed of relevant organizations/institutions engaged in promoting literacy.
- Steps need to be taken to set up literacy centers in a phased manner as stated in the latest report submitted by the GoP at the CONFENTIA meeting. The phasing of the centers should be proportionate to the phased rate of literacy to be achieved over the given period of time.

- The literacy programme material should be relevant to the needs and context of local communities. The planners should also customize programmes for adult females to suit their particular context, vulnerabilities and need. The material should include modules on women's rights, gender sensitivity, reproductive health, family life and women participation in community affairs in adult literacy and learning programmes. Civil society organizations can also contribute by developing gender transformatory practices by broadening the concept of literacy to developing skills for social action and women empowerment. They should also campaign for a more participatory training of trainers, with action research linked to local gender needs and the diversity of learners and document good practices to improve the understanding of literacy is developed in different social environments.
- In every community there should be provision for continuing education like libraries so that they have a literate environment to sustain literacy
- Media should be used effectively for mustering political will and support for literacy at all levels. The same medium can also be productive in terms of post literacy.

GLOSSARY

AA	Action Aid
ADP	Annual Development Plan
AIOU	Allama Iqbal Open University
ASPBAE	Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education
CSO	Civil Society Organization
EFA	Education for All
ESR	Education Sector Reforms
GCE	Global Campaign for Education
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNI	Gross National Income
GMR	Global Monitoring Report
GoP	Government of Pakistan
HDI	Human Development Index
LFPR	Labor Force Participation Rate
LIFE	Literacy Initiative for Empowerment
NCHD	National Commission for Human Development
NFBE	Non Formal Basic Education
NFE	Non Formal Education
NEF	National Education Foundation
NEP	National Education Policy
NPA	National Plan of Action
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PCE	Pakistan Coalition for Education
PETF	Pakistan Education Task Force
PILDAT	Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency
PMLC	Prime Minister's Literacy Commission
PSLM	Pakistan Social and Living Measurement
SAQE	Society for Access to Quality Education
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Science and Cultural Organization
UNLD	United Nations Literacy Decade

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