

Foreword

The update on ESR Action Plan 2001/2-2005/6 reveals that education remains a central and sobering challenge for Pakistan on account of short falls in access, quality and transition. It is heartening to see that the provinces have recognized the merit of sector wide approach and are developing sector strategies strongly along those lines. This is reflected in provincial PRSPs, which will support the national PRSP targets.

We are constrained with regards to resources in spite of overall increase in allocations. The demand for quality education continues to outpace supply not just at the primary level but also at the middle, secondary and higher secondary level. For every 10 primary schools there is only 1 middle, and schools in the public sector. These gaps lead to low possibilities for completion and transition. However, there are several historical anomalies, which need to be corrected. There is not sufficient cushion in the non-salary component of the recurrent budget, repairs and maintenance, facility up-gradation remains unattended. These problems compel us to revisit how we undertake allocations, develop norms for not just establishment of schools but also norms for school based maintenance, facility improvements, utilities and quality inputs at primary, middle and secondary levels.

The space provided under devolution for community participation is yet to be fully explored. Sindh is providing legal cover to SMCs, whilst Punjab has restructured the School Councils to give them enhanced authority for effective and responsible local governance. These are promising trends in devolution of authority and trust.

Local level education planning is gaining momentum in Pakistan with inclusion of CSOs in the preparation of District EFA Plans 2015 and the medium term District Education Plans. This marks the beginning of evidence based planning processes. Such initiatives are part of the capacity building processes, which are urgently required at the district level recognizing that devolution has varying interpretation patterns from province to province.

An enabling environment for private sector and public private partnerships is in place including a robust incentive package. We seek to make the incentive regime more targeted for private sector complementarily in bridging access gaps at middle and secondary levels as a part of coherent public policy.

We stand committed to quality improvement in public sector service delivery at all levels in which civil society and private sector are our valuable partners so that we can move towards becoming a knowledge-based society spurring human development and economic growth.

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