

Punjab Education Sector Reform Programme

**Information and Communication Needs Assessment
of the education sector in Punjab**

December 2012

TA-4

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For more information on this Needs Assessment and the work of Cambridge Education contact:
Daniel Harris, Communication Specialist, Cambridge Education, 203-C, Street R, Upper Mall, Lahore,
Pakistan. Tel: +92 423 575 8562

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Foreword

Improving education is critical to the future of Punjab and its people. The Government of Punjab recognises the importance of education and has, since 2003, been implementing an ambitious reform programme to dramatically improve access, quality and governance in education.

Reforming education requires the involvement of a great number of stakeholders; from parents demanding better education for their children, teachers providing quality education in the classroom and School Councils exercising good governance, to District administrations ensuring support, materials and guidance are provided to schools and, policy and decision makers at Provincial level creating an enabling framework within which change can take place.

Information and communication to each of these stakeholders, as well as other actors in Pakistani society, is critical if the education of Punjab's young people is to improve. This Needs Assessment seeks, for the first time, to analyse and understand stakeholders' information and communication needs. In so doing, it will provide a solid platform for coordinated and focused activity to engage and inform all those in Punjab who can play a part in the transformation of education for a better future for Punjab.

PMIU, Programme Director
Dr Farah Masood

Introduction

This Needs Assessment summarises the information and communication needs that, once addressed, will help to deliver significant improvements in education quality, access and governance in Punjab. Developed with the Punjab Education Sector Reform Programme, the Needs Assessment seeks to identify information gaps, weaknesses in planning and coordination, dissemination and delivery of information and communication.

The Needs Assessment follows a communication-based methodology that seeks to put stakeholders, both actors (messengers) and recipients at the heart of approaches to communication. As an evidence base, the Needs Assessment provides the platform for the development of a comprehensive Information and Communication Strategy for education in Punjab.

This report is divided into four sections. The first section covers the background for improving information and communication to support education improvements in Punjab. The second section analyses the needs and gaps in relation to the management and delivery of effective information and communication. This section looks in detail at the principal actors in the education sector including the Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies, the Programme Monitoring and Information Unit, District level administration and those with a responsibility to deliver information and communication at school level. The third section looks at the perceptions and knowledge of principal audiences for education information and communication in Punjab; students, parents, teachers and community members. The fourth and final section of this report brings together the analysis and makes a series of conclusions and recommendations to enhance and develop an improved approach to information and communication as the reform programme continues.

Abbreviations

AEO	Assistant Education Officer
CE	Cambridge Education
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CPDP	Continuous Professional Development Programme
CMMF	Chief Minister's Monitoring Force
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CTA	Chief Technical Adviser
CTSC	Cluster Training and Support Centre
DCO	District Coordination Officer
DEO	District Education Officer
DFID	Department for International Development
DMO	District Monitoring Officer
DPI	Director of Public Instruction
DSD	Directorate of Staff Development
DTE	District Teacher Educator
DTSC	District Training and Support Centre
EDO	Executive District Officer
EFA	Education for All
EMA	Education Monitoring Assistant
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ELE	Elementary School Teacher
GCET	Government College for Elementary Teachers
GCU	Government College University
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GoPb	Government of Punjab
HR	Human Resource
HT	Head Teacher
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
KAP	Knowledge Attitudes and Practices Survey
LEAPS	Learning and Educational Achievement in Punjab Schools
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MER	Monitoring Evaluation and Reporting
MLA	Monitoring Learning Achievement
MTBF	Medium Term Budgetary Framework
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
MTSF	Medium Term Sector Framework

MTSP	Medium Term Sector Plan
MTSS	Medium Term Sector Strategy
NEAS	National Education Assessment System
NER	Net Enrolment Ratio
NGOs	Non-governmental Organisations
NRSP	National Rural Support Programme
PEAS	Punjab Education Assessment System
PEC	Punjab Examination Commission
PEF	Punjab Education Foundation
PESP	Punjab Education Sector Project
PESRP	Punjab Education Sector Reform Programme
PITE	Provincial Institute of Teacher Education
PMIU	Programme Monitoring and Implementation Unit
PMSP	Punjab Middle Schools Project
PRE-STEP	Pre-service Teacher Education Project
PRSP	Punjab Rural Support Programme
PLSM	Punjab Living Standards Measurement Survey
PTA	Parent Teachers' Association
PTBB	Punjab Textbook Board
QA	Quality Assurance
RSP	Rural Support Programme
RSPN	Rural Support Programme Network
SAHE	Society for the Advancement of Education
SAP	Social Action Programme
SBAP	School-Based Action Plan
SC	School Council
SED	School Education Department
SMC	School Management Committee
SMIS	School Management Information System
STEP	Support for Teacher Education Project
TA	Technical Assistance
ToR	Terms of Reference
ToT	Training of Teachers
UK	United Kingdom
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Executive Summary

This Needs Assessment identifies the information and communication gaps and requirements for the education sector in Punjab..

The education sector reform programme has achieved some significant improvements since its introduction in 2003. However, it is widely acknowledged that there has been insufficient focus on informing and engaging with key stakeholders and beneficiaries to enhance their capacity to play a greater role in driving improvements.

The next phase of the reform programme commits to the development of an Information and Communication Strategy and the creation of a Communication Unit, based in PMIU, to take this work forward. This Needs Assessment therefore provides an important evidence base upon which the Information and Communication Strategy is based.

The Needs Assessment has been developed using a communication-based methodology involving detailed in-depth interviews with a wide range of stakeholders at Provincial, District, school and community level. In addition, a Knowledge Attitudes and Practices (KAP) Survey has been conducted in order to ascertain the views of the beneficiaries of education sector reforms: students, parents, teachers and community members. The KAP survey seeks to understand the perceptions, barriers and stigma towards changed behaviour so that information and communication can be targeted to address these views.

The Needs Assessment Report looks in detail at the management and delivery of information and communication, detailing in particular the processes and approaches that will improve the coordination and dissemination of messages and information. It also analyses stakeholder and audience perceptions so that, once the management and delivery arrangements are in place, information and messages towards beneficiaries are focused and appropriate. Taken together, the findings and recommendations in this report will play an important part in the continued improvement in education for all of the Punjab.

Key findings

1. Data and information

The education sector in Punjab has a wealth of data, collected at school level and collated by PMIU as monthly district reports and data sets. The value of this data is already helping to drive improvement across the sector. This Needs Assessment finds that much more can be done to use this data to inform and engage a range of stakeholders in education reform. The critical challenge for the Information and Communication Strategy is to repackage existing data and information for a range of audiences so they are regularly and effectively informed of progress, need and areas for intervention.

2. Messages

The penetration of communication channels and messages into target audiences (parents, students and communities) is poor. Key stakeholders who need information in order to make choices about education are often unaware of facilities and opportunities available to them, and are not receiving messages about the value and importance of education to their family and the community.

3. District support

Communication efforts are ad hoc and sporadic. Districts carry out some education campaigns, but there is no guidance or framework for communication provided at a provincial level. Communication activities on education are not inter-linked and are not carried out in a systematic and planned manner.

4. Community level

The importance of communication for gatekeepers and influencers is often overlooked. In particular, though there are some exceptions, School Councils are not used consistently and effectively as a means to ensure that information and communication reaches communities. There is a need to dramatically improve the potential of School Councils to engage communities.

5. Coordination

At provincial level, there is an absence of strategic planning and delivery of communication both to District administrations and to wider audiences and stakeholders. There is no shared vision for education that is owned and used by neither all provincial partners nor are there key shared data and messages that combine to communicate successes and challenges. The result is that the impact of reforms and government efforts to improve education is being lost.

6. Focus

Communication is often carried out implicitly, rather than being a distinct activity that is designed to support interventions and reforms. There is a need to prioritise information and communication as central to the theory of change. There is a need to consider reform programme activities, as well as important routine activities such as enrolment and retention, and develop information and communication programmes to support them.

7. Stakeholder perceptions

There are no consistent or unified messages about the value and quality of education, nor the standards and facilities the public can expect that are used across the education sector in Punjab.

Information and messages are not directed at addressing known perceptions or barriers and stigma towards education among key audiences. The significant achievements of the reform programme are not being incorporated into the messages and information directed towards communities and parents.

Management and Delivery of Information and Communication

Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies

- Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies require a focused, strategic and professional approach towards communicating and informing key stakeholders and the public
- There are significant challenges in the use and interpretation of data to describe the overall education sector and to inform decision making
- There are no shared platforms for the storage and use of data and poor linking of web sites
- There is poor coordination among implementing partners, and a lack of shared vision
- Information produced by Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies is not always packaged well for stakeholder needs
- There are weak feedback mechanisms to bring information from school and community level through the Districts to provincial level
- There is little or no engagement with media which has the potential to communicate important messages about the current state and importance of education
- There is a need to bring together analysis and strategy across all of the Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies to present a more holistic and compelling picture of the education sector across Punjab.

PMIU

- There is an absence of widely communicated vision and focus on the key components of reform
- There is a need for a set of clear, unified education messages that underpin the reform programme that can be used consistently across all outputs
- It is important to develop simple, regular communications that keep Districts up to date on key interventions, milestones and successes and provide other opportunities for Districts to share their activities and views
- There is an inadequate web platform, information and resources that enable stakeholders to understand the education sector and the impact of reforms, and cross reference provincial and school data with other indicators
- There is a need to develop short summary reports that provide simple, clear information on reform progress as well as the Annual Census
- It is important to regularly assess stakeholders' needs and to develop appropriate information and communication materials that address their needs
- There is a need for regular, coordinated and focused communications activity on each of the key reform

interventions to key stakeholders and the public. In particular, a strand of communications on teacher quality should be developed

- There is a need to understand the views of beneficiaries, their resistance to change and the factors that will improve their understanding of education in Punjab in order to more effectively target interventions and communications
- There is a need to provide a planned communications framework within which each of the Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies can play a complementary role, providing a gateway to their information and communications
- There is a need to develop and communicate the role of School Councils as key drivers of change in the education system
- There is a need to enhance existing school performance information for use at school level to empower parents and communities in the form of School Performance Report Cards.

District level

- The Chief Minister's Roadmap is providing energy and information clarity for Districts
- Government schools have a number of success stories to tell (textbooks, IT labs, stipends, PEC results, etc) and there is a need for Districts to further promote these initiatives
- Districts need regular information on the reform programme as well as guidance materials and resources to better communicate to their populations
- Districts need support to create larger public awareness campaigns on the importance of education to families and communities
- The monitoring system is driving improvements in communication, by focusing Districts on key indicators related to the reform programme
- There are weak or absent structured feedback mechanisms for Province and Districts for exchange of ideas, and Districts say they need more input into discussion
- In terms of communication, Districts are working largely on their own. There are no standards, protocols or guidance available for concerted and coordinated communication and information
- Districts need support on their information and communication role. They have capacity and responsibility issues on communications.

School level stakeholders

- There is a need to focus communication on the importance of effective school leadership
- A critical need is for schools to develop proactive approaches to community mobilisation, both towards the school and the importance of education in general
- Innovative approaches must be developed to enhance the communication between the school and parents, including open days and regular open meetings
- The role of School Councils need to be prioritised at school level, to clarify roles, to identify committed members of the local community enhance their role as a link with the local community
- Schools need to become focused on information provision to parents. Whilst school performance report cards will make a significant difference in this regard, there must be broader communication on the importance of this element of their work
- Schools, working with Districts, should seek to identify role models who can advocate for the school and show how it has created success.

Stakeholder and Audience Perceptions

Key Issues:

1. Parental support/encouragement
2. Teacher attitude
3. Teacher absence
4. School environment
5. School facilities
6. Enjoying school and learning

Students

Students are concerned about the behaviour of teacher in class, particularly strict teachers and harsh punishments. They are concerned that teachers do not give them enough individual attention, especially due to the high numbers of students in each class.

Students are also concerned about school infrastructure. For all students, this means having electricity, clean drinking water and spaces to play. For girl students, it is important to them that there are toilet facilities.

Girl students see stipends as an important motivation for school attendance and learning achievement.

Key Issues:

1. School facilities
2. Teacher training and teaching styles
3. Availability of teachers in school
4. School management - communication
5. Affordability – fees and materials
6. Teacher attitude.

Parents

Parents of students at public schools are also concerned about the quality, attitude and presence of teachers in class and this is an important factor that affects their decision to send their children to school. They think teachers should treat all students equally.

Parents believe that private schools get better results, and that teachers in private schools give students more individual attention and there is a better relationship with the head teacher. They also think there are better diary systems in private schools.

Parents want to know that schools have basic facilities as this affects their decision to send children to school. They also want schools to have enough learning materials, including text books and stationery. Some parents think it is not worth sending their children to school because there is no guarantee of a job if their child is educated.

Key Issues:

1. Community confidence in the school
2. Community involvement with the school
3. Management and transparency
4. Access to education for all children
5. Committed, professional teaching staff
6. Active School Council

Key opinion leaders in communities

Key opinion leaders want to see a much better relationship between the school and the community, with the head teacher and School Council taking a proactive role in informing the community about the school. Key opinion leaders think the community is not generally aware of the great efforts being made by the government to increase the quality of government schools. They want to see more information on attendance, teacher quality and facilities.

Key opinion leaders think there is a gap in the relationship between students and teachers. They think that teaching methodologies need improvement and that there must be practical learning in class.

Key Issues:

- 1. Support and supervision**
- 2. School leadership**
- 3. Information and resources for teaching**
- 4. Teacher meetings/School Development Plan**
- 5. Information on school performance**
- 6. Formal teacher/parent relationship**

Teachers

Teachers say there have been some improvements in the quality of learning in schools and want refresher courses and support for teachers. Teachers think that class numbers are too high and that it is difficult to pay sufficient attention to every student.

Teachers say that co curricular and extracurricular activities interest students and help them learn, increasing their motivation. Teachers are concerned that the lack of space and facilities at the school, including classrooms and seating, affects students' level of interest in learning.

Teachers in secondary schools say that IT labs have made a big difference in the reputation of the school for parents and communities.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the analysis contained in this Needs Assessment. Whilst it is not expected that all of these recommendations will be implemented immediately, the Information and Communication Strategy will set out a clear, planned process to address the needs identified in this report. Once the Communication Unit is in place, its task will be to carry out the interventions proposed in the Information and Communication Strategy in order to make sustained and effective impact on education reform in Punjab.

Preparing the Ground

1. An Information and Communication Strategy should be developed to provide a coordinated, consistent and regular flow to stakeholders and beneficiaries at every level of the education sector in Punjab
2. An early output of the Information and Communication Strategy must be to produce materials that clearly explain PESP II, its goals and objectives in order that partners and stakeholders can be clear about their own role in its delivery
3. PMIU should work alongside Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies to provide a gateway to their information and data and to enhance the effectiveness of all partners' communication
4. A significant increase in regular communication on the reform programme should be adopted, especially to key actors, managers and those in a position to influence others. This communication should encompass information on interventions, milestones and best practice
5. PMIU should consider producing a range of materials that summarise and explain progress and challenges in the sector. These may include an annual sector report, an annual education sector conference, as well as films, photographic images and case studies

Improving Dissemination

6. Communication should be used to enhance the coordination between partner organisations through regular information sharing meetings, email group news, newsletters and short summary reports

7. Data should become more useful through its interpretation for use. Significant efforts should be made to develop short summary reports, top line findings and analyses to assist education managers in understanding the challenges and needs of the education sector
8. PMIU and its partners should develop a core set of Unified Education Messages designed for use towards key beneficiaries, the public and communities. These messages will address the barriers, stigma and attitudes evidenced in the KAP survey
9. PMIU should commit to building an ongoing understanding of stakeholder and beneficiary views through an annual KAP survey collected at District level and collated centrally
10. Delivery partners should review their web sites and ensure they provide accessibility to data and information that meets stakeholders' needs. A web strategy should seek to provide open and shared access to a range of data from all of the implementing partners in the education sector

Generating Public Engagement

11. PMIU should develop key information and communication strands on each principal area of the reform programme. These strands will proactively promote government activity, the standards that the public can expect from education services and counter any misperceptions
12. PMIU and its partners should collectively develop a broad education awareness campaign across Punjab to promote the value of education to all. Alongside this broad campaign, there should be a focus on developing communications to increase teacher quality and attitude
13. A particular focus for information and communication should be to develop the role and awareness towards School Councils. A concerted effort should be made to enhance their status, reward best practice, promote their functions and provide innovative approaches to community engagement
14. An important issue that the Information and Communication Strategy must address is how to more effectively engage private sector schools in the drive for reform
15. Over time, Districts should develop their own capacity to communicate and inform the public. This should involve each District having its own information and communication plan, with indicators measured through an annual KAP survey. In addition, Districts should create communication committees and forums to plan key information activities

Energising and Promoting Schools

16. PMIU and its partners must provide more effective and dynamic feedback mechanisms for Districts in particular. It should seek to convene discussion and policy forums, commission input from Districts on a regular basis and identify areas of best practice that can be shared
17. Districts should be encouraged to develop strong relationships with each other, including partnering to share ideas and to support delivery
18. The introduction of School Report Cards should be a major focus of communications for PMIU. A comprehensive plan to inform Districts, schools and communities about their use and value should be at the centre of such activities
19. At school level, there should be an increased focus on using information and communication to support effective leadership. Materials, guides and workshops should target head teachers and school councils to put leadership at the centre of concepts for school improvement
20. There is a big role for the media in promoting community and parental engagement with schools. The next phase of the reform programme should place emphasis on better engagement with the media and develop proactive approaches to build their understanding and awareness of education reforms and the progress that is being made. The Information and Communication Unit may also explore the production of short films and programmes to document the activities underway.

Section 1

Background

1. Education Reform in Punjab

The mission of the Punjab Education Sector Reform Programme is:

To increase access to education by allocating more financial resources at the Provincial & District level, to support devolution and public sector management reforms and to improve governance, access and the quality of the education system in the Punjab.

With a population of 80 million, the Punjab province comprises almost 60 percent of the total population of Pakistan. During the 1990s, the Pakistan Government faced a serious financial crunch due to various domestic and international factors. This financial crunch resulted in suppressed outlays for the social sectors including education.

In Punjab Province, public sector schools experienced sluggish enrolment growth rates to the extent that in the year 2003, 46% of the total children, who should have been in the schools, were out of schools. Enrolment growth had been rather stagnant (enrolment growth rate in public schools remained 1.5% per annum in the decade preceding the PESRP) and the goal of moving towards achievement of MDGs was beginning to look more and more challenging.

The provincial government launched the Punjab Education Sector Reform Program (PESRP) in 2003 with the objective of improving access, quality and governance in the education sector. At the time of its launching, the Punjab had been witnessing insignificant improvements in the education sector with net primary enrolment rates of only 45 percent. The education reforms focus on increasing enrolments and retention, especially for girls, and in improving sector governance and monitoring.

PESRP was initially started for a time span of three years. Tremendous efforts, for improving access to education, have been made. Incentives such as provision of missing infrastructure, free textbooks, and stipends to the girl students have been undertaken to ensure increase in enrolments. Due to the potential for the programme to deliver improvements, it has been extended for a period of another three years.

The key goals of PESRP II are:

1. Increase household demand for schooling
2. Increase school participation
3. Improve school quality and improved teaching performance
4. Increase student learning and student achievement.

One of the most significant initiatives in terms of driving education improvement across Punjab has been the Chief Minister's Roadmap for Education. The Roadmap places a clear focus on:

- Delivering 100% enrolment of all children of school-going age
- 100% retention of all school-going children
- Free compulsory, internally competitive education for all
- Merit-based recruitment of teachers
- Targets and ranking of Districts by performance
- Transparent selection of officers and their retention linked with targets and incentives for good performance.

District rankings on key indicators are presented before the Chief Secretary of the Province and performance is presented to the Chief Minister bi-monthly. They provide District by District data on a range of key criteria and are used by Districts to measure and improve their performance.

2. The importance of information and communication

Information and Communication has a critically important role to play in improving education in Punjab.

PESP II places increasing emphasis on the importance of information and communications to its success, acknowledging that this was lacking in Phase I. The Project Appraisal Document for PESP II states:

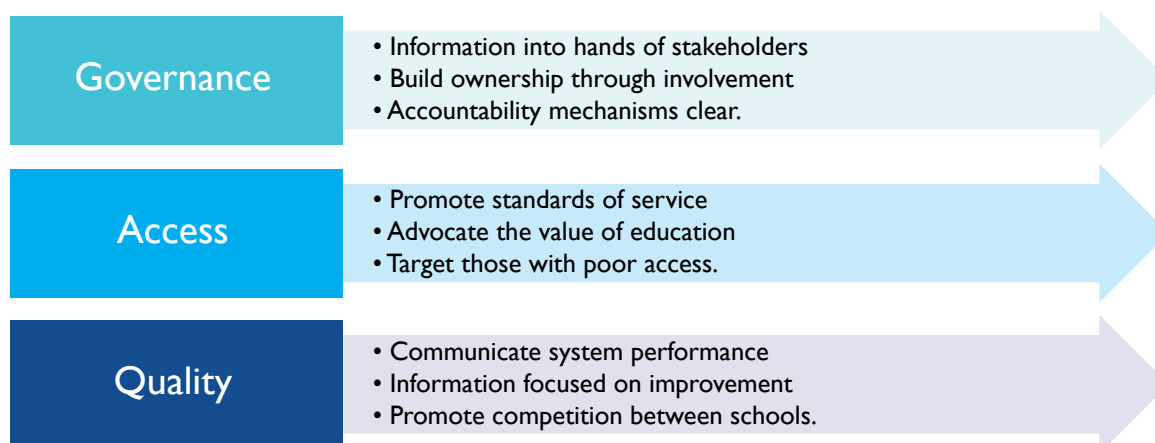
“Presently, no formal system exists to communicate and interact with stakeholders on PESP II, either in the form of information dissemination or a stakeholder feedback mechanism. There is an abundance of data available from several sources (e.g. CMMF school inspection database, PEC student assessment data, PEAS student assessment data, the Annual School Census), but the use of these data are often restricted to the source organisation itself, and a limited group of stakeholders.”

Acknowledging these weaknesses, the Government of Punjab plans to develop a comprehensive Information and Communication Strategy under PESP II to effectively disseminate information about the reform programme and receive feedback from both internal and external stakeholders. The objective of the information and communication strand will be to generate greater transparency and awareness among stakeholders including citizens, communities and service providers, by informing them about their roles, responsibilities and rights, the standards of service delivery they can expect under PESP II.

The government expects to create an enabling environment for improved oversight and engagement at various levels to improve service delivery performance. Activities will include the establishment of a Communications Unit at the provincial level, which will be responsible for the development and implementation of a communications strategy that proactively disseminates information about specific aspects of PESP II (determined by a stakeholder needs assessment), as well as on roles and responsibility for delivery within the sector ranging from parents to the provincial administration, and builds stakeholder feedback mechanisms into the strategy. The Unit will package data available within the system according to the needs of various stakeholders to assist informed decision making from the policy maker to the parent, and provide a platform for entities of SED to meet on a regular basis for information exchange.

The key initial communication steps outlined in PESP II programme documentation are as follows:

- Plan to develop and restructure PMIU to include a research and analysis unit and an information and communication unit by August 30, 2012
- Production and dissemination of school performance report cards by November/December 2012
- Stakeholder information and communication needs assessment by December 31, 2012
- Establish research and information/information and communication units in accordance with plan by March 30, 2013
- Production and dissemination of school performance report cards for middle and high schools by April 2013
- Verification of school performance report cards by end of April 2013
- Development of Information and Communication Strategy by June 30, 2013.



3. Methodology

To set the analysis provided in this Needs Assessment in context, it is important to outline the methodology that is to be used in developing the needs assessment and preparation of the PESP II Information and Communication strategy.

3.1 Communication-based assessment

The Needs Assessment involves several important stages of investigation. These stages are designed to produce clear outputs, each of which is valuable to the development of options and solutions that will be included in the Communication and Information Strategy. These are made clear in the table below:

Communication and Needs Assessment		
Basic steps	Key activities	Outputs
1. Become acquainted with key issues	Review documentation, objectives and problems being addressed	Relevant findings
2. Identify and engage key stakeholders	Identify and explore stakeholder perceptions, information needs	Relevant findings, scoping report
3. Assess communication networks and capacities	Identify and analyse communication systems	Relevant findings, systems analysis
4. Probe problems, causes, risks and opportunities	Explore causes of problems (technological, political, economic)	Relevant findings, PEST and SWOT
5. Assess and rank options and solutions	Analyse and discuss solutions to achieve change	Relevant findings, options paper
6. Validate perceptions and barriers to change	Surveys and analysis on key issues, barriers for relevant stakeholders	KAP Survey analysis
7. Transform options into solutions (and define impact indicators)	Synthesise into useful accounts to define communication objectives and indicators	Define and validate project and communication objectives

In applying this methodology, it is necessary to engage a range of key audiences and actors in order to determine their information needs and perceptions, as well as to explore with them the practical options and solutions that will be applied in the delivery of the Communication and Information Strategy. The principal stakeholders assessed for the creation of the Needs Assessment are:

- a) **Senior decision makers**, at Chief Executive and operational levels, in Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies, the School Education Department, PMIU, World Bank and donor partners. The method of enquiry for these stakeholders is through one-to-one meetings and interviews
- b) **Managers and implementers** of policy, including senior and middle level managers in District administrations, as well as key staff in the Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies. The principal methods of enquiry for these stakeholders are through a mix of interviews and focus group discussions

c) School level teachers and head teachers. The method of enquiry for this key group is to conduct a series of interviews as well as a Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) survey in selected Districts. The KAP survey is designed to ascertain what is known about priorities, programmes and goals; attitudes towards best practice behaviours and delivery of education at school level; and practices (including the propensity) to adopt different behaviours towards education delivery as set out in the PESP reform programme

d) Communities including, in particular, members of School Councils, parents of students, parents of children not in school, other important and influential community members, students and young people. The methods of enquiry for these groups is to conduct a complementary KAP survey in selected Districts and, where possible to engage communities through participatory methods designed to ascertain priority challenges towards access, quality and governance issues including barriers to sending children to school; barriers to progression and completion of studies; perceptions on teacher quality and the learning environment.

In developing the Needs Assessment around the key stakeholder and audience groups, this methodology is applying a best practice actor-based theory of change to the development of the Communication and Information Strategy. An actor-based theory of change acknowledges that in delivering education outcomes, information and communication must be targeted at changing awareness, knowledge, opinions and understanding with the express intention of changing the behaviours and practice of key audience groups towards specific policy outcomes. This is essentially a social theory of communication. This approach fits into the logic model or log frame project planning method. It takes the inputs made through the delivery of the Communication and Information Strategy and converts them into outputs of activities, which produce short, medium and long-term outcomes which are directly connected to PESP II outcomes.

3.2 Knowledge Attitude and Practices Survey

The Knowledge Attitude and Practices Survey seeks to determine the perceptions of key audiences (recipients) of messages towards education quality and improvement. In doing so, it enables the Information and Communication Strategy to understand the levels of awareness and the push and pull factors that are likely to lead to changed behaviours. In this way, messages and communication materials can be effectively targeted at the specific issues that are likely to have most impact.

The research was done to ascertain the views of various stakeholder groups targeted by the PESP II:

- Parents of students in both public and private schools
- Students, both boys and girls
- Non school-going children
- Community members
- Key opinion formers at the community levels.

The KAP survey establishes a baseline of the views of these different stakeholder groups so that policy can be designed for communication and information of PESP reforms which will affect the behaviour of the stakeholder groups in achieving the goals of the Programme.

A quantitative survey was considered as a part of the KAP survey process and, whilst this may be required at a later stage, it was felt that the survey needs to reflect the texture and detail of beneficiaries' views on a range of subjects related to education quality, access and governance. However, the KAP survey seeks to identify priority issues for each respondent group and is therefore a useful baseline against which future KAP surveys can be measured.

In addition to seeking the views of these stakeholders on broad education-related issues, it also sought to determine perceptions and attitudes towards key reform components included in PESP II, so that these can be more effectively communicated in the future. The key reform components tested were:

- a) The provision of free textbooks for all pupils in government schools
- b) Providing stipends for girls attending secondary school (grades 6 to 10) in government schools in 16 Districts in Punjab
- c) Building IT laboratories in government secondary schools
- d) Support to improving school infrastructure

- e) Teacher performance incentives linked to student achievement and enrolment
- f) Strengthening School Councils to improve school governance
- g) Providing better information at school level on school performance, including proposed School Report Cards showing enrolment, attendance, infrastructure, examination results etc displayed prominently at the school
- h) Field-based professional development for teachers
- i) The rationalisation of schools and teachers, and corresponding strengthening of other schools.

Research Methodology

The KAP is an exploratory research method designed at understanding and evaluating the information and communication needs for the reform program. The research is primarily a qualitative study. A scoring card was also used on prepared statements per each stakeholder group.

Three Districts of Punjab were selected by using judgment and purposive sampling. Locations selected in Lahore and Rahim Yar Khan were urban. In Rawalpindi, a rural location was selected.

A total of 30 focus groups were conducted with the key stakeholder groups (parents, students and young people and community members), and a total of 60 in-depth interviews were conducted with teachers and key opinion leaders. The field work was conducted during July 3 to July 11, 2012. The complete, final copy of the Knowledge Attitude and Practices Survey is available from the PMIU.

Section 2

Management and Delivery of Information and Communication

4. Overview

The research for this section of the Needs Assessment took a comprehensive look at key stakeholders, attempting to understand their needs and to understand what improvements can be made to more effectively target messages and communication. This section principally addresses the management and delivery of information and communication by provincial level decision makers, District level administrations and school level managers. This section considers the communication channels, management arrangements and application of communication methods to improve the flow and reach of communications related to education reform in Punjab.

Much of the Needs Assessment in this section therefore covers the systemic and organisational needs that, once addressed, will improve the capacity and effectiveness of these actors and messengers in delivering information and communication.

It is important to note that the Programme Monitoring and Information Unit will take a proactive role in addressing many of the needs identified in this report. Therefore, the findings in the analysis section should be seen in the context of the role of the PMIU.

5. Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies

Summary

- Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies require a focused, strategic and professional approach to communicating and informing key stakeholders and the public
- There are significant challenges in the use and interpretation of data to describe the overall education sector and to inform decision making
- There are no shared platforms for the storage and use of data and poor linking of web sites
- There is poor coordination among implementing partners, and a lack of shared vision
- Information produced by Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies is not always packaged well for stakeholder needs
- There are weak feedback mechanisms to bring information from school and community level through the Districts to provincial level
- There is little or no engagement with media which has the potential to communicate important messages about the current state and importance of education
- There is a need to bring together analysis and strategy across all of the Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies to present a more holistic and compelling picture of the education sector across Punjab.

5.1 Roles of Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies

Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies have a critical role to play in the delivery of education improvements in Punjab.

Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies fall under the leadership of the School Education Department (SED) of the Government of Punjab. They are vested with powers given from the Government of Punjab to manage and deliver key education functions across Punjab. SED has mostly developed its own entity organisations under pressure from donors.

There are three Autonomous Bodies involved in this Needs Assessment: The Punjab Textbook Board; Punjab Examination Commission; and the Punjab Education Foundation. There are two attached departments involved in this Needs Assessment: Directorate of Staff Development; the Punjab Education Assessment System. The Programme Monitoring and Information Unit is a special temporary function set up to monitor the reform programme and is dealt with in a separate section.

Punjab Textbook Board

Production and publication of:

- Textbooks for Class I to XII
- Supplementary reading material relating to textbooks
- Guide books for teachers
- Related research and reference materials.

Punjab Examination Commission (PEC)

- Develop, implement, monitor and evaluate a system of examinations for elementary education
- Formulate policy and programmes for the conduct of examinations relating to elementary education
- Collect data for research to improve curricula and teaching methodology
- Capacity building of the teachers to improve the system of assessment
- Identify the areas where improvement in training of the teachers or educationists is required
- Promote public discussions on issues pertaining to elementary education.

Punjab Education Foundation

- Promote quality education through Public-Private Partnership
- Encourage and support the efforts of the private sector through technical and financial assistance
- Innovate and develop new instruments and enable private educational institutions to champion wider educational opportunities at affordable cost to the poor.

Directorate of Staff Development (DSD)

Manages and develops:

- Teachers' training programme and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) framework
- Cluster Training Support Centres
- District Training Support Centres
- Establishment matters of DTEs
- Teacher training modules.

Punjab Education Assessment System (PEAS)

- Implement National Education Assessment activities in Punjab
- Assess students learning achievement level in the Province on the basis of sample
- Develop instruments for learning assessment
- Identify strong and weak areas of students learning with reference to National Curriculum and target competencies
- Disseminate findings to the stakeholders so that they may contribute to improve the quality of education.

5.2 Analysis

A number of organisations have expressed their own lack of capacity in the delivery of professional communications. Most of the Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies have no dedicated communication staff in their ranks, though they do have officers who deal with information such as data analysts, researchers and monitoring officers. There is a need for expert assistance to translate what they do into lucid and interesting forms of communication.

There is a need for training and skills development in key communication disciplines. Internally, they need technical capacity on developing effective publications and to improve their web sites. There are some challenges in delivering media expectations, and their capacity to meet these. It is clear that, due to this lack of communications expertise, many valuable opportunities to present a positive picture of education in Punjab are being lost.

There is some very powerful data available on student performance, learning outcomes, school infrastructure, teacher quality, enrolment and attendance, and District management. Data collection takes place by each of the Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies. In many respects, the quality and reach of this data is impressive. The annual distribution of exam results by the Punjab Examination Commission is a singularly impressive exercise that ensures every child and every school receives timely results information. The distribution of textbooks by the Punjab Textbook Board is similarly impressive, ensuring every public school receives an allocation via its

District and Tehsil offices of curricula textbooks. Elsewhere, the Punjab Education Assessment System produces compelling and useful analysis on learning achievement in the form of reports for use by education managers and policy makers.

The Punjab Education Foundation appears particularly focused on communication. When PEF opens a new school it uses cable TV and the news media, announcements from the mosques, leaflet drops, donkey carts and cycles. It uses SMS and phones for partners and has regular structured feedback on school and education quality. There are four members of staff in the PEF Communication Department. They undertake routine marketing roles including advertisements, media and awareness-raising.

Each Attached Department and Autonomous Body has a website and produces publications, research reports, guides and information materials. Much of the data collected by Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies is now online on their individual web sites.

A critical identified need is the absence of a shared vision for education reform and shared definitions that are used across each of the Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies. The Needs Assessment found that Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies have their own strategies and plans, with many having clear organisational vision and mission statements. There appears, however, to be no overarching view of education that is clearly communicated which details the contributory role of each of the Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies.

An important identified need within and across Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies concerns data. A significant amount of data is produced but there is a gap between the data and its analysis for use. Once data exists and becomes more accessible, it is necessary for the data to be analysed and interpreted as to what it signifies in terms of education quality, access and governance. Information should be used to enlighten and develop understanding. This focus on the use of data and information appears lacking.

Whilst the effective use of data is essential, it is also important to develop creative approaches to information and communication, rather than simply produce guidelines and instructions. This may involve role modelling best practice, and using case studies to demonstrate opportunities and challenges.

There are no shared platforms on which data can be stored and collated for access. Data systems operate largely in parallel. An important identified need is to be able to provide shared access to a range of data so that decision makers and implementers in particular can see the sector “in the round”. This will enable them to interrogate data and develop their own analysis of a range of factors that impact, for example, on education quality.

The Needs Assessment also finds that the proactive dissemination of evidence and analysis is a critical issue for Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies. For policy makers, planners, managers and the public, a programme of communication of important findings on education is necessary both to build understanding of challenges and to encourage interaction with them.

An important issue is the need to address the packaging of information for different audiences. This needs assessment is clear that a “suite” of information materials is needed that address education issues at a range of levels, from the technical to the non-technical. In considering appropriate formats, it is apparent that large documents containing many pages of data tables are useful only to a very limited audience. This implies a need for short, accessible summary documents, produced regularly for broad audiences both in the education sector, the public and key decision makers.

The Needs Assessment found that Attached and Autonomous Bodies need to be clear about the audiences and stakeholders they wish to address, from the public to technical specialists, and design information and communication activities around them. Each Attached Department and Autonomous Body needs to carefully plan communication activities, with clear outcomes and objectives.

The design and content of web sites in general appears to be ineffective for the non technical user. Whilst web sites hold a variety of data, they are both passive (you have to know what you are looking for) and complex (information is not presented clearly, nor is it interpreted for analysis). Given the importance that Districts, in particular, attach to their use of web sites and the increasing need for the wider society to be able to interrogate data and access information, the development of the web sites of Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies is particularly important.

Some respondents from Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies noted that the flow of information is weak and needs increasing. They say that continuous communication is needed, ensuring regular interaction with stakeholders. The public do not know where to go if they need information and there is a need to disseminate information on their programme and activities both to stakeholders and the public.

Whilst Districts and schools have a direct role and responsibility for communicating with parents and the public, Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies also have an important role to play in helping to set the context for this direct communication. Only these organisations, with the School Education Department, can promote the value of education, the provincial achievements that are being delivered and ensure a focus on advocacy and communication on the areas for which they are responsible. The link appears to be weak between implementing agencies and the beneficiaries.

A key identified need is for more effective coordination for the development and communication of education policy matters, in particular the reform programme. It was widely acknowledged that many organisations operate in silos, leading to significant challenges in ensuring coherence of activities among Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies. Each organisation needs to share its strategy and overall activity plan with partners. It has been noted that many staff with these organisations do not understand the respective roles of others.

In part, it is apparent that much of this problem is the result of a weak coordination process for the discussion and management of activities and priorities between implementing partners. It was observed that such meetings take place on an ad hoc basis, rather than being instituted as a core component of regular planning. In addition, there is a need for information sharing mechanisms.

The challenge of horizontal communication between implementers appears to be equal to the identified challenge of vertical communication to Districts and schools. A number of respondents commented that information dissemination to these levels is weak, often delivered late or not at all.

The sheer size of the private education sector in Punjab and its vital role in improving education outcomes suggests that it must be part of the coordination of information and communication. One respondent noted that no one knows what each other does and that this is a significant waste of resources. A number of respondents note that there needs to be greater synergy between public and private sectors so that we all work to the same ends.

6. Programme Monitoring and Information Unit

Summary

- There is an absence of widely communicated vision and focus on the key components of reform
- There is a need for a set of clear, unified education messages that underpin the reform programme that can be used consistently across all outputs
- It is important to develop simple, regular communications that keep Districts up to date on key interventions, milestones and successes and provide other opportunities for Districts to share their activities and views
- There is an inadequate web platform, information and resources that enable stakeholders to understand the education sector and the impact of reforms, and cross reference provincial and school data with other indicators
- There is a need to develop short summary reports that provide simple, clear information on reform progress as well as the Annual Census
- It is important to assess stakeholders and to develop appropriate information and communication materials that address their needs
- There is a need for regular, coordinated and focused communications activity on each of the key reform interventions to key stakeholders and the public. In particular, a strand of communications on teacher quality should be developed
- There is a need to understand the views of beneficiaries, their resistance to change and the factors that will improve their understanding of education in Punjab in order to more effectively target interventions and communications
- There is a need to provide a planned communications framework within which each of the Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies can play a complementary role, providing a gateway to their information and communications
- There is a need to develop and communicate the role of School Councils as key drivers of change in the education system
- There is a need to enhance existing school performance information for use at school level to empower parents and communities in the form of School Performance Report Cards.

The PMIU has been allocated a separate section in this Needs Analysis due to its pivotal role in ensuring information, communication and knowledge is used to enhance education in Punjab. As a key actor in the reform programme, the PMIU will be restructured to include an Information and Communication Unit, as well as Research and Analysis Unit. The findings of this Needs Assessment therefore have a direct bearing on the work of these proposed units as well as the role of the PMIU as a whole.

6.1 Analysis

The mission of the PMIU is to support the Education Department and Government of Punjab (GoPb) by bridging the implementation gaps and delivery mechanisms. The PESRP embraces the principles of increased transparency, participation, and collaboration as essential to accomplish its mission. By focusing on open practices and increasing access to data, the PMIU aims to create new information and knowledge that will help promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

Working alongside the Chief Minister's Monitoring Force, PMIU data collection is done monthly for every school in each District collecting data and preparing quarterly rankings on:

- Student enrolment and attendance
- Teacher posts and attendance
- Functioning facilities
- District Administrator visits.

There are officers in the PMIU responsible for oversight and monitoring of each aspect of the reform programme, including text book distribution, facilities, stipends, School Councils, teacher incentives and District ranking. Each of the monitoring officers has an equivalent focal person at District level.

The Annual Census is more detailed and looks at information on teachers by ID number, enrolment and drop out, including by gender and by stipend, student/teacher ratio, school infrastructure and facilities. The Annual Census information is available on the PMIU website but it is currently difficult to search by different categories. Presently searches can take place only by school and it has been suggested that a more intelligent search system including, for example, by indicators, district, date and stakeholder group would enhance access to valuable information. The PMIU is in the process of reviewing and developing its website, though it is understood that this is mainly to do with information updating rather than fundamental change.

Many of the issues raised in the previous section (Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies) apply equally to the PMIU. There is a lack of professional communication expertise that is able to interpret, manage and disseminate information. As a Unit that deals with information and has a duty to create knowledge this is a need that must be addressed, both for the reform programme itself and to provide a gateway to support the Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies in their efforts.

As seen with Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies, the PMIU needs to ensure that it packages information appropriately for different stakeholders. One important example is the communication of the Annual Census. The PMIU produces a lengthy publication of data tables that is accessible only to a technical and informed audience. The PMIU must challenge its own practice in this regard and make strategic decisions about what it communicates, to whom and in what formats.

There are several principal communication failures relating to the PMIU. Externally, the PMIU is not communicating a coherent picture of the reform programme and its overall goals, milestones and components. Beyond the reports compiled for Districts, the data collected by the PMIU is not being translated into communication outputs that describe the progress being made across the Province. The elements of the reform programme itself are not being communicated to the public, which clearly wants to know whether schools have facilities, whether teachers are trained, and whether attainment is improving.

Internally, there is an important need to keep key actors informed of the progress of the reform programme, the activities being undertaken and achievements to date. The role of the PMIU in coordinating Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies is controversial. However, the PMIU is in a position to provide information and to communicate across partners. By using communication as a coordinating mechanism it will support improved delivery across the education sector.

It is widely acknowledged that there is a need for a department looking holistically at the whole of education in Punjab. Whilst the PMIU needs to be cautious about assuming a role that is too dominant, it is clear that the need is for a department that is able to provide a gateway to information for partner organisations.

It is clear that, for all of the principal components of the reform programme, there is a need for a focused approach to communication, both to the Districts, key stakeholders and to the public. In some instances, there has been negative publicity or a lack of public awareness about the activities being undertaken as described in the paragraphs below. This is not only a lost opportunity but can, at times, contribute to misperceptions and a lack of public confidence in government schools. This is evidenced in later sections of this Needs Assessment that assess the views of parents and communities.

The teacher incentive scheme has received some criticism due to ineffective communication. It has been observed that teachers received poor information about the timing of the scheme as well as the criteria for receiving the salary bonuses. More widely, public communication about teacher incentives had been lacking. On other reform programme elements, girls' stipends, for example, is a major initiative that reaches almost 382,000 poor girl students, increasing their motivation and ability to study. This initiative needs to become a regular and significant communication campaign to show how the reform programme is transforming access to education.

More broadly, a number of officers in PMIU have expressed the need for a concerted information and communication drive on teacher quality. There is a need to promote the ideal teacher as a role model in terms of their behaviour, teaching styles and role in the classroom. Whilst these activities should be undertaken in partnership with others, given the focus in teacher quality in phase two of the PESP, this area of focus would represent an important communication objective of work in the future.

A further significant area of need within the reform programme is the communication to and for School Councils. These school level bodies are widely seen to have not established themselves sufficiently to have had a uniformly positive impact on education in Punjab. There is a need to promote School Councils and their role, and to incentivise their establishment. In addition, there appear to be information gaps regarding the functions, composition and duties of School Councils.

It is already acknowledged within the next phase of PESP that information needs to be driven down to school level, to empower schools, parents and communities with accurate and timely information on performance, attendance and facilities. School Report cards will be an important information activity that needs to be communicated widely to the public as well as to Districts and schools, with guidance and support.

7. District level administration

Summary

- The Chief Minister's Roadmap is providing energy and information clarity for Districts
- Government schools have a number of success stories to tell (textbooks, IT labs, stipends, PEC results, etc) and there is a need for Districts to further promote these initiatives
- Districts need regular information on the reform programme as well as guidance materials and resources to better communicate to their populations
- Districts need support to create larger public awareness campaigns on the importance of education to families and communities
- The monitoring system is driving improvements in communication, by focusing Districts on key indicators related to the reform programme
- There are few discussion and feedback forums for Province and Districts for exchange of ideas, and Districts say they need more input into discussion
- In terms of communication, Districts are working largely on their own. There are no standards, protocols or guidance available for concerted and coordinated communication and information
- Districts need support on their information and communication role. They have capacity and responsibility issues on communications.

7.1 Analysis

The Chief Minister's Roadmap and the monthly monitoring system overseen by the Chief Minister's Monitoring Force are having a dramatic impact on the focus of Districts on improvement. Monthly performance, District rankings and delivery on key indicators is generating energy and clarity at District level. In terms of communication, this monitoring system is bringing performance information into almost every aspect of the work of District administrations.

Through the Chief Minister's Roadmap process, each District receives a report showing their performance and what they have to do. This is used to enforce improvements. There is a District Review Committee meeting attended by EDO (education), District Monitoring Officer, and chaired by the DCO.

The Chief Minister's website is used, including a digital library, with the Punjab Endowment Fund. Other websites developed by Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies are accessed by Districts. These resources provide guidance on issues such as classroom management and learning styles. Other websites such as PEC – for online examination results – and DSD for teacher development are well used by certain individuals at head teacher level. The Chief Minister's Roadmap is widely acknowledged by Districts as being the driving factor behind the reform programme and officials are well aware of it. Districts report that a number of key reforms, including the provision of IT labs in secondary schools, have had a noticeable positive impact on public confidence in government schools.

At the District level, information is received through a variety of channels; through emails, by telephone and through personal contact from field officers. There are monthly discussions with the Punjab Education Delivery Team. There are good meeting structures in operation throughout. These are usually monthly – following a reporting pattern – and happen at most, if not all, levels of the District.

In many Districts there are vigorous enrolment campaigns from March to May (beginning of school year) and then from August to November (after the summer break). These high profile enrolment and retention campaigns often use the media, banners, assemblies and meetings and activities at all levels.

In some cases, Districts are innovative in using text messages to inform schools of important matters though, at present, the response is mixed.

At District level, there is a clearly expressed need for information on the Education Sector Reform Programme as well as information on the secretariat, and the progress of components of the reform programme. There are focal persons for different areas of reform (stipends, text books, etc) – these are people for whom key messages and information must be communicated and coordinated.

A key information and communication need at District level is for organised, coordinated communication that both looks ahead to issues and milestones, and sets the broader context and vision for education improvement. Effective overall information and communication planning is largely lacking at District level. A simple requirement that all Districts involved in this Needs Assessment report is for a newsletter or regular publication that sets out current initiatives, progress on reforms, best practice and key dates.

Districts are concerned that there are many competing demands on their time and resources, and that requests for information and instructions come from a wide range of organisations. Many officers express a need for a much more effective, planned and coordinated system of communication. All respondents mention the burden of other work and requests from higher ups, which suggest better coordinated, forward looking communication is necessary. At District level, there is often a problem with time limits, the late arrival of information and the need to act on it quickly. Districts report that there are lots of layers and steps in the way of the sender and recipient of the message.

This implies a need for a clear chain of communications upwards and downwards so that Districts can feed up their challenges and problems, in order to receive regular timely information. Some Districts report that there is a need for a Communication Cell at District level to ensure information is transmitted at the proper time, and that provincial information is widely disseminated.

A number of Districts report that they would like to have a greater role in providing feedback and participating in discussion with the Province. There is a sense of frustration that they are not able to share their experiences, challenges and successes with the wider education sector.

An important area of expressed need is for clear guidelines, protocols and resources that support information and communication activities. There is a clear need for a centrally-coordinated information and communications plan, for use in the Districts which stipulates key activities that should be undertaken, provides information and messages for use with key stakeholders and offers guidance on how to conduct activities. It is clear that, at District level, there is a need for a District-owned information and communication strategy, clear messages and deliverables throughout the year.

Many Districts report that a "big push" is needed on communicating the importance of education to the public and parents in particular. This is a campaign, within which all actors have a role. There is an important need to realise the community as motivators of education, enrolment, attendance and to demand quality. Within a broader

campaign on the value of education, Districts report a lack of public awareness of key components of the reform programme. School Councils are seen by Districts as essential to driving improvements in education. However, some report that, whilst many School Councils provide strong governance in schools, they lack authority or status. Some Districts express a need for training, clear guidance on their roles and responsibilities and for some additional powers to enhance their status. These powers may include the ability to attest student enrolment registers and to make representations to the EDO (education) on matters relating to their school.

School Report Cards are also universally seen by Districts as a significant potential development that will have a dramatic impact on school performance. Districts report that, when School Report Cards are introduced, there must be clear guidance provided on how to read the content, the process for their dissemination and information on how to present the cards to schools and communities.

Some Districts believe there is a need to become more creative in their use of communication to engage communities. They believe radio drama, theatre and multimedia can play a better role in the work they do. They would like to use TV and have a programme of dramas and movies shown in the community to sensitise them. This should be combined with a Provincial enrolment campaign.

Effective relationships with schools are essential to effective District information and communications. There needs to be an understanding at school level about the work of monitoring officers. Districts report that there is a lack of useful available materials to help inform schools of best practice. Districts report the need for guides, including for teachers, both in printed formats and on the internet. Districts also report that they would benefit from communication on what teacher training is being done (DSD), and student advisory notes.

Over time, a number of Districts would like to see a District level web site, for EDO (Education). The web site would link to existing available resources and information as well as providing specific information relating to schools in the immediate area.

8. School level stakeholders

Summary

- There is a need to focus communication on the importance of effective school leadership
- A critical need is for schools to develop proactive approaches to community mobilisation, both towards the school and the importance of education in general
- Innovative approaches must be developed to enhance the communication between the school and parents, including open days and regular open meetings
- The role of School Councils need to be prioritised at school level, to clarify roles, to identify committed members of the local community and to enhance its role as a link with the local community
- Schools need to become focused on information provision to parents. Whilst school performance report cards will make a significant difference in this regard, there must be broader communication on the importance of this element of their work
- Schools, working with Districts, should seek to identify role models who can advocate for the school and show how it has created success.

8.1 Analysis

Information and communication to parents, the community and to students comes through several formal and informal channels. The role of the community and the School Council is, as one might expect, essential in building awareness and interest in the school. Where the School Council functions well, it is seen to have a positive impact on the attitudes of parents towards the school which may improve participation and attendance levels.

When the community takes an active role it is able to monitor participation, for example, by talking to children who are in the streets in uniform during school hours. It is also noted that role models, including students who have performed well, successful former students and teachers in the community have a significant impact on the standing of the school in the community.

The big gap for many schools is in community mobilisation beyond the School Council. A better technique of parental and community mobilization needs to replace the capacity building programme being implemented by Punjab Rural Support Programme (PRSP) and National Rural Support Programme (NRSP).

For sustained mobilization, interest of parents has to be generated in what happens inside the school, through opening channels of communication between the school and the parents and the community. Where things work at school level, it is because there is continuous contact with parents – especially when there are absences. Opportunities for parents to discuss issues related to school in social gatherings should also become a part of everyday practice.

In addition to the School Council and the community's role as communicators, the role of the head teacher in particular is important. In some schools, the proactive role of the head teacher in their participation in the School Council and in being open to talk to parents has had a significant impact. School leadership is therefore critical to both school improvement and to effective communication with parents and the community.

School and parents communication is important. Monthly meetings between teachers and parents have been identified as a model of good practice that can be developed further. In some cases, the head teacher and teachers at the school discuss issues with parents at meetings and open days. Where parents and community members are encouraged to visit the school, and when clear information about the school's performance and attendance rates are provided, parents respond positively and their confidence improves.

It has been noted that a system of daily reporting of attendance figures would be very useful – allowing the District and the Province to see performance in “real time”. When this information is made available to parents, the announcement of the result of schools is seen as very important. Moreover, it has been suggested that there should be a system of writing a diary every day to inform parents about day to day activities of the school and their children.

If someone achieves a position in curricular or extracurricular activities it gives a positive image to society. In some cases, it was observed that there are quarterly parent teacher meetings and suggestions flow to the head teacher. The performance of the school must be easily accessible to the local community. Effective use of data at school level dramatically increases accountability. Information regarding admission has been identified by parents as important. It is clear that schools will only improve if they enhance their accountability to the people. Lack of transparency needs to be addressed by enforcing compulsory information disclosure at the school level. This is being addressed in phase two of the reform programme by the introduction of school performance report cards.

There are mixed reports about School Councils. There is a council in every school which sometimes provides information of school activities to community members. However, many have failed to perform as required. Whilst it needs time, a culture is needed in which School Councils are seen as important. There is a need to promote and empower the School Councils, encouraging the involvement and mobilisation of the whole community towards the school. School Councils haven't worked effectively everywhere. There's a need to promote their role and the benefits of involvement in the life of the school. The effectiveness of School Councils needs to be measured on a periodic basis by using a composite weighted index covering all major areas of their responsibilities.

There is evidence that effective School Councils are the ones in which one or two members have displayed extraordinary leadership, commitment, and management competencies. To scale up this factor of success, a critical mass of leadership has to be created, comprising of the Head Teacher and several committed members from parents and the community.

Section 3

Stakeholder and Audience Perceptions



9. Overview

This section of the Needs Assessment concerns the needs of the principal recipients of messages and information related to education in Punjab. The results of this area of enquiry, taken with the other identified needs in this section, provide the basis for the development of Unified Education Messages that can be adopted across the education sector as a whole.

Whilst each of these audiences also has a role to play in disseminating messages, ensuring targeted content of messages and information to these groups to address information needs and gaps in perception and understanding is critical to delivering improvements in education. This section therefore looks at both the role of the community and the school in communication as well as the attitudes and perceptions of stakeholders on key issues. By addressing attitudes and perceptions, the Information and Communication Strategy will be able to change the behaviours of key stakeholders at school and community level.

The Needs Assessment finds that there are a number of communication gaps at the primary audience level. The key reasons for these communication gaps are:

- Parents do not interact with teachers and take sufficient interest in the activities of the school
- The school, including the School Council, does not communicate effectively with the community
- There is a lack of awareness regarding school improvements and facilities.

10. Priority Issues for Audiences

These priority issues for each stakeholder group are based on findings generated by the KAP Survey.

Parents

Parents believe:

1. The behaviour of the school and the teacher should be welcoming at school is important. This requires good teacher attitude and giving attention to children in class
2. Staff should be qualified. When there are new and qualified teachers, especially in IT, Maths, Science and English, students take more interest in their studies
3. Financial support should be provided to families
4. Public schools should give more respect to parents as happens in private schools
5. There should be a diary system for children's activities.

Parents (Children at Private Schools)

Parents whose children were enrolled in private schools believe:

1. Teachers give more individual attention to their children
2. Homework is assigned and checked on a regular basis
3. Classroom environment is more disciplined and controlled as compare with Public schools
4. There is a diary system which keeps the parent informed on child's progress
5. Children are provided more confidence in the use of English language.

Students

Students believe:

1. The behaviour of the teacher should be friendly. This is important because teachers act as role models to children, and it will improve the quality of the school
2. It is important to have good infrastructure and basic facilities at the school
3. More co curricular and extracurricular activities would help increase school participation
4. IT Labs have improved the quality of the school.

Teachers

Teachers believe:

1. Study aids and attendance at workshops improves teaching performance
2. It is important to have proper lesson plans to cope with the new syllabus
3. Students learn more and achieve more if they are motivated through encouragement and appreciation of their minor achievement in class
4. More practical work in class helps students' learning achievement.

Key Opinion Leaders

Key opinion leaders believe:

1. Awareness at community level on school activities will increase school participation
2. The role of the head teacher is essential for a good school
3. School infrastructure and basic facilities will improve enrolment and attendance
4. School Councils should be mobilised more effectively to be active and competent
5. Financial support to poor but deserving students increases learning achievement.

11. Improving public confidence

The Needs Assessment also analyses what issues, once addressed, will improve public confidence in the schools. As public confidence is essential to improving education, the perceptions are important factors in the future design of messages, information materials and campaigns. Stakeholder perceptions are:

- The recruitment of qualified, friendly teachers
- Ensuring teachers are competent and have a sense of responsibility
- Teachers must improve their behaviour
- Recruiting more teachers to meet shortages
- Regular meetings with parents
- The community involved in school affairs
- Teachers' progress reports are made available to the community
- There should be parent teacher meetings
- There should be one community member in each street either as a member or attached to the School Council
- There should be resources available at the school to make improvements
- Free books are improving public confidence. This should be communicated to more parents
- Improvements in the infrastructure, including more playgrounds, better classrooms, functional IT labs, and availability of water and electricity
- Competitions, prizes and District scholarships show the community that the school has potential
- A diary system, as in private schools.

12. Increasing household demand for schooling

- Cooperation among parents, teachers and students is essential
- Teacher absence must be addressed
- Teachers must adopt a supportive and friendly behaviour in class
- Financial support for poor students is important
- Well maintained buildings, playgrounds and facilities will increase demand
- Free text books are increasing demand, and may be supplemented with stationery and uniforms.

13. Increasing school participation

- Create wide community and public awareness about the importance of education is essential
- Teacher behaviour and proper attention given to each child is a priority
- Head teachers' cooperation and communication with parents, the presence of a School Council and interaction with the community is important
- Encouraging parents to take an interest in schooling is required
- Financial support for poor students (stipends) increases participation where it is in operation
- Creating a conducive learning environment is necessary, including the provision of basic facilities (water, furniture and toilets).

14. Improving school quality and teaching performance

- Good school governance, including a functioning School Council, will improve school quality and teaching performance
- Having clear, consistent policies at the school will improve its quality
- Co curricular and extracurricular activities are important
- Help with homework and ensuring homework is checked is important
- Providing study aids and having lessons plans will improve teaching quality
- The attitude of teachers in public schools must be as good as that of teachers in private schools.

15. Increasing students' learning achievement

- Strict and rude teacher behaviour hampers learning achievement
- Homework should be mandatory
- Tackling the barriers to achievement at community level, including poverty and culture, is important (promotion of education)
- Providing stipends for girls will greatly increase their learning achievement
- Well qualified teachers are essential to improved learning achievement
- Teachers who can teach practical lessons and use good, creative teaching styles are essential.

16. The importance of improving teacher quality

Across all stakeholder groups at school and community level, in particular; students, parents, community members and key opinion leaders, the focus of information and communication should be on teacher quality, attitude in class, attention paid to students, communication with parents, qualifications and teacher numbers.

Given the importance placed by key stakeholders on the performance and attitude of teachers, the KAP Survey sought to identify what issues were perceived by parents, community members and students as necessary to teacher improvement. The results of this area of enquiry can be used to direct information and messages towards teachers and those in a decision making role that will, in turn, improve public confidence in teachers. The perceptions can be summarised as follows:

- Teachers must be encouraged to enhance their qualifications
- There must be models that teachers can follow to show them the best learning styles
- Teachers need learning aids and more guides that they can follow
- Parents and the community should know what training and qualifications the teachers have passed
- The District must be involved in improving teacher quality through professional development
- There should be a monthly training session with the head teacher on teacher quality
- All teachers must be required to attend refresher courses and training workshops
- Local primary schools should be monitored by the secondary school.

17. Perception toward private schools

As a whole government schools are better because they are nearer to their home or village, free books are provided to students. One mother mentioned that initially she enrolled her children in private school owned by her brother. The reason was family influence and major discount in the fee. But later on, her brother sold the school and she had to transfer her children to Government schools.

If the school is far away from the village the parents don't feel safe to send their kids especially girls. Attitude of teacher also matters and if there is a report of physical punishment, parents are not willing to send their children to school.

Some parents whose children were studying in private school stated that teachers meet them on a regular basis and their children are learning etiquettes, are more disciplined, and are using Urdu and English sentences more fluently.

Parents and community members also said in private schools teachers are punctual and they give special attention to students. Whereas in public schools, teachers are careless and they do not take full responsibility.

18. Stakeholder perceptions of education reforms

PESRP is implementing a number of reforms across the education system in Punjab. For these reforms to continue to be effective and to improve, it is important to understand stakeholder perceptions towards them. This section therefore takes the main components of reform in turn and summarises stakeholders' views.

1. Provision of free textbooks for all pupils in government schools

All stakeholders are aware of this reform. It is widely appreciated and is having a significant impact on public confidence in government schools. Parents say that because it has reduced the financial burden on them, it is increasing demand for schooling. Some respondents claimed that they are not getting the whole set of books. In addition, it was noted that students who enrolled after the admission session are not provided with free books.

Some respondents (teachers) noted that there was not an effective distribution of books, and that corruption in the system needs to be tackled. Community members suggested that there needs to be an information campaign on the availability and distribution of free textbooks that takes place on a large scale across the District and Province.

2. Stipends for girls attending secondary school (grades 6 to 10) in government schools in 16 Districts

This reform has had a major impact where it has been implemented. Other respondents want the stipend introduced in their District. Many stakeholders said that stipends encourage recipients to work harder at school. It was suggested that the stipend scheme should be communicated widely, particularly to poor families and to non school going children.

Some respondents suggested that the stipend could be developed as a merit-based award, by granting higher amounts to students who achieved the best grades in their examinations. Girl students all said that the stipend increases their motivation for study. However, some community members suggested that the delivery of these stipends should be made more transparent by proper inspection and audit, so that the most deserving and motivated girl students benefit.

3. Provision of IT laboratories in government secondary schools

All respondents were aware of this reform and consider it extremely important for a modern economy. The provision of IT labs is improving household demand for schooling and giving government schools a more equal standing in relation to private schools. Learning power, said some, will be increased when students have practical IT lessons, and the labs help significantly to achieve this. Private schools are considered more advanced in terms of information technology.

Some community members were of the view that, although the facility is there, there are no appropriate and qualified teachers so the facility is not functional. Others mentioned the lack of electricity as a barrier to their effectiveness. In some cases the IT labs were perceived not to be functioning when, in fact, they were. There is an information gap that School Councils, teachers and community members can fill in this regard.

4. Support to improve school infrastructure

Most respondents think there is still a great deal of improvement needed to ensure school infrastructure is adequate. School infrastructure is considered essential in increasing household demand for schooling and in building public confidence. Some non school going children said that friends at school tell them the school infrastructure is improving.

There are a range of issues related to school infrastructure that stakeholders want to see improved, but essential elements include boundary walls; classrooms; provision of clean drinking water and the fact that girls may have to go to private houses to use the toilet. Key opinion leaders in particular said that there needs to be a programme of information so that people across the District can know how school infrastructure is improving, and demand it for themselves.

5. Teacher performance incentives linked to student achievement and enrolment

The majority of respondents appreciate this reform and say that it will motivate teachers to improve results. All stakeholders were of the view that this will help change teacher behaviour in school and deliver improved student learning outcomes. This reform is considered very well by teachers as a morale booster. Others said it is leading to increased competition between teachers.

However, some respondents said that greater transparency is needed in the process of performance incentives, including clear information of the criteria for the award. A number of students consider this an important reform in improving their own learning.

6. Strengthening School Councils to improve school governance

Whilst all respondents think that a strong School Council is important, many believe that it is a formality and is not being effectively implemented. Some stakeholders think the School Council members are not giving their time to the school due to other commitments. In particular, some respondents think the School Council must do more to increase school admissions.

Some key opinion leaders suggested all schools having a Parents' Day, at which School Council members are responsible for mobilising the community and encouraging parents to take an interest in school affairs. Some think the School Council's role needs to be communicated more widely.

7. Providing better information at school level on school performance, facilities and attendance

Whilst this reform has not been implemented, stakeholders believe it will be very important and will increase enrolments as well as competition between schools. Some schools already provide some information for parents, displayed at the school, and this is appreciated.

It is important, say respondents, that information is displayed properly as it has the potential to change the mind sets of the public towards government schools. Key opinion leaders say that it is very important to inform the community of the new system, once implemented, as school transparency is essential to public confidence.

8. Field-based professional development for teachers

Teacher training and refresher courses are provided and, though teachers are satisfied, they think it requires more specialist trainers. Some, but not all, teachers said that they are using new methodology in lecture planning and improving the classroom teaching styles. However, the need to train in teaching techniques was considered important. Some teachers said that they need more materials to support the training, especially in activity-based lectures.

Students and parents consider it essential for increasing learning achievement, the quality and performance of teachers. All stakeholders said that training teachers, and improving their skills whilst they were in the field, is a critically important issue for education in Punjab. Some would like information on the teacher training programme in their District.

9. Rationalisation of schools and teachers, and strengthening of other schools

Around half of respondents were aware of this reform and many said it had not been implemented. There are widespread complaints about the numbers and availability of teachers in schools. Some teachers noted that they have to take classes of 70 plus students. Other said that complaints about teachers paying enough attention to students were because of the shortage of teachers.

This perceived lack of resources is having a negative impact on community confidence in government schools. It is also increasing the attraction of private schools for parents. According to students and parents, there must be no more than 30 students in each class.

19. Messages and Information Needs

Stakeholders were asked what messages and information would have the most impact on them, in terms of changing their behaviour towards the school. A number of these information requirements may also be addressed in the development of school report cards. The information needs identified by stakeholders are as follows:

19.1 Information

- Transparency in school reports
- Complete records of student activities and attendance
- An announcement of school results
- Knowing the behaviour standards of teachers
- Knowing what facilities are available and working at the school
- Knowing how many qualified teachers there are
- Monthly meetings of teachers and parents at which activities can be discussed
- Knowing the standards of education to expect.

19.2 Messages

The Information and Communication Strategy will propose that a series of Unified Education Messages are adopted across the education sector in Punjab to address barriers, gaps and stigma towards education. The following section begins to identify some of these messages. The key messages and concepts that will convince stakeholders towards increased demand, improved teacher performance and increased community participation were.

Parents

- To convince parents to visit school and meet teachers on regular basis
- Teachers have improved behaviour and they are more welcoming and give respect to parents
- Public schools have improved its quality, environment and infrastructure
- Proper attention is given to all students
- Visit schools and appreciate children on their performances (like private schools are doing by celebrating events and appreciate minor achievements of students. Private schools engage parents on different occasions)
- Children of teachers and other influential community members are also studying in the same school.
- Education is free for children. Family budget on education is subsidised
- Environment is clean and hygienic for your children
- Public school has hired teachers in “Educators” scheme. More qualified teachers are available in the public schools
- You will find more discipline in public school
- Public school teachers are more competent and highly paid as compared with private schools in small towns and rural areas.

Teachers

- To improve teachers' performance refresher courses are arranged and specialised trainers are appointed for specific trainings.
- Teachers must improve their attitude and behaviours. Teachers need to fulfil their responsibilities honestly
- One centralised examination should be arranged and best performing student and teacher be rewarded
- Teacher should take an interest in classes
- Punctuality and regularity to be monitored
- The teachers should be soft hearted and should give positive inspiration to pupils
- Teachers and head teachers must be appointed on merit and meet minimum qualification criteria
- Teachers must take students to computer lab daily
- Teachers should be paid competitive salaries.

Community members

- School management should mobilise the community effectively
- To increase community's interest, schools needs to show better results
- Schools need to communicate their infrastructure, facilities, environment to parents and community members
- Schools need to build strong relations with parents and community members
- Schools should convince the community that qualified teachers are available in schools
- The gap between parents and teachers is narrowed. The Community is mobilised to help schools in successfully organising "parent's day" in school
- Syllabus of public schools is equivalent to private schools but fee is very nominal
- Community members should participate in school matters
- Community members should guide the management of school
- Community members should increase their observation to monitor school activities
- Community members should mobilise other community members in creating awareness on school progress.

Section 4

Conclusions and Recommendations



20. Key conclusions and recommendations

The recommendations emerging from this Needs Assessment will form the basis of a comprehensive Information and Communication Strategy to support education sector reform in Punjab.

20.1 Conclusions

- The penetration of communication channels and messages into target audiences (parents, students and communities) is poor. Key stakeholders who need information in order to make choices about education are often unaware of facilities and opportunities available to them, and are not receiving messages about the value and importance of education to their family and the community
- Communication efforts are ad hoc and sporadic. Districts carry out some education campaigns, but there is no guidance or framework for communication provided at a provincial level. Communication activities on education are not inter-linked and are not carried out in a systematic and planned manner
- The importance of communication for gatekeepers and influencers is often overlooked. In particular, though there are some exceptions, School Councils are not used consistently and effectively as a means to ensure that information and communication reaches communities. There is a need to dramatically improve the potential of School Councils to engage communities
- At provincial level, there is an absence of strategic planning and delivery of communication both to District administrations and to wider audiences and stakeholders. There is no shared vision for education that is owned and used by all provincial partners nor are there key shared data and messages that combine to communicate successes and challenges. The result is that the impact of reforms and government efforts to improve education is being lost
- Communication is often carried out implicitly, rather than being a distinct activity that is designed to support interventions and reforms. There is a need to prioritise information and communication as central to the theory of change. There is a need to consider reform programme activities, as well as important routine activities such as enrolment and retention, and develop information and communication programmes to support them
- There are no consistent or unified messages about the value and quality of education, nor the standards and facilities the public can expect that are used across the education sector in Punjab
- Information and messages are not directed at addressing known perceptions or barriers and stigma towards education among key audiences. The significant achievements of the reform programme are not being incorporated into the messages and information directed towards communities and parents.

20.2 Recommendations

Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the analysis contained in this Needs Assessment. Whilst it is not expected that all of these recommendations will be implemented immediately, the Information and Communication Strategy will set out a clear, planned process to address the needs identified in this report. Once the Communication Unit is in place, its task will be to carry out the interventions proposed in the Information and Communication Strategy in order to make sustained and effective impact on education reform in Punjab.

Preparing the Ground

1. An Information and Communication Strategy should be developed to provide a coordinated, consistent and regular flow to stakeholders and beneficiaries at every level of the education sector in Punjab
2. An early output of the Information and Communication Strategy must be to produce materials that clearly explain PESP II, its goals and objectives in order that partners and stakeholders can be clear about their own role in its delivery
3. PMIU should work alongside Attached Departments and Autonomous Bodies to provide a gateway to their information and data and to enhance the effectiveness of all partners' communication
4. A significant increase in regular communication on the reform programme should be adopted, especially to key actors, managers and those in a position to influence others. This communication should encompass information on interventions, milestones and best practice
5. PMIU should consider producing a range of materials that summarise and explain progress and challenges in the sector. These may include an annual sector report, an annual education sector conference, as well as films, photographic images and case studies

Improving Dissemination

6. Communication should be used to enhance the coordination between partner organisations through regular information sharing meetings, email group news, newsletters and short summary reports
7. Data should become more useful through its interpretation for use. Significant efforts should be made to develop short summary reports, top line findings and analyses to assist education managers in understanding the challenges and needs of the education sector
8. PMIU and its partners should develop a core set of Unified Education Messages designed for use towards key beneficiaries, the public and communities. These messages will address the barriers, stigma and attitudes evidenced in the KAP survey
9. PMIU should commit to building an ongoing understanding of stakeholder and beneficiary views through an annual KAP survey collected at District level and collated centrally
10. Delivery partners should review their web sites and ensure they provide accessibility to data and information that meets stakeholders' needs. A web strategy should seek to provide open and shared access to a range of data from all of the implementing partners in the education sector

Generating Public Engagement

11. PMIU should develop key information and communication strands on each principal area of the reform programme. These strands will proactively promote government activity, the standards that the public can expect from education services and counter any misperceptions
12. PMIU and its partners should collectively develop a broad education awareness campaign across Punjab to promote the value of education to all. Alongside this broad campaign, there should be a focus on developing communications to increase teacher quality and attitude

13. A particular focus for information and communication should be to develop the role and awareness towards School Councils. A concerted effort should be made to enhance their status, reward best practice, promote their functions and provide innovative approaches to community engagement
14. An important issue that the Information and Communication Strategy must address is how to more effectively engage private sector schools in the drive for reform
15. Over time, Districts should develop their own capacity to communicate and inform the public. This should involve each District having its own information and communication plan, with indicators measured through an annual KAP survey. In addition, Districts should create communication committees and forums to plan key information activities

Energising and Promoting Schools

16. PMIU and its partners must provide more effective and dynamic feedback mechanisms for Districts in particular. It should seek to convene discussion and policy forums, commission input from Districts on a regular basis and identify areas of best practice that can be shared
17. Districts should be encouraged to develop strong relationships with each other, including partnering to share ideas and to support delivery
18. The introduction of School Report Cards should be a major focus of communications for PMIU. A comprehensive plan to inform Districts, schools and communities about their use and value should be at the centre of such activities
19. At school level, there should be an increased focus on using information and communication to support effective leadership. Materials, guides and workshops should target head teachers and school councils to put leadership at the centre of concepts for school improvement
20. There is a big role for the media in promoting community and parental engagement with schools. The next phase of the reform programme should place emphasis on better engagement with the media and develop proactive approaches to build their understanding and awareness of education reforms and the progress that is being made. The Information and Communication Unit may also explore the production of short films and programmes to document the activities underway.

Daniel Harris

Communication Specialist
Cambridge Education

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