



Consultation Meeting on the National Education Policy 2016 - ICT Voices of Citizens and Youth



Acknowledgements

The bold decision by the citizens of Pakistan to engage with the NEP 2016 policy and reforms process is matched by the same vigor and robustness as seen in the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) data collection on learning, making the invisible visible through a citizen led effort. Recognizing the critical urgency of Article 25 A – Right to Education and its implementation; the education sector plans and targets, and the upcoming Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – especially goal 4 and its accompanying 10 targets – it was essential to find a platform in collaboration with federal and provincial governments for citizens', especially youth, to voice their concerns regarding the current education scenario in Pakistan. After all, youth comprise 31 % of our population and they form the active ranks of students, teachers, entrepreneurs, and young parents, who rarely get an opportunity to voice their opinions.

Seeing as the NEP 2016 will affect their lives for the next 10 or 15 years, it was imperative to find a space for articulation and expression, not just in the mainstream capital cities, but also across the provinces, so as to give as many people as possible the opportunity to be heard and to make valuable contributions in the form of recommendations that will be included in the upcoming education policy.

Keeping this in mind, ITA has been conducting consultation sessions on the National Education Policy across Pakistan and held its 10th session in Islamabad. The ITA team was successful in engaging both students/youth and teachers/faculty in contributing to the policy revision process through these consultations.

This exercise would not have been possible without the active engagement and support of;

Joint Education Advisor (JEA) Federal Ministry of Education and Professional Training, Govt. of Pakistan

UNDP – Pakistan who has supported the effort to mobilize voices for SDGs and Jawan Pakistan

Dubai Cares as part of its ongoing nationwide advocacy through ITA on policy and Right to Education

Teams from:

- Pakistan Alliance for Independent Schools (PAIS) Mr. Mohammad Jamil Najam and other founding members
- Education Youth Ambassadors (EYAs) and Right to Education (RTE)
- ASER Pakistan
- Idara-a-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA) public trust National and Provincial teams

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AJK	Azad Jammu and Kashmir
ASER	Annual Status of Education Report
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
EFA	Education for All
EYAs	Education Youth Ambassadors
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
GB	Gilgit-Baltistan
ICT	Islamabad Capital Territory
ICTs	Information and Communication Technology
IPEMC	Inter Provincial Education Ministries Conference
ITA	Idara-e-Taleem-o- Agaahi
KP	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
LMTF	Learning Metrics Task Force
MoE&PT	Ministry of Education and Professional Training
NEP	National Education Policy
NFE	Non Formal Education
PAIS	Pakistan Alliance of Independent Schools
PPPs	Public Private Partnerships
RTE	Right to Education
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training

Introduction

The National Education Policy 2009 comes in a series of education policies dating back to the very inception of Pakistan. This year in June, the Minister of Federal Education and Professional Training (MoE&PT) completed the implementation status of the NEP 2009 and at the Inter Provincial Education Ministers Conference (IPEMC) – the highest education body of the country and unanimously owned forum of all federating units comprising of Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, four provinces (Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa & Baluchistan) and four Areas (ICT, AJK, FTA and GB) – decided to review and update the existing policy. Through this forum, all federating units are at one page on the subject of education. The forum is a consultative forum and decisions are taken unanimously.

Owing to the fact that the 18th Amendment, passed shortly after the NEP 2009 was introduced, which led to major shifts in entitlements, decision making, and responsibilities across federations, a review of the national policy became imperative. Since subjects on which both federal and provincial governments could make laws were devolved completely to the provinces, the old policy was no longer relevant.

18th Amendment- Key Shifts

19A. Rights to information- every citizen shall have the right to have access to information in all matters of public importance subject to regulation and reasonable restrictions imposed by law

9. Insertion of new Article in the Constitution – in the Constitution, after Article 25, the following new articles shall be inserted, namely:

“25A Right to education – the state shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age five to sixteen year in such manner as may be determined by law.”

Abolishing the concurrent list transferring the residuary powers to provinces for 47 subjects including Education and Health

Full text on the 18th amendment can be found at <http://pakistanconstitutionlaw.com/4thschedule-legislative-lists/>

Recognizing this need, the government is set to upgrade and review the last education policy by the end of this year (2015) and implement it starting January 2016. The new policy will be uniformly implemented in all provinces including Azad Jammu Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan.

Well known for its work with youth across Pakistan, especially for the citizen led country wide initiative ASER with 10,000 youth volunteers, its work with Education Youth Ambassadors program, and its close engagement with the SDGs post 2015, ITA was naturally inclined to take the NEP 2016 consultations forward. ITA has also participated in the official two member delegation in the Incheon Korea May 2015, where BaelaRazaJamil, then Director Programs ITA was a member of the drafting group in the Incheon Declaration 2015 on behalf of the National Delegation.

In April, ITA formally requested the Ministry of Education and Professional Training jointly with Pakistan Coalition for Education (PCE) to ensure civil society's presence in IPEM-C meetings and the NEP 2016 processes. As a result, the Ministry extended an invite to ITA's leadership for the IPEM-C in Quetta where it was forcefully argued to make the process very consultative, sharing widely with citizens and multiple stakeholders, so that inclusion of their 'voice' is ensured in all NEP processes.

Shortly after, the MoE&PT requested ITA to provide technical assistance with the NEP 2016 process and also with stakeholder consultations across the country. Through the **PAIS (Pakistan Alliance of Independent Schools)**, ITA has now started the consultation process across Pakistan.

Article 25-A

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

ITA along with ASER, Right to Education Teams and PAIS has been holding consultative meetings across Pakistan in order to mobilize public opinion and to provide inputs to revise National Education Policy. The aim of the consultation was to provide the Pakistani youth (teachers, associations, students, education youth ambassadors /activists, young entrepreneurs in education and learning), civil society, and experts with a platform to give their input on the upcoming new National Education Policy 2016, a policy that will undoubtedly have an impact on their lives.

More specifically, the broader objective of the NEP 2016 exercise is

to engage with focused constituencies, especially youth through consultations, face to face and through social media for the NEP 2016 ensuring links with 25 A and the Sustainable Development Goal No 4 for voice and recommendations.

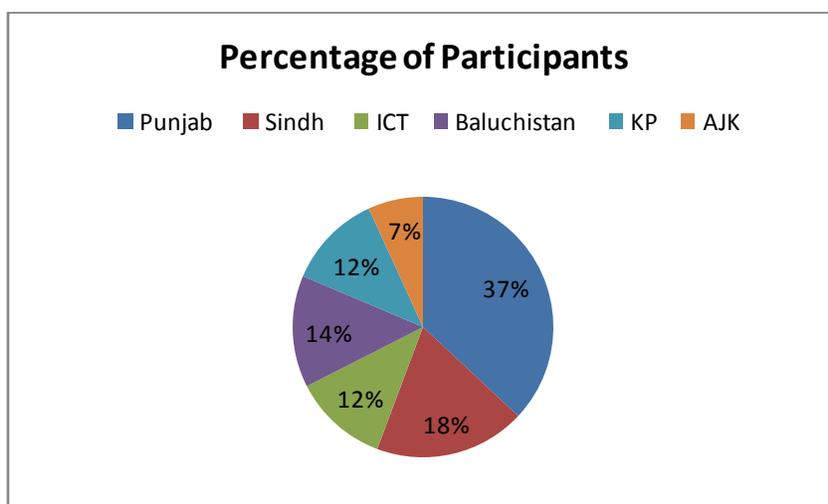
The reports/recommendations of each consultation will be formally signed off by the provinces and federal government representatives, such that the recommendations are integrated within specific segments of the NEP 2016.

Consultation

For this process to be an effective one, ITA developed a sector wide analysis on the education sector and its sub-sectors. For each sub-sector, the analysis included national commitments (NEP 2009 policy actions), provincial commitments (education sector plans), international commitments (SDGs and EFA etc.), current baseline on key indicators pertinent to the sector and the challenges that need to be overcome. By providing the participants with critical reference documents including sector plans from each province, ITA was able to engage in and receive meaningful recommendations. Furthermore, a number of additional tools were used to make the exercise a successful and meaningful one.

2 sessions were held in the Capital and were attended by a total of 95 participants. Table 1 in the Appendix shows the number of participants from each district across Pakistan. Of over 800 participants, 12 % represented ICT.

Figure 1: Percentage of participants from each province/administrative unit



The sessions started with a presentation on the overview of NEP 2009, explaining the current structure, outcomes, and shortcomings of the existing policy, and explained the need for a review. The presenter, Izzah Meyer Manager Policy, Research and Action of ITA highlighted that the need to match and upgrade the national education policy in light of the 18th amendment, article 25-A, and the upcoming Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Following the opening remarks, the audience was split into seven groups, each group evenly consisting of students, teachers and government representatives. The seven groups were as follows:

1. Early Childhood Education
2. Primary Education
3. Secondary Education
4. TEVT and Special Education
5. NFE and Adult Literacy
6. Governance and Financing for Education
7. Madrassas



Additionally, ITA created an interactive forum where likeminded individuals could start conversations and have discussions with fellow stakeholders regarding the policy. The discussion forum and blog posts can be found here http://itacec.org/nep_discussion_forum.php?pgid=6.

The NEP consultations also received extensive media coverage across Pakistan. Clipping and articles can be found online here http://itacec.org/nep_media_news.php?pgid=4.

List of Global Documents used for Reference

Incheon Declaration – Education 2030
WEF 2015 Draft Framework for Action
NGO Forum Declaration 2015
Sustainable Development Goals
SDGs Declaration (Zero Draft)
SDGs Education Goal 4
2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
Qingdao Declaration

Summary of Recommendations - Sub-Sector Wise

Early Childhood Education (ECE)

NEP 2009 acknowledges ECE as a formal stage for foundational development of a child and states that Provision of ECE shall be attached to primary schools which shall be provided with additional budget, teachers and assistants for this purpose.

Goal 4 target 4.2

By 2030 ensure all girls and boys have **access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education** so they are ready for primary education (Early Childhood Education)

During the group discussions, participants reviewed the existing ECE policy and its implementation in order to identify gaps. They addressed what age group falls under ECE, what the desired targets are, and whether or not the current policy is reflecting the appropriate age of ECE.

- ECE should be made mandatory and compulsory and a separate budget should be allocated to this sub-sector
- Medium of instruction should be Urdu – prepare children better for primary education and so on
- ECE curriculum should be the same all over Pakistan
- Specialized and trained teachers
- All ECE classrooms must be fully equipped with learning aids, toolkits, and other relevant materials

Primary Education

The NEP 2009 states that all children, boys and girls, shall be brought inside schools by the year 2015. ICT has also passed the Right to Free and Compulsory Act in 2012 which states that free and compulsory education will be provided to all children of the age five to sixteen year. There are, however, still gaps in provision across primary schools and the quality of education is a huge concern as well.

There was a lively discussion on strengthening the monitoring and evaluation system and ensuring every child is getting quality education. Some of the areas highlighted in their discussion included how community awareness can be increased, and how political influence – that hinders with meritocracy – can be prevented.

To achieve higher enrollments and to address other pressing issues, groups in all the districts presented the following recommendations:

- Exchange programs to make students more culturally aware, patient and accepting
- The number of training centers for teachers must also be increased to ensure all teachers are well equipped to deal with the challenges of their jobs
- All teachers must receive training upon induction as well
- Proper planning for IDP war on terror

- The curriculum must be same across the board
- Civic education should be made part of the curriculum as well
- Playgrounds and other facilities in schools must be made available and extracurricular activities encouraged
- Provision of proper moral values and education for children i.e. character building, strong morals and so on

Secondary Education

Article 37 (b) states that the State of Pakistan shall endeavor “to remove illiteracy and provide free and compulsory **secondary** education within minimum possible period” and the NEP 2009 states that provision shall be expanded at secondary level, particularly in the rural areas and of schools dedicated for girls. Furthermore, priority shall be given to those locations where the ratio of secondary schools is low.

SDG Goal 4 Target 4.a

Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all

The group discussion on secondary education addressed the issue of a high dropout rate at secondary level and proposed a research based methodology to address gaps in implementation. They discussed how enrollment rates can be increased, what the loopholes in implementation are, and what strategies can be taken to improve secondary education in the Capital.

- Expanding provision of schools should be accompanied by upgrading the existing schools in terms of infrastructure, teachers availability etc. just reaching a quantitative target will be a sunken cost
- To address the problem of drop-outs, schools should provide students support in the form of scholarships, and other incentives such as food, medical checks etc.
- Quality evaluation of teachers should be introduced to ensure the implementation of student centered pedagogies
- Student wellness should be focused on and sports activities encouraged
- Introduce modern assessment systems in schools to prevent cheating and other malpractices

Non-Formal Education and Adult Literacy

The NEP 2009 *literacy rate shall be increased up to 86% by 2015 through up-scaling of ongoing programs of adult literacy and non-formal basic education in the country.*

SDG Goal 4 Target 4.6

By 2030, ensure that all youth and at least [x] per cent of adults, **both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy**

This groups' main objective was to identify what the actual problems are in the area of NFE and Adult literacy. They questioned why people have to remain so inaccessible to programs in alternative learning for younger and older age groups, and why government initiatives aren't as impactful as programs conducted by NGOs etc.

- More public and private institutions and schools to increase literacy rates in the Capital
- Industry linkages are a must, so adults with new skills can find job placements
- ICT and media must be used to create an awareness regarding adult literacy and NFE
- Syllabus should be job oriented so upon completion, students have a higher chance of securing employment

Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) and Special Education

The NEP 2009 states that *special measures shall be adopted to ensure inclusion of special persons in mainstream education as well as in literacy and TVE programs.*"

SDG Goal 4 Target 4.3 and 4.4

By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to **affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education**, including university

By 2030, increase by [x] per cent the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including **technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship**

The discussion focused on providing equal opportunity and support for all, especially children with special needs. They also discussed the importance of practical knowledge so individuals can earn a living. They addressed important questions such as how the government can support special need students in schools, and what can be done to create an environment more conducive to learning.

- Technical education should be linked with general education
- Provide max opportunities to girls and boys in their respective fields
- Establish literacy and skills development center for illiterate populations
- Arrange on-the-job training opportunities for students enrolled in technical centers
- Provide special training to teachers of technical and vocational institutions
- Establish more training centers and programs for agriculture technology
- Create jobs for technical education hold at all levels
- Give max practical training to the students
- Give financial support and easy loan to technically skilled persons so they may start their own businesses

Governance and Finance

When it came to governance, identifying and implementing effective monitoring tools was also significantly discussed.

SDG Goal 4 Target 4.7

By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire **the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development**, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and nonviolence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development

The main recommendations gathered are as follows:

- Recruitment and selection of educational manager must be on merit and performance based.
- Leadership management academy
- Process of distribution and allocation of funds maybe simplified
- Autonomy of decisions to educational managers
- Performance based selection and transfers
- Autonomy of self-generated resources
- Implementation strategies
- Single chain of monitoring and evaluation
- Roles and responsibilities may be specified
- Norms of accountability of performance
- Straight and simple SOPs
- Financial management by the monitoring general
- Communication effectiveness
- Tenure of job (3 years)

Madrassa Education

The NEP 2009 acknowledges that Deeni Madrassas form a component of the private sector, and that this parallel system consists of a curriculum that lies outside the mainstream.

Discussions within this group were started by first analyzing the role of Madrassas in the education system, and explored the challenges faced by budget constraints and lacking technical capacity of the system. The talked about whether or not madrassa education can be brought under the management of public sector, and what can be done at local, provincial, and national levels to protect the rights and interest of children enrolled in madrassas.

- Curriculum should be revised. This revision must include the point of uniformity and addition of science subjects
- There must be a system of registration and affiliation with boards/university
- There must be a monitoring/governing body at government level
- There must exist points during madrassa education cycle so that the early learners may get inducted in practical life
- Induction of teachers from formal setup

Article 20 (a)

Freedom to profess religion and to manage religious institutions.

Subject to law, public order and morality:-

a) Every citizen shall have the right to profess, practice and propagate his religion

Article 22 (1)

No person attending any educational institution shall be required to receive religious instruction, or take part in any religious ceremony, or attend religious worship, if such institution, ceremony or worship relates to a religion other than his own.

Appendix

Table 1: Number of participants from each district

Sr.No	Province	District	No. of Participants
1	Punjab	Lahore	88
2		Bahawalpur	84
3		Rawalpindi- University	73
4		Lahore- University	53
5	Sindh	Hyderabad	45
6		Mithi	46
7		Sukkur	60
8	ICT	Islamabad	28
9		Islamabad-University	67
10	Baluchistan	Quetta	50
11		Lasbela	62
12	KP	Peshawar	44
13		Mardan- University	51
14	AJK	Muzaffarabad	55

Annex A: Guidelines for Breakout Session and Discussions

National Education Policy 2016 Consultative Meetings

Guidelines for Breakout Sessions/ Group Work (All by sub-sectors and governance/financing)

- **What are the gaps and challenges in Quality/Access/Governance?**
- **Which Policy Actions from NEP 2009 remain unaddressed? What was left out in NEP 2009?**
- **Where does the sector fit in given provisions of provincial legislation under 25-A?**
- **What is reported, and what must be the official age group for each sub-sector to be reported in indicators? (25 A/ NEP 2009/SDG No. 4)**
- **Issues of Quality and learning in the sub-sector:**
 - Teacher adequacy in sector/recruitment systems(lack of head teachers primary/elementary levels)
 - Teacher Education (pre-service)and training systems(in-service);
 - Assessment systems/Boards: reliability; regularity, access & end use to improve learning
 - Textbooks: relevance, diversity, alignment to National Curriculum/new versions SLOs etc.
 - Integration of Inclusive education; Life Skills Based Education (LSBE); Climate Change; Environment. Child & Human Rights; Protection; Tolerance/peace; heritage; demographics/population.
 - Role of and space for supplementary materials in the ‘official teaching time’
 - *Role of, and support to technology enabled learning solutions and innovations*
- **Issues of access across each thematic area? (public sector and private sector share)**

- Provincial Sector Plans to address access/gender, geography, class to reach unreached;
- Role of private sector on its own resources/support through the education foundation
- Facilities and norms in schools e.g. Number of rooms by level; need for inclusive spaces; library/resource room; ECE rooms; kitchen/store in low lying areas near rivers where emergency shelters are needed. Etc.
- **Governance :**
 - How can we activate school councils; ensure participation of students (grade 5 onwards); capability to spend large funds e.g. Non-Salary budgets (NSBs) *fact sheet on NSB?* How to ensure capacity for community engagement both VOICE & timely actions?
 - *Official role and scope of public private partnerships in public sector administrative and financing systems*
 - What are some ways of promoting Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in education – learning, monitoring and accountability?
 - Child/youth Protection/Life Skills: Importance of Life-Skills based education(LSBE) how can we ensure these in teacher education/training and in schools equipping students/ SCs with essential LSBE?: *Emergencies, preparedness systems & budgets mainstreamed.*
- **Financing: Is the financing adequate for the sub-sector? Releases are on time?** What are some innovative ways to tap resources for enhancing financing of education?
- Recommendations and way forward

Annex B: Template for group discussions and recommendations

Recommendation from Group Discussion:

For each group select a Chair (moderating/time management/reference to key docs); a Note Taker & agree on who will read the recommendations from this group. Each group should have access to reference documents. Please take 10 minutes to review documents in your folders.

Note: Please reference any additional documents used (internet sources/journals/books/news articles etc.)

Group Title: _____

Name of Group Chair/Moderator: _____

Name of Presenter: _____

Name of Note taker: _____

Group Members:

Please provide objectives of the sub-sector assigned:

Target goals to be achieved (e.g. increase enrollment by x% by December 2016):

Target audience and Key stakeholders:

RECOMMENDATIONS AND WAY FORWARD: