Mapping the Universe of Learning Assessments in Pakistan

Learning Metrics Task Force

Phase II - Pakistan
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Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA)
December 2015
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Foreword

Since 2013-14, there is a global shift in emphasis from 'sustained access to schools' to 'access plus meaningful learning at schools'. The post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals and recently drafted Incheon Declaration 2015, articulate the urgency to work together to provide “quality education for all”. As we develop strategies to meet the post 2015 global development agendas, our systems need to use evidence-based frameworks to highlight the policies and institutions that matter most to promote learning for all. Working in this direction is the Learning Metrics Task Force (LMTF) initiative, which is co-led by the UNESCO Institute of Statistics and the Brookings Institution, and advised and supported by many major bilateral and multilateral international education institutions and prominent civil society organizations and researchers.

LMTF is currently partnering with 15 countries and other jurisdictions on four continents—as “Learning Champions” — to develop, experiment with and validate a range of assessment methods and protocols to measure and collect meaningful information on learning indicators. In Pakistan, as a Learning Champion team led by Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi with members drawn from ‘the public and private sector assessment fraternity’, there is a huge consensus to construct a strategy on defining education quality in Pakistan and measuring that quality.

This study, carried out under the Learning Metrics Task Force /Learning Champions initiative, offers authentic information on the “known universe” of national/provincial assessments in Pakistan. This study will provide key stakeholders with a clear picture of the various assessment actors and efforts in the country, reflecting on what is working well and what is not, and setting the baseline of what is being assessed and emphasized by the national learning assessment systems. The mapping study will be useful as a research and reference guide to help partners and stakeholders obtain a common and comprehensive understanding of the current assessment systems, its strengths and weaknesses, explore similarities and differences and consider practices in relation to stated principles of effective assessment practice. It will also generate immediate next steps and set priorities for the government and private sector alike.

I am grateful to all who have contributed to this exciting process; in particular the representatives of the various formal institutions conducting assessments who were generous with their time and expertise to help prepare this catalogue. Their contributions to improving the quality of basic education in Pakistan are incalculable. I would also like to thank the distinguished members of LMTF /Learning Champions team in Pakistan, who helped further enrich the content by their recommendations. The generous support received from the team at the Brookings Institution on technical assistance and subject-matter expertise is invaluable. Together, this partnership has produced a vitally important resource for Pakistan.

It is intended to be a “living document and work in progress”, which serves as a dynamic information platform to be updated in the coming years, reflecting changes in the learning assessment systems across Pakistan.

Saba Saeed
LMTF-Program Coordinator
Acknowledgements

This report is an analysis of the results from a survey administered by Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi under the Learning Metrics Task Force initiative in Pakistan in collaboration with government education departments from each province, private sector, civil society and academia. We are grateful to the institutional representatives who provided critical information on their respective assessment systems: Dr. Nasir Mehmood (Punjab Examination Commission), Mr. Azmat Siddique (Directorate of Staff Development), Mr. Jaffar Mansoor Abbasi (National Education Assessment System), Ms. Zubaida Bana (AKUIED), Mr. Tariq Shah (PITE Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), Mr. Nisar Barki (PITE Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), Dr. Abdul Hameed (University of Management and Technology) Mr. Zulfiqar Shah (National Education Assessment System), Dr. Syed Kamaluddin (PMI), Mr. Khawaja Tariq (Kashmir Education Assessment Center), Mr. Aftab Ali (Provincial Education Assessment Center, Sindh), Mr. Shafique (Provincial Education Assessment Center, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) and Ms Sehar Saeed (Annual Status of Education Report).

Finally, we acknowledge the support of many colleagues at ITA who contributed to the conceptualization, review and finalization of this report. We would like to thank Baela Raza Jamil, Director Programs/Trustee ITA and Imtiaz Nizami, Deputy Director Programs, ITA for their substantive inputs in the report; and to Saba Saeed, author of the report and lead coordinator for LMTF Learning Champions Pakistan, for research and compilation of the report. We are indebted to Muhammad Abubakar leading the desktop publishing unit for the layout.

For more information about the report, please contact:

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LMTF Project Coordinator  
E-mail: saba.saeed@itacec.org  
www.itacec.org/lmtf

We extend our gratitude to the team of Learning Metrics Task Force at the Brookings Institution, particularly Ms Preethi Nampoothiri, Project Coordinator, and Ms Kate Anderson, Senior Policy Analyst, for their technical assistance and expertise, enriching this report. The Learning Champions coordination under LMTF in Pakistan would not have been possible across Pakistan without Dubai Cares country wide support.

The survey instrument used for country data collection and research was prepared by the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) team under the “Observatory of Learning Outcomes Measurement” initiative to produce a global catalogue of public examinations, national and international assessments undertaken around the world.
Mr. Muhammad Baligh ur Rahman
Member of National Assembly (MNA) and
Minister of State for Federal Education and
Professional Training

In the 21st Century we need to develop our children to become visionary leaders and change agents of tomorrow, ready to address social, economic and environmental challenges. The government, private sector, academia and civil society, are collectively involved in doing remarkable work to deliver quality education as a key priority of the country, this entails high learning outcomes for ALL our children and citizens regardless of race, gender, class, age and other notions of difference. Article 25-A, the result of the 18th Amendment to the Constitution, has indeed provided us with an essential road map towards a transformed education system to deliver, to ALL our children aged 5-16 years, access to sustained quality education. Moreover, the global development agenda as 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Incheon Declaration 2015 have high mandates for lifelong learning, quality education and poverty eradication.

Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi is a valued partner in the education sector who have been committed to addressing the profound demand and supply side problems that form the nuts and bolts of the education challenge. This report prepared by the Learning Champions a collaboration of all government and private partners on our prevalent assessment systems will undoubtedly provide support to our reform agenda; assessments are a critical component of quality. Pakistan as one of the 15 Learning Champion country globally has participated actively under the Learning Metrics Taskforce (LMTF) initiative supported by the Brookings Institute and the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS). The Champions have worked collaboratively to produce his document with ambitions to develop new assessment tools to measure learning across the seven dimensions. It is very important for Pakistan to have a stream of data which systematically informs students' continuous progress toward attainment of established learning standards and 21st century skills. This report will help partners and stakeholders obtain a common and comprehensive understanding of the current assessment systems, strengths and weaknesses, explore similarities and differences to consider practices in relation to the principles of effective assessment practice.

I am grateful to the national, provincial education public and private institutions that have ensured their full support and cooperation to compile this catalogue and I trust that the nation will benefit from this endeavor. I commend this resource authored by Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi with contributions from all key partners to education stakeholders across Pakistan and beyond. I sincerely hope that all stakeholders in education, including educators, learners, parents, government and non-governmental organizations and business, will join forces effectively to deliver quality education to all our children. We hope to have a National Assessment Forum in Pakistan represented by all provinces and areas to debate assessment and quality agenda regularly for informed actions.
Note from Dr. Joshua A. Muskin

Dr. Joshua A. Muskin
Non-Resident Senior Fellow
The Brookings Institution

It is a widely accepted maxim that what is measured gets done. This is certainly the case in most education systems worldwide. Thus, as most nations commit officially this year to the delivery of education with relevant learning, signing on to the new Education for All declaration and the Sustainable Development Goals, the articulation and implementation of adapted assessment aims and strategies are critical. Most essentially, such assessment accomplishes three broad incontrovertible criteria.

One, it must capture accurately students’ full breadth of learning, including not just the core areas of Language and Mathematics but also all the other topics in the curriculum and the wide range of personal competencies, behaviours and values required for successful engagement in “real life.” These include, illustratively, creativity, collaboration, confidence, respect, life-long learning, ambition, entrepreneurship and perseverance, among many others.

Two, assessment must serve effectively to monitor and communicate widely about learning at the respective system and institutional levels in order to guide decisions and actions within and beyond the education sector towards strengthening all inputs, processes and actors that influence the quality of outcomes. Importantly, such measures must avoid the pernicious consequences of accountability, which tend to assign responsibility for failures to those persons (usually teachers) who have the least authority over the factors that most affect quality.

Three, students must benefit from assessment as an integral part of their daily instruction, understanding fully and clearly what they are meant to learn, checking their actual learning against these objectives, and receiving precise guidance on how to close any gaps. The operation of such classroom-based, continuous assessment requires not only that systems equip teachers with the necessary capacities to measure across the full breadth of learning but also that they create the conditions for meaningful assessment and feedback to happen, including ensuring that there is adequate space in the curriculum and school day for such activities, among others.

The major international education organizations came together a few years ago around the Learning Metrics Task Force (LMTF) initiative with the aim of identifying the core components of a global notion of “breadth of learning” and of articulating the fundamental elements of an effective assessment architecture and strategies by which to verify such learning and to guide actors across the education spectrum towards actions to raise the level and relevance of learning.

The participation of Pakistan in LMTF has been important for two seemingly incompatible reasons. On the one hand, Pakistan’s education systems continue to struggle in ensuring that large swaths of the country’s children acquire the knowledge, skills and values required for a prosperous, secure nation. On the other hand, Pakistan brings great initiative, innovation and intelligence to international research and discussion on quality and relevance in education. The analysis and mapping of assessment in Pakistan presented in the following pages will hopefully help launch a renewed national discussion of what learning to prioritize in the country, how best to equip teachers and schools to help their students achieve such learning and how to measure learning to confirm it is happening and to guide efforts to continuously elevate such attainment. At the same time, the effort should contribute fruitfully to global efforts to do the same.
Message from Baela Raza Jamil

Baela Raza Jamil
Advisor and Trustee
Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA)
Centre for Education and Consciousness

Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi, as an organization committed to education and quality learning outcomes for children, youth groups and beyond, has the humbling honor to have led the largest citizen led household based initiative in Pakistan: the Annual Status of Education Report (2008-2015). It is also indeed a privilege to be the coordinator of the Learning Metrics Task Force initiative in Pakistan (supported by the Brookings Institute and the UNESCO Institute of Statistics), in collaboration with public and private, national and provincial institutions undertaking learning assessments in Pakistan. The initiative aims to reform assessment practices and advance the development of new standards and assessment frameworks that cover global learning domains such as physical well being, social and emotional, culture and arts etc.

As part of the LMTF program, we initiated this mapping study which provides baseline information on large scale national assessments, recognized examinations and sub-national assessment; and sheds light on strengths and weaknesses of the current assessment practices. This study could not be better timed, since the recent national and global Post 2015 development agendas ascribe ever greater urgency to ensuring lifelong learning, quality education and poverty eradication. The Sustainable Development Goal 4 (with its 7 targets and 3 means of implementation) is dedicated to inclusive and equitable quality education and life-long learning opportunities for all. Measuring progress towards these goals will begin with baselines on learning, to determine whether students are acquiring the required knowledge and competencies and whether a system is providing them with an appropriate education to acquire these comprehensive lifelong outcomes.

We acknowledge the efforts of the Brookings Institute and UIS and the public and private assessment fraternity in Pakistan for supporting us with producing this catalogue. We extend our gratitude to Dubai Cares for supporting the Learning Champions coordination under LMTF in Pakistan. We hope this study will spark a useful and constructive debate on reforming assessment practices in Pakistan as a substantive tool for better understanding of the current assessment universe across the country and beyond.
Mr. Imtiaz Ahmed Nizami
Deputy Director Programs
Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA)

This report seeks to illuminate and enrich the discussion around comprehensive systems of student national and provincial assessments across Pakistan and to help lead the development of more effective and meaningful pathways to assess student learning. The program titled “Learning Metrics Task Force” under which this report has been commissioned began in late September 2014 when a group of 15 countries embarked on the ambitious goal of supporting the development of more robust systems for assessing learning outcomes (global, national, local) and the better use of assessment data globally and at all levels of national education systems to help improve learning outcomes across the seven domains of learning that are: Physical well-being, Social & emotional, Culture & the arts, Literacy & communication, Learning approaches & cognition, Numeracy & mathematics, Science & technology). The program is being run and managed by the Brookings Institute and the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) in partnership with prominent international education institutions, civil society organizations and researchers.

ITA is honored to lead this program supported by the Dubai Cares project in Pakistan. We are very fortunate to have full support and cooperation of the public and private assessment fraternity without whom none of this would have been possible. The focal persons of our partner government and private institutions have generously taken out time to provide critical information on their respective assessment systems. The subsequent chapters on this report will reveal further information on what this program entails, who are the key partners and what has this effort achieved so far.

We hope that this research will mobilize all stakeholders to share assessment initiatives and agree on common set of indicators for public reporting and actions; much needed as a vibrant community of practice in Pakistan to inform reforms and policy provincially and nationally.
Message from Learning Champions

Prof. Dr. Abdul Hameed
University of Management and Technology

As post-2015 discussions on education begin to focus on targets and indicators for tracking as well as scaling up national capacity, the recommendations from the Learning Metrics Task Force have helped to shape the debate in Pakistan. As part of LMTF initiative in Pakistan, we were engaged in meaningful discourse and action on how to define and measure learning broadly, across multiple domains and educational stages. We hope and foresee that LMTF and other similar initiatives will bring about the much needed change in Pakistan.

Mr. Siraj Agha
PEACE, Balochistan

LMTF has played an instrumental part in Pakistan by bringing together public and private partners from all provinces to diagnose the quality of our assessment systems and jointly develop action plans and nationally representative tools to improve student outcomes across cognitive and non-cognitive domains. It has been a very meaningful engagement for Balochistan and ensure our continued support and collaboration in this process.

Mr. Aftab Ali
PEACE Sindh

Assessment is an integral part of teaching – learning process as it provides evidences to improve the curriculum, teacher education and teaching practices. LMTF has brought forth our attention to the very important areas of child learning and development, those that many people assumed are not measurable. We hope the LMTF work continues in Pakistan, reflecting the truism that assessment should be taken in the broader sense to serve as a construct for the welfare of the learners.

Ms. Saba Saeed
Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA)

The journey of Learning Metrics Task Force Phase 2 has been a really engaging multistakeholder collaboration that strived to improve learning outcomes for children in Pakistan, with a specific focus on strengthening the assessment system. We as a partner, are pleased that we together along with others accomplished the main tasks and have set a footing for an effective assessment system targeting beyond just basic competencies. We really appreciate the efforts of Brookings Institution in bringing the learning champions together on board and allowing us to play a lead role in developing global good practice on assessment and learning, including helping to shape indicators for global tracking and country level tools. Engagement with other partners both virtually and in person has been an immense learning experience and we hope that this collaboration will multiply manifold.

Dr. Nasir Mehmood
PEC, Punjab

LMTF has a played a very unique role in establishing a broad coalition of stakeholders in Pakistan with a common vision of improving learning for all. LMTF is indeed a powerful conversation and effort to be engaged with up to 2015 and in the post 2015 phase building multiple constituencies for policy, planning and action on learning and learning assessments.
Message from Learning Champions

Mr. Tariq Ali and Mr. Nisar Barki
PITE, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

LMTF has provided a national forum to cope with challenges and developments in assessment systems by means of a unique and systematic way. LMTF is focusing on those areas that would otherwise go unnoticed. It emphasized on overall development of a child and not just cognitive aspect of learning. We hope the partnerships explored and the work undertaken will continue to grow as ways of supporting improvement in our education system.

Mr. Zulfiqar Shah
NEAS, Federal

LMTF initiative has provided the much needed collaborative space to strengthen assessment systems across the country. Supported by the major public and private sector fraternity in Pakistan, LMTF has gained momentum as an effort aimed at developing new set of success measures that are both educationally useful and publicly understandable. As supporters of such a large scale initiative covering 15 countries, it is indeed an asset for us as well as for the education system.

Mr. Tariq Shafi
KEACe, Azad Jammu & Kashmir

We, as an institution, feel proud to be a part of the ‘Learning Champions’ group. LMTF has helped examine the existing capacity of assessment systems and develop assessment items to measure non-cognitive constructs of a child, a reform much needed in Pakistan.

Ms. Zubeda Bana,
AKUIED

We applaud the Learning Metrics Task Force Pakistan for its rigorous and sustained engagement in bringing together assessment units in Pakistan and in strengthening the overall system. As LMTF partner, our focus is centered on strategies for developing new, accurate and reliable measures to evaluate “modern” skills amongst children.
Chapter 1
Introduction
LEARNING CHAMPIONS
PAKISTAN

Learning Metrics Task Force
SECOND LEARNING CHAMPIONS NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS MEETING

Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi in Collaboration with Punjab Examination Commission
5th January, 2015
Punjab Examination Commission, Lahore
Chapter 1: Introduction
Repositioning Quality and Learning – National and Global Obligations

Underlying many gaps in the current global and national education frameworks is the failure to address education in a holistic, comprehensive, and inter-sectoral manner. For many years, the focus of majority of the countries has been to prioritize access to primary schooling relative to the quality of learning. This skewed focus on access and completion shifts the attention from how and what students are learning at schools. Whilst physical access to schools forms an important part of what essentially counts, it is pertinent to see whether education quality being offered at schools is equipping children, youth and adults with the knowledge, skills and values they need to contribute towards personal and wider sustainable growth and knowledge based societies/economies. Current evidence on learning levels of children globally presents an abysmal state of student learning outcomes. As stated by Global Monitoring Report (2013-2014), 250 million children are unable to read, write, or do basic mathematics. With such an overwhelming number of children not acquiring basic competency in reading and numeracy, shift from access to access plus learning becomes vital for achieving progress in education.

Despite being highlighted in EFA Goal 6: “Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills”, quality trails the dominant Universal Primary Education (UPE) paradigm and learning remains implicit with little focus on what exactly it means, how it will be planned and measured. Despite studies (Hanushek & Woessman, 2009) recommending a compelling case for quality, learning and cognitive development for economic growth; quality has traditionally been placed lower down the education development hierarchy compared to access.

![250 million Children In School But Not Learning! (GMR 2013-14)](Image)

Quality and access have been consistently juxtaposed in a binary opposition, arguing for hard choices to make against scarce resources. The classical linear approach of ‘access first’ and ‘quality later’ for developing countries (Woodhall & Psacharopoulos, 1985) has put the quality agenda on the backburner.

Source: www.globaleducationfirst.org/2822.htm
The Post 2015 consultations, however, adopt a non-linear approach towards human fulfillment and development. Education development agendas have been crafted vigorously to define the education goal around learning and quality as a central piece to reach all especially the most marginalized globally. The recently finalized report on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the Open Working Group (July 2014) proposes education as the fourth goal out of the 17 goals. The overall goal is stated thus: “To ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.” The goal is accompanied by targets. Target No. states “by 2030 all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.”

The Muscat Agreement (June 2014) has proposed an Education For All overarching goal and 7 targets in close alignment to SDGs /OWG which ensure equitable and inclusive quality education and lifelong learning for all by 2030. It further says that by 2030 all girls and boys complete free and compulsory quality basic education of at least 9 years and achieve relevant learning outcomes, with particular attention to gender equality and the most marginalized.

Pakistan’s education system, obsessed with access to primary education, followed similar pathways.

A ‘weak’ positioning of student learning outcomes in education policy reforms has compromised capabilities of millions of children, youth and adults who remain unentitled by the ‘access first’ mantra. Quality remained ‘project and input driven’ and disconnected with the organic parts that produce quality and thinly resourced to wither away as soon as the projects concluded. In all reform documents, quality is sequenced after the access chapters (NEP, 1998; ESR Action Plan, 2001/2-2005/6; NEP, 2009). In the National Education Policy (2009) quality is described as follows:

Most of the inputs in the system have an impact on quality. However, there are five to six basic pillars that have the major contribution. These are: curriculum, textbooks, assessments, teachers, the learning environment in an institution and relevance of education to practical life/labour market. (NEP 2009, pg. 37)

With education declared a fundamental constitutional right in Pakistan for children aged 5-16 years old under Article 25-A followed by the devolution of powers amongst provinces, the possibility has emerged to ensure that the focus does not remain on access only but quality and learning are prioritized too. Each province has developed its education sector plan up to 2018/19 which was prepared in tandem to the post 2015 consultations keeping local priorities uppermost. The outcome documents or sector plans are sector wide in scope designed/pitched and targeted across all sub-sectors mirroring most of the Post 2015 global agendas. The targets are set for pre-primary, primary, secondary, high secondary and tertiary education, where access, equity and quality are seen as anchor milestones.
Ineintrically linked to one another. Vision 2025 of Pakistan, an outcome document through national stakeholder consultation by the Ministry of Planning, Development and Reforms, is also cast in a sector wide approach providing ample opportunities for carving an agenda where students do not simply go to schools but also demonstrate measurable learning outcomes.

Complementing these policy reforms ensuring the provision of quality education country wide are efforts to strengthen the national/provincial assessment systems. Many countries establish national assessment systems to generate evidence on the learning competencies achieved by the children/students at a particular age or grade and to develop indicators of school performance at national and provincial levels for comparing, benchmarking and developing policies and interventions (Asia-Pacific Education System Review, 2013). Improving the quality of national and/or regional assessments has received significant attention in the post 2015 global learning goals. Just as improved monitoring of access helps maintain pressure on governments to ensure that each child completes primary school, better monitoring of learning can push governments to make certain that all children not only go to school but are achieving the basics. Global Monitoring Report (2013/14) outlines three basic principles that need to be adhered to while conducting assessments:

- All children and young people need to be taken into account when interpreting results, not just those who were in school and took part in the assessment. Disadvantaged children may already be out of the school system, and therefore unlikely to have reached minimum learning standards, by the time the assessment is administered. Not counting them means that the scale of the problem is understated.
- Better information on background characteristics of students is needed to identify which groups of students are not learning.
- Information on the quality of education systems should also be included as part of the assessments. 

(GMR, 2013/14, pg. 6)

In Pakistan, assessment remains stuck in the norms referenced grading, ranking and quantitative approaches unable to shift to a criterion referenced culture that is qualitative nuanced with respect to knowledge, skills, attitudes and competencies that are transparent and comparable. The National Curriculum (NC) 2006 attempted to achieve such a transition as has been amply illustrated in many of its subject based documents. Taking the example of NC 2006 for General Science VI-VIII which states in its conceptual map for curriculum outcomes that the “core objective of scientific literacy sets out the need for students to acquire science related Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes, and emphasis that this is best done through the study and analysis of the interrelationship among Science, Technology, Society and Environment (STSE)” (NC, 2006, p.11). The National Education Policy (2009) states following policy actions regarding assessment:

“Assessment systems are quality measures that cater to a number of requirements of the education system. These can be used to measure overall system efficiency as well as individual students’ performance. A comprehensive assessment design would provide feedback for improvements at all tiers. Assessment mechanism should be such that analytical thinking and critical reflections are tapped and encouraged. The recent work of the National Education Assessment System and the Punjab Examination Commission shall be continued in reforming the system across the country.” (NEP, 2009, pg. 41)

There are 8 policy actions, of which the 8th one addresses assessment to some extent:

“A quality cycle managements hall link the various systems of assessment and institutions involved in assessment (examinations, NEAS/ PEACe, continuous assessment) to provide
feedback to curriculum development, textbooks development and teacher education and professional development” (NEP, 2009, pg. 42)

Whilst Pakistan has had the good fortune of building capacity in assessment systems, institutionalize and embedding it in reform and policy documents, by the same token core assessment conducting bodies have weakened over time accelerated by the new institutional arrangements and priorities under the decentralized post 18th amendment setting. The initiatives and annual allocations for regular assessments remain under spent due to lack of vision, leadership, clarity of purpose and commitment. Another important issue with the assessment system of Pakistan is the absence of a single body responsible for assessment. For example, in Punjab alone, there is the Punjab Examination Commission (PEC) for grades 5 and 8; PEACe for grade 4 and 8; and the boards responsible for conducting secondary and higher secondary examinations (Grades 9-12). The responsibilities of these assessment bodies are often restricted to the conducting of examinations and sharing of results with little proactive feedback to students and teachers about their weaknesses and strengths. What makes the situation worse is that despite testing the same curriculum at the same grade, there is little or no coordination between these bodies and the other institutions dealing with curriculum, textbooks, teacher training (pre and in-service). We may have PEC and PEACe both conducting the examinations for the 8th grade in Punjab, but with little communication across the two about relevance and robustness of assessments and what do the trends in learning outcomes of children reveal about quality that need attention? Furthermore there is little diversity in the subjects covered by each assessment system as majority of these assess students on basic reading and numeracy.

Major multilateral and bi-lateral agencies are working on improving the quality of national and regional monitoring and assessment systems. One such effort has been initiated by The Centre for Universal Education (CUE) in collaboration with the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) titled the Learning Metrics Task Force (LMTF). LMTF is a representative group of global stakeholders engaged in in-country consultations to broaden the learning framework for both developing and developed countries alike, from pre-primary to lower secondary as a continuum of learning metrics across 7 domains¹ (CUE Brookings, 2013). Phase I of deliberations successfully completed in 2013 identified seven domains of learning for pre-primary, primary and post primary levels.

LMTF in its Phase II is supporting 15 countries including Pakistan to advance the goal of more effective assessment systems that can help improve learning outcomes.

The overall objective of this report is to shed light on the significance of this initiative for Pakistan and to map out information on country wide

¹ LMTF Seven Domains are: Physical Well Being, Social & emotional, Culture and Arts, Literacy & Communication, Learning approaches and cognition, Numeracy and mathematics and Science and technology.
assessments reflecting on what is working well and what is not, and how well the assessment practices are aligned to LMTF’s seven learning domains and seven measurement areas. The report attempts to capture the distinctive variations in assessment systems across each province, to highlight issues around subjects/domains being covered, scope and coverage, content of the assessment tools, and dissemination of data collected. Policy level issues are also framed so that they may be addressed by decision makers in a climate that seeks participation, interactive policymaking and planning, with a particular focus on student learning outcomes. We hope that this research will mobilize all stakeholders to share assessment initiatives and agree on common set of indicators for public reporting and actions; much needed as a vibrant community of practice in Pakistan to inform reforms and policy provincially and nationally.

There are seven chapters in the mapping report:

**Chapter 1** Outlines the introduction, illustrating the need of criterion referenced assessment system –testing standards that are focused on learning outcomes.

**Chapter 2** Focuses on global best practices in assessments.

**Chapter 3** Examines the significance and progress of the LMTF initiative in Pakistan and the institutional players involved.

**Chapter 4** Discusses the methodology and mapping tool used to collect information on country wide assessments in Pakistan.

**Chapter 5** Shares the outcomes of the country wide assessment mapping exercise.

**Chapter 6** Highlights the challenges and gaps around issues of policy, planning, human resource needs, teaching/learning norms and budgets.

**Chapter 7** Presents recommendations for the future.
Chapter 2

Global Practices on Assessments
International trends in assessment build a momentum in a global setting to ensure that children are indeed learning across different levels. Since the 1990s, school-based assessments have become popular globally, regionally and nationally, with high stakes and generally high cost for comparable competencies within and across countries. Since 2005 citizen-led, low-cost household-based assessments have also been on the rise. In a recently held World Bank Symposium “Assessment for Global Learning (2013)” global, regional and national assessment systems were documented to highlight mixed trends in assessments.

**PISA - Programme for International Student Assessment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>To evaluate the quality of education systems every 3 years by assessing knowledge and competencies in 3 subject areas: reading, mathematics and science.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target Population</strong></td>
<td>15-year old students enrolled in schools at grade 7 or above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participating Systems</strong></td>
<td>74 countries, states and school systems in 2009. So far, PISA has covered 74 countries (27 of which were developing countries/ODA recipients in 2010).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment Domains</strong></td>
<td>Reading, mathematics and science, with a focus on one subject in each year. The focus is on higher order thinking skills and the capacity to apply knowledge and skills to real life situations. Optional areas include: financial literacy, problem solving, digital reading, and reading components.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Background Information</strong></td>
<td>Information collected includes instructional time, opportunities to learn, student attitudes and reading activities, socio-economic background, teacher and school-related factors, among others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methodology</strong></td>
<td>PISA uses a school-based, group administration approach. It uses paper and pencil tests that include multiple-choice (1/2) and constructed response (1/2) questions/tasks. The test takes two hours. (The 2012 assessment included an optional computer-based assessment for mathematics and reading.) PISA has been administered every 3 years since 2000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information Published</strong></td>
<td>International report and a website which includes ranking of countries, percent of students at different performance levels, trends across years, and background information, among others. The international database is publicly available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Costs</strong></td>
<td>The international overhead costs for new participants in PISA 2015 is EUR 182 000 payable over four years at EUR 45,500 per year from 2013 to 2015 inclusive. In addition, the costs for the national implementation of the programme are borne entirely by the participating country. Implementation costs vary by country and are highly dependent on cost of living.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose</strong></td>
<td>To monitor and improve the health of a country’s education system and enable evidence-based decisions for improving student achievement in reading literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target Population</strong></td>
<td>Students enrolled in schools at grade 4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participating Systems</strong></td>
<td>59 countries, states and school systems in 2011.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment Domains</strong></td>
<td>Reading literacy: (a) retrieve explicit information, (b) make straightforward inferences, (c) interpret and integrate ideas and information, and (d) examine and evaluate content, language, and textual elements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Background Information</strong></td>
<td>Intended and implemented curriculum, home and classroom contexts for learning to read, instructional time, student attitudes towards reading, socio-economic background; information from school principals, teachers, students and parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methodology</strong></td>
<td>Paper and pencil test. Includes multiple-choice (1/2) and constructed response (1/2). Includes stories and articles of about 800 to 1,000 words. School-based, group administration. Background instruments partially online. All tests are curriculum based. Administered every 5 years since 2001.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information Published</strong></td>
<td>International report and website include ranking of countries, percent of students at different performance levels, trends across years, background information, example questions, assessment framework, and encyclopedia with background information from the countries. The international data base is publicly available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Costs</strong></td>
<td>The participation fee is US$20,000 plus EUR 20,000 per year. In addition, the costs for the national implementation of the programme are borne entirely by the participating country. Implementation costs vary by country and are highly dependent on cost of living.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Purpose**
To monitor and improve the health of a country’s education system and enable evidence-based decisions for improving student achievement in basic reading skills.

**Target Population**
Students enrolled at the end of the primary school cycle (usually grades 4, 5, or 6).

**Participating Systems**
3 countries in 2011.

**Assessment Domains**
Basic reading skills: (a) focus on and retrieve explicitly stated information, (b) make straightforward inferences, (c) interpret and integrate ideas and information, (d) examine and evaluate content, language, and textual elements.

**Background Information**
Intended and implemented curriculum, home and classroom contexts for learning to read, instructional time, student attitudes towards reading, socioeconomic status.

**Methodology**
Paper and pencil test. Includes multiple-choice (1/2) and constructed response (1/2). School based, group administration. All tests are curriculum based. Administered every 5 years since 2011.

**Information Published**
International report and website include ranking of countries, percent of students at different performance levels, trends across years, background information, and example questions, among others. The international database is publicly available.

**Costs**
The yearly participation fee is US$20,000 plus EUR 20,000. In addition, the costs for the national implementation of the programme are borne entirely by the participating country. Implementation costs vary by country and are highly dependent on cost of living.
**ePIRLS - Online Reading Component of the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Purpose</strong></th>
<th>To assess how successful countries are in preparing students to read, comprehend, and interpret online information.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target Population</strong></td>
<td>Students enrolled at grade 4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participating Systems</strong></td>
<td>First assessment round will take place in 2016.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment Domains</strong></td>
<td>ePIRLS uses an engaging, simulated Internet environment with authentic school-like assignments about science and social studies topics to measure achievement in reading for informational purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Background Information</strong></td>
<td>Intended and implemented curriculum, home and classroom contexts for learning to read, instructional time, student attitudes towards reading, socio-economic status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methodology</strong></td>
<td>Computer-based, online environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information Published</strong></td>
<td>Not applicable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Costs</strong></td>
<td>The fee for ePIRLS is US$12,500 plus EUR 12,500 per year, in addition to the PIRLS 2016 fee. In addition, the costs for the national implementation of the programme are borne entirely by the participating country. Implementation costs vary by country and are highly dependent on cost of living.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# TIMSS - Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Purpose</strong></th>
<th>To monitor and improve the health of a country's education system and enable evidence-based decisions for improving student achievement in mathematics and science.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target Population</strong></td>
<td>Students enrolled in schools at grades 4 and 8, and 11 or 12 (Advanced module).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participating Systems</strong></td>
<td>77 countries, states and school systems in 2011.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment Domains</strong></td>
<td>Mathematics and science.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Background Information</strong></td>
<td>Intended and implemented curriculum, student attitudes towards learning, self-confidence in learning, socio-economic background, information from school principals, teachers, students and parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methodology</strong></td>
<td>TIMSS uses a school-based, group administration approach. It uses paper and pencil tests that include multiple-choice (1/2) and constructed response (1/2) questions/tasks. The assessment framework is based on an agreed-upon curriculum that reflects the priorities of all participating countries. Background instruments partially online. All tests are curriculum based. Administered every 4 years since 1995.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information Published</strong></td>
<td>International reports and website include ranking of countries, percent of students at different performance levels, trends across years, background information, example questions, assessment framework, and encyclopedia with background information from the countries. The international database is publicly available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Costs</strong></td>
<td>The TIMSS 2015 participation fee is US$25,000 plus EUR 25,000 per year for 4 years for one grade. In addition, the costs for the national implementation of the programme are borne entirely by the participating country. Implementation costs vary by country and are highly dependent on cost of living.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**EGRA - Early Grade Reading Assessment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>To measure how well children in the early grades of primary school are acquiring reading skills, assess early reading and prereading component skills, and provide national or regional diagnostic information. (Can be modified for classroom or community assessment.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Target Population</td>
<td>Students enrolled in schools at grades 1, 2, 3, or 4 (or higher, depending on student skill levels).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating Systems</td>
<td>Over 60 countries and 100 languages since 2006.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Domains</td>
<td>Core early reading skills customizable for different contexts. Core components include letter recognition, letter-sound identification, word reading, connected text reading (fluency), and oral reading comprehension questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background Information</td>
<td>Country/research-specific, but generally includes school, classroom and student/family background information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>School-based, individual oral administration. Can be repeated with re-randomized items and new text as needed. Both paper and electronic forms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Published</td>
<td>Instruments and country reports with student performance in each reading skill and related background factors available at <a href="http://www.eddataglobal.org">www.eddataglobal.org</a>. Datasets available to researchers following protocol for approval.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs</td>
<td>EGRA is an open source, public resource available to all. The costs for the implementation of the assessment have been generally financed by USAID or other donors to date. Implementation costs vary by country.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# EGMA - Early Grade Mathematics Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Purpose</strong></th>
<th>To measure how well children in the early grades of primary school are acquiring foundational mathematic skills and provide national or regional diagnostic information. (Can be modified for classroom or community assessment.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target Population</strong></td>
<td>Students enrolled in schools at grades 1, 2, 3, or 4 (or higher, depending on student skill levels).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participating Systems</strong></td>
<td>Over 22 countries and 25 languages since 2009.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment Domains</strong></td>
<td>Core early mathematics skills customizable for different contexts. Core components include: number identification, quantity discrimination, missing number, word problems, addition/subtraction problems, shape recognition, and pattern extension.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Background Information</strong></td>
<td>Country/research-specific, but generally includes school, classroom and student/family background information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methodology</strong></td>
<td>School-based, individual oral administration. Can be repeated with re-randomized items and new text as needed. Both paper and electronic forms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information Published</strong></td>
<td>Country reports with student performance in each skill area and related background factors available at <a href="http://www.eddataglobal.org">www.eddataglobal.org</a>. Datasets available to researchers following protocol for approval.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Costs</strong></td>
<td>EGMA is an open source, public resource available to all. The costs for the implementation of the assessment have been generally financed by USAID or other donors to date. Implementation costs vary by country</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# SAM – School Achievements Monitoring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>To assess reasoning skills of primary school students based on subject competencies using three levels: (1) procedural knowledge, (2) conceptual understanding, and (3) functional competence. SAM is designed for the follow-up and improvement of the learning process in schools, and is intended for teachers, methodologists and education management authorities. Mass (external large-scale administration) and in-class (classroom assessment) testing of students are applicable.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target Population</strong></td>
<td>Primary school students at grades 3-4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participating Systems</strong></td>
<td>5 countries (Russia and CIS countries) in 2011-2013. 15 countries will have participated by 2015.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment Domains</strong></td>
<td>Mathematics and language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Background Information</strong></td>
<td>Student’s family, his/her attitude to school/teaching/learning, school activities, classroom, relations with other students; teaching methods, educational programs, organization of educational process, availability of modern educational technologies and their efficiency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methodology</strong></td>
<td>Paper and pencil. Computer-based version (offline and online) of test is being piloted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information Published</strong></td>
<td>Integral (normalized) score, proficiency levels, and three-dimensional profiles by class, school, municipality, and province. Trends across years, background information, and example questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Costs</strong></td>
<td>No participation fee.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## ASER – Annual Status of Education Report

| **Purpose** | To put children’s learning at the center of debates and discussions on education; to engage citizens’ in understanding their own situation and strengthening accountability; and to promote government, parent, and citizen action to improve children’s learning. |
| **Target Population** | All children in the age group from 5-16 year olds (including those attending public, private or religious schools and those not enrolled in schools). Student samples are representative at the national and sub-national levels. |
| **Participating Systems** | Inspired by ASER-India, several countries have taken the initiative to adapt and implement ASER type assessments. ASER does not have a central coordinating body. Countries come together voluntary and independently. So far, the following countries have implemented ASER type assessments: India (ASER, annually since 2005), Kenya (called UWEZO, since 2009), Mali (BEEKUNGO, since 2011), Pakistan (ASER, since 2008), Senegal (called JANGANDOO, since 2012), Tanzania (UWEZO, since 2009), and Uganda (UWEZO, since 2009). |
| **Assessment Domains** | Basic abilities in reading and numeracy that children are usually expected to learn at grade 2. The ASER reading assessment tool consists of 4 levels: letters, words, a short paragraph, and a longer "story". |
| **Background Information** | At the household level: socio-economic background, parent education, reading material at home, and extra coaching classes, among others. At the school level: in the sampled village, one government school with primary classes is visited. Observations are made about school facilities such as classrooms, teacher learning materials, toilets, drinking water; and enrollment and attendance, among others. |
| **Methodology** | Individual, oral administration of children in- and out-of-school. Reading is measured using local languages. Ordinary citizens volunteer to conduct the assessment and disseminate the results. |
| **Information Published** | Children performance in different subject areas. Performance by grade level is judged according to learning standards. Results are published within months of the assessment being conducted. Parents get instant feedback as they observe their children being asked to read or do arithmetic. |
| **Costs** | No participation fee. Leading implementing organization has to cover the costs of national implementation. |
Chapter 3

The LMTF Initiative - Reforming Assessments in Pakistan
Chapter 3: The LMTF Initiative - Reforming Assessments in Pakistan

As illustrated briefly in the previous chapters, the education community has been working to shift the focus and investment in education from universal access to education to access plus learning. Since 2012, this movement has been spearheaded and formalized through the Learning Metrics Task Force (LMTF), which set out to define what it is that students around the world, regardless of their cultural background and their country's level of economic development, should know and be able to do by the time they finish school. Through a broadly inclusive process that brought together education stakeholders from many countries, Phase I of LMTF culminated with a global framework of seven key learning domains deemed important for the educational experience of children (from pre-primary to lower secondary) in all countries.

The set of seven domains represents the spectrum of skills and competencies that LMTF stakeholders felt were important for students to learn and possess, and that were already embedded in some form, in their education systems and national curriculums. In Phase II of the LMTF process, 15 countries from around the world became LMTF Learning Champions, bringing the challenge of the global learning agenda and applying it to their national curricula and assessment systems. By becoming a part of this global vision, they have pledged to advance the development of new standards and assessment frameworks to ensure coverage of key learning domains.

Driven by the commitment to attain the goals set by Article 25 A (access plus quality), a group of public-and private partners from all provinces in Pakistan have come together under the Learning Metrics Task Force as Learning Champions (www.brookings.edu/blogs/education-plus-development/posts/2015/01/27-effective-ways-to-measure-student-learning-muskin) to construct a strategy on defining education quality in Pakistan and measuring that quality. The 9 member strong group is currently involved in mapping existing assessments in the country in order to identify effective ways of reforming the system. There is a profound level of ownership, consensus, and a commitment to ensure that testing does not remain limited to numeracy and literacy, rather shifting the focus to the measurement of students’ success in both cognitive and non-cognitive domains.

More specifically, Learning Champions in Pakistan (supported by the Task Force) are involved in designing, testing, refining and validating

(i) A set of indicators drawing from the seven LMTF areas of measurement (plus any others individual countries may prioritize),

(ii) Both existing and new tools and methods to measure and collect meaningful information on these indicators,

(iii) Mechanisms to consolidate, analyze and disseminate the information (both quantitative and qualitative) and

(iv) Models and means for using the data to influence policy and practice across education systems for improved learning quality.
Institutional Players Involved:

Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA), which leads the ASER Pakistan movement on learning, coordinates the LMTF Learning Champions consortium in collaboration with respective government representatives from each province including:

- **IBCC**
  Inter Board of Committee Chairmen (IBCC) - Federal

- **NEAS**
  National Education Assessment System (NEAS) - Federal

- **PITE**
  Provincial Institute for Teacher Education (PITE) – Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

- **PEC**
  Punjab Examination Commission (PEC) - Punjab

- **PPIU**
  Policy Planning and Implementation Unit (PPIU) - Balochistan

- **PEACE**
  Provincial Education Assessment Center (PEACE) - Sindh

- **RSU**
  Reform Support Unit (RSU) - Sindh

- **KEACe**
  Kashmir Education Assessment Center (KEACe) - Azad Jammu & Kashmir

- **GBEAC**
  Gilgit - Baltistan Education Assessment Center (GBEAC) – Gilgit Baltistan

- **AKUIED**
  Aga Khan University Institute for Education Development (AKUIED)

- **UMT**
  University of Management and Technology (UMT), Lahore
Chapter 4

Mapping Study - Charting the Map of Education Assessments in Pakistan
Chapter 4: Mapping Study - Charting the Map of Education Assessments in Pakistan

The ultimate objective of LMTF is to support the development of more robust systems for assessing learning outcomes (global, national, local) and the better use of assessment data globally and at all levels of national education systems to help improve learning outcomes across the seven domains of learning and seven areas of measurement (www.brookings.edu/about/centers/universal-education/learning-metrics-task-force-2/global-indicators) identified in LMTF 1.0. As a starting point, the Learning Champions Team of Pakistan led by Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi launched a mapping study to examine and highlight the "known universe" of national assessments in Pakistan, and set the baseline of what is being assessed and emphasized by the national learning assessment systems.

Objective of the Mapping Study:
This database has been created to map the landscape of national assessments and provide key stakeholders with a clear picture of the various assessment actors and efforts in the country, reflecting on what is working well and what is not, and mapping current assessment initiatives to LMTF's seven learning domains and seven measurement areas. The assessment systems have been categorized by the focus areas assessed, which learning domains they fall in, and at which point in the schooling cycle they are administered. We subsequently analyzed global patterns in what is being measured, thereby creating a current snapshot to serve as a baseline from which to assess the LMTF's progress. The mapping study's systemic approach will help partners and stakeholders obtain a common and comprehensive understanding of the current assessment systems, its strengths and weaknesses, explore similarities and differences and consider practices in relation to stated principles of effective assessment practice. It will also generate immediate next steps and set priorities for the government and private sector alike.

Methodology:
The mapping study uses a mapping tool aligned to Observatory of Learning Outcomes\(^2\) (OLO) Measurement and System Assessment and Benchmarking for Education Results-Student Assessment\(^3\) (SAFER-SA) to collect data on standardized exams and assessments administered at the national level from primary to upper secondary schools in Pakistan. The mapping study covers information on large scale national assessments, recognized examinations and sub-national assessments. Though examinations can sometimes be seen as synonymous to national/sub-national assessment, the survey defines examinations as a formal test/assessment specifically designed for the purpose of certification of students whereas national/sub-national assessments are defined here as those system-level education assessments which are designed to provide an estimate of the learning level in the education system as a whole, at a particular age or grade level. The latter can be administered to either a sample or population of students, whereas examinations involve testing of all students at the designated age or grade level. Classroom assessments and school-based assessments and assessments organized by small scaled decentralized educational institutions which are mainly for selection purposes from one grade to another or from one course to another were not within the scope of this study.

Survey Participants:
The information was collected between the months of December 2014 to April 2015. The mapping study covers information on 10 assessment systems of Pakistan from primary to upper secondary school. The following table presents the breakdown of participation (by assessment systems):

---

\(^2\) The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) has launched a new initiative to track student achievement and its measurement worldwide.

\(^3\) SAFER-SA is one of the sub-systems under The World Bank’s SAFER program. SAFER is an evidence-based program to help countries systematically examine and strengthen the performance of their education systems. Information on SAFER can be found at http://go.worldbank.org/NK2EK7MKV0
Table 4.1 Breakdown of Participation by Assessment Systems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No</th>
<th>Name of the Assessment/Institution</th>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Geographical Coverage</th>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Lead Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Annual Status of Education Report</td>
<td>ASER</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>National Assessment Testing</td>
<td>NAT</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Multiple</td>
<td>National Education Assessment System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Diagnostic Assessment</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>Balochistan</td>
<td>Education Department/PEACE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Continuous Professional Development by Directorate of Staff Development</td>
<td>DSD</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>Directorate of Staff Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Kashmir Achievement Testing</td>
<td>KAT</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>Azad Jammu Kashmir</td>
<td>Kashmir Education Assessment Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Provincial Education Assessment Centre</td>
<td>PEACe</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>Sindh</td>
<td>Provincial Education Assessment Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Punjab Examination Commission</td>
<td>PEC</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>Punjab Examination Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Provincial Education Assessment Centre</td>
<td>PEACe</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>Khyber Pakhtunkhwa</td>
<td>Punjab Examination Commission Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Student Achievement Test</td>
<td>SAT</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>Sindh</td>
<td>Reform Support Unit, Govt of Sindh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents included officials from the respective provincial government departments (most of whom are a part of the Learning Champions team) and in some cases national experts in the field of education and assessment.

Mapping Tool:
An online version of the mapping tool was developed in English. The tool is organized into four sections with a number of questions embedded in each section. These sections include:

Sections of Mapping Tool
1) General       2) Scope, Purpose and Funding       3) Content       4) Institutional

The main body of the questionnaire was dedicated to mapping current assessment initiatives to LMTF’s seven learning domains followed by the analysis of assessment data and interventions implemented using assessment results. In the process of mapping the subjects tested in each of the assessments to the LMTF learning domains, we referenced the definition and subdomains for each competency proposed by the LMTF Report. In cases where subjects seemed to fall within multiple domains, we used discretion in assigning those subjects to certain learning domains, ensuring consistency across the mapping exercise. Table 1 shows which content areas assessed in national examinations were assigned into each LMTF domain.

Table 4.2 Classification of content areas into LMTF learning domains

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LMTF Domain</th>
<th>Content Areas Tested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literacy &amp; Communication</td>
<td>Reading, Literacy, Language Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy &amp; Mathematics</td>
<td>Mathematics, Accounting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science &amp; Technology</td>
<td>Physics, Chemistry, Biology, other Skills-Oriented Subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social &amp; Emotional</td>
<td>Religion, Citizenship or Civic Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture &amp; the Arts</td>
<td>History, Social Studies, Philosophy, Music, Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Well-Being</td>
<td>Sports, Physical Education, Health and Nutrition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Approaches &amp; Cognition</td>
<td>Critical thinking and Analytical Skills, Cognitive Skills, Problem Solving, Quantitative and Qualitative Reasoning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 5

Mapping an Expanding Universe of Assessments
Chapter 5: Mapping an Expanding Universe of Assessments

This section presents key findings of the mapping survey. Since the data is collected by and large from the public departments, these findings reflect the departments’ openness in sharing information on their respective assessments. Given this, the findings represent the “known universe” of assessments, which will continue to expand as we obtain more information about existing assessments and new assessments are introduced.
**General**

**Year of Establishment**
2008

**Latest Year Administered**
2014

**Frequency**
Annual

**Language in which Assessment is Administered**
English, Urdu, Sindhi & Pashto

**Lead Institution**
ITA

**Funding Source**
Grants from International Organizations

---

**Content**

**LMTF Domains Covered by the Assessment**
- Literacy & Communication
- Numeracy & Mathematics

**Mechanisms in place to ensure alignment with the curriculum**
- Regular independent review by qualified experts
- Regular internal review when content framework or assessment system is updated

---

**Scope & Coverage**

**Purpose of Assessment**
- Monitoring Education Quality Levels
- Informing teacher training programs
- Informing policy makers for interventions

**Age Groups Covered**
- Five to Sixteen

**Grades Covered:**
- Not Applicable

**Subjects Covered**
English, Mathematics, Urdu/ Sindhi/Pashto

**Participants in the latest year**
- 195,723

---

**Institutional**

**Main Use of Data**
- Tracking the impact of reforms on student achievement levels
- Policy reform
- Informing teacher training programs

---

**Selection of Participants**
- Two Stage Stratified Sample

**Geographical Coverage**
- National- Rural and Urban

**Type of Assessment**
- Household Based

**Type of Institution**
- Public, Private and Madrassah

**Format of Assessment**
- Oral

---

**Levels of Result Reporting**
- Student, School, Family, District, Provincial, National

**How are Results Disseminated**
- Both printed and online report
- Online Database
- Newspaper Coverage of Results
- Stakeholders Conferences / Workshops

**Challenges and Areas for Improvement**
- Education Policy Reform

---

Focal Person: Ms. Sehar Saeed

Designation: Program Manager

Email Address: sahar.sd@gmail.com
## General

- **Year of Establishment**: 2003
- **Latest Year Administered**: 2014 (latest large scale assessment held)
- **Frequency**: Every 4 Years
- **Language in which Assessment is Administered**: English, Urdu, Sindhi
- **Lead Institution**: NEAS
- **Funding Source**: National Budget (in 2014) previously supported by grants from international organizations

## Content

### LMTF Domains Covered by the Assessment
- Literacy & Communication
- Numeracy & Mathematics
- Science & Technology
- Culture and Arts

### Mechanisms in place to ensure alignment with the curriculum
- Regular independent review by qualified experts
- Regular internal review when content framework or assessment system is updated

## Scope & Coverage

### Purpose of Assessment
- Monitoring education quality levels
- Informing teacher training programs
- Informing policy makers for interventions

### Age Groups Covered
- Not Applicable

### Grades Covered:
- 4 and 8

### Subjects Covered
- Maths, Science, Social Studies, Urdu, English

### Participants in the latest year
- 11200

## Institutional

### Main Use of Data
- Tracking the impact of reforms on student achievement levels
- Policy Reform
- Informing curriculum improvement
- Informing teacher training programs

### Levels of Result Reporting
- National

### How are Results Disseminated
- Printed Report Only
- Online database
- Stakeholders conferences
- Brochures

### Challenges and Areas for Improvement
- Budgeting
- Institutional Professional Capacity

---

**Focal Person:** Mr. Jaffar Mansoor Abbasi  
**Designation:** National Coordinator  
**Email Address:** abbasijma@gmail.com
**General**

- **Year of Establishment**: 2004
- **Latest Year Administered**: 2015
- **Frequency**: Every 4 Years
- **Language in which Assessment is Administered**: English, Urdu
- **Lead Institution**: PEACE Balochistan
- **Funding Source**: 2004-2009 (NEAS, MoE) 2010-2015 (Provincial) Education Department

**Content**

**LMTF Domains Covered by the Assessment**
- Literacy & Communication
- Numeracy & Mathematics
- Science & Technology
- Culture & Arts

**Mechanisms in place to ensure alignment with the curriculum**
- Regular independent review by qualified experts
- Regular internal review when content framework or assessment system is updated

**Scope & Coverage**

**Purpose of Assessment**
- Monitoring Education Quality Levels
- Informing teacher training programs
- Informing curriculum improvement
- Informing policy makers for interventions

**Age Groups Covered**
- (9 Years and 13 Years)

**Grades Covered:**
- 4 and 8

**Subjects Covered**
- Math, Science, Social Studies, Urdu

**Participants in the latest year**
- 5000

**Institutional**

**Main Use of Data**
- Tracking the impact of reforms on student learning achievement levels
- Policy reform
- Informing teacher training programs

**Selection of Participants**
- Random Stratified Sample

**Geographical Coverage**
- Provincial-Rural and Urban

**Type of Assessment**
- Standardized Test

**Type of Institution**
- Public, Private

**Format of Assessment**
- Written

**Levels of Result Reporting**
- Provincial, District

**How are Results Disseminated**
- Printed report only
- Stakeholders Conferences / Workshops

**Challenges and Areas for Improvement**
- Budgeting
- Quality Experts
- Lack of awareness importance of assessment

---

**Focal Person:**
**Dr. Syed Kamaluddin**

**Designation:**
**Director PMI**

**Email Address:**
kamalshahppiu@gmail.com
Continuous Professional Development
(by Directorate of Staff Development DSD, Punjab)

**General**
- **Year of Establishment**
  2010
- **Latest Year Administered**
  2015
- **Frequency**
  6 times a year
- **Language in which Assessment is Administered**
  English, Urdu,
- **Lead Institution**
  DSD
- **Funding Source**
  National Budget
  Grants from International Organizations

**Content**

**LMTF Domains Covered by the Assessment**
- Literacy & Communication
- Numeracy & Mathematics
- Science & Technology
- Culture & Arts

**Mechanisms in place to ensure alignment with the curriculum**
- Regular independent review by qualified experts
- Regular internal review when content framework or assessment system is updated

**Scope & Coverage**

**Purpose of Assessment**
- Monitoring Education Quality Levels
- Informing curriculum improvement
- Informing teacher training programs

**Age Groups Covered**
- Not Applicable

**Grades Covered:**
- 3, 4 and 5

**Subjects Covered**
- All Subjects

**Participants in the latest year**
- 25 lac

**Institutional**

**Main Use of Data**
- Tracking the impact of reforms on student achievement levels
- Informing curriculum improvement
- Informing teacher training programs
- Producing school reports to inform the planning by principals at the school level.
- Training workshops for in service teachers

**Selection of Participants**
- Census

**Geographical Coverage**
- Provincial-Rural and Urban

**Type of Assessment**
- Formative

**Type of Institution**
- Public, Masjid Maktib

**Format of Assessment**
- Written

**Levels of Result Reporting**
- Family, School, Provincial, National

**How are Results Disseminated**
- Both printed and online report
- Online Database
- Stakeholders conference/ Workshops

**Challenges and Areas for Improvement**
- Time series data storage and analysis.

Focal Person:
**Mr. Azmat Siddique**

Designation:
**Dy. Director Planning**

Email Address: azmat.dsd@gmail.com
Punjab Examination Commission

Content

LMTF Domains Covered by the Assessment
- Literacy & Communication
- Numeracy & Mathematics
- Science & Technology

Mechanisms in place to ensure alignment with the curriculum
- Regular independent review by qualified experts
- Regular internal review when content framework or assessment system is updated
- Curriculum Based Assessment

Scope & Coverage

Purpose of Assessment
- Student certification
- Monitoring education quality levels
- Informing teacher training programs
- Informing curriculum improvement

Age Groups Covered
- Not Applicable

Grades Covered:
- 5 and 8

Subjects Covered
Maths, Science, Urdu, English, Islamiyat

Participants in the latest year
- 2.2 Million

Institutional

Main Use of Data
- Tracking the impact of reforms on student achievement levels
- Informing teacher training programs
- Informing curriculum improvement
- Producing school reports to inform the planning by principals at the school level.

Selection of Participants
- Census
- Public schools-Mandatory
- Private schools-optional

Geographical Coverage
- Provincial-Rural and Urban

Type of Assessment
- Standardized Test

Type of Institution
- Public, Private, Madrassah

Format of Assessment
- Written

Levels of Result Reporting
- Student, School, Provincial

How are Results Disseminated
- Both printed and online report
- Online Database
- Stakeholders conference/Workshops

Challenges and Areas for Improvement
- Data analysis
- Data dissemination

Focal Person:
Dr. Nasir Mehmood

Designation:
Director Assessments

Email Address:
cheernasir@yahoo.com
Kashmir Achievement Testing
(by Kashmir Education Assessment Centre - KEACe, AJK)

General

Year of Establishment
2003

Latest Year Administered
2013

Frequency
Every 3 Years

Language in which Assessment is Administered
English, Urdu.

Lead Institution
Kashmir Education Assessment Centre

Funding Source
National Budget

Content

LMTF Domains Covered by the Assessment
• Literacy & Communication
• Numeracy & Mathematics
• Science & Technology
• Culture & Arts

Mechanisms in place to ensure alignment with the curriculum
• Ad hoc review
• Regular internal review when content framework or assessment system is updated

Scope & Coverage

Purpose of Assessment
• Monitoring education
• Quality levels
• Informing teacher training programs
• Informing curriculum improvement

Age Groups Covered
• 5-9 Years

Grades Covered:
• 4

Subjects Covered
English, Urdu, Science, Maths, Social Studies

Participants in the latest year
• 1000

Institutional

Main Use of Data
• Tracking the impact of reforms on student achievement levels
• Informing teacher training programs
• Informing curriculum improvement

Selection of Participants
• Random Sample

Geographical Coverage
• Provincial-Rural and Urban

Type of Assessment
• Standardized Test

Type of Institution
• Public

Format of Assessment
• Written

Levels of Result Reporting
• Provincial

How are Results Disseminated
• Printed report only
• Stakeholders conference/ Workshops

Challenges and Areas for Improvement
• Data analysis
• Data dissemination

Focal Person:
Mr. Khawaja Tariq Shafi

Designation:
Senior Subject Specialist

Email Address:
tariqshafi1964@yahoo.com
LMTF Domains Covered by the Assessment
- Literacy & Communication
- Numeracy & Mathematics
- Science & Technology
- Culture & Arts

Mechanisms in place to ensure alignment with the curriculum
- Regular independent review by qualified experts
- Regular internal review when content framework or assessment system is updated

Purpose of Assessment
- Planning education policy form
- Training support to teachers
- Informing curriculum/textbook improvement

Age Groups Covered
- No Applicable

Grades Covered:
- Grade 4 and 8

Subjects Covered
Urdu/Sindhi, Maths, Science, English, Social Studies

Participants in the latest year
- Grade-4: 33100 Students

Main Use of Data
- Tracking the impact of reforms on student achievement levels
- Informing curriculum improvement
- Informing teacher training programs
- Informing Textbook Boards

Selection of Participants
- Random Sample

Geographical Coverage
- Provincial-Rural and Urban

Type of Assessment
- Standardized Test

Type of Institution
- Public

Format of Assessment
- Written

Levels of Result Reporting
- Provincial, District

How are Results Disseminated
- Both printed and online report
- Provincial stakeholders conference

Challenges and Areas for Improvement
- Data analysis
- Data dissemination
Provincial Education Assessment Centre (PEACe)
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

**General**

**Year of Establishment**
2002

**Latest Year Administered**
2015 Early Primary Grade Assessment (G-3)

**Frequency**
Every Year (from 2005 to 2008) and after that in 2014, 2015

**Language in which Assessment is Administered**
English, Urdu

**Lead Institution**
PEACe

**Funding Source**
Elementary & Secondary Education Department KP

---

**Content**

**LMTF Domains Covered by the Assessment**
- Literacy & Communication
- Numeracy & Mathematics
- Science & Technology
- Culture & Arts

**Mechanisms in place to ensure alignment with the curriculum**
- Regular internal review when content framework or assessment system is updated
- Curriculum based assessment

---

**Scope & Coverage**

**Purpose of Assessment**
- Monitoring student
- Achievement levels for quality education and informing the policy makers, teacher training institutions, curriculum and textbook developers.

**Age Groups Covered**
- 8 to 14 years

**Grades Covered:**
- 3 to 8 (Class 3 in the latest year)

**Subjects Covered**
Urdu, Maths, Science, English, Social Studies (Note: English, Urdu & Maths in the last G-3 Assessment studies)

**Participants in the latest year**
- 5000

---

**Institutional**

**Main Use of Data**
- Tracking the impact of reforms on student achievement levels
- Informing curriculum improvement
- Informing teacher training programs
- Producing school reports to inform the planning at the school level.
- Training workshops for in service teachers

---

**Selection of Participants**
- Random Sample

**Geographical Coverage**
- District-Rural and Urban

**Type of Assessment**
- Achievement Test

**Type of Institution**
- Public

**Format of Assessment**
- Written

---

**Levels of Result Reporting**
- Provincial

**How are Results Disseminated**
- Printed report only
- Stakeholders conferences

**Challenges and Areas for Improvement**
- Education policy reform

---

Focal Person:
M. Shafique

Designation:
Deputy Director PEACe

Email Address:
shafique.atd@gmail.com
**Student Achievement Test**
(by Reform Support Unit, Sindh)

### General
- **Year of Establishment:** 2012
- **Latest Year Administered:** 2015
- **Frequency:** Annual
- **Language in which Assessment is Administered:** English, Urdu, Sindhi
- **Lead Institution:** IBA Sukkur/RSU
- **Funding Source:** National Budget

### Content
**LMTF Domains Covered by the Assessment**
- Literacy & Communication
- Numeracy & Mathematics
- Science & Technology

**Mechanisms in place to ensure alignment with the curriculum**
- Regular internal review when content framework or assessment system is updated
- Regular independent review by qualified experts

### Scope & Coverage
**Purpose of Assessment**
- Monitoring Education Quality Levels
- Informing teacher training programs
- Informing policy makers for interventions

**Age Groups Covered**
- Not Applicable

**Grades Covered:**
- 5 and 8

**Subjects Covered**
- English, Science, Mathematics, Urdu/Sindhi

**Participants in the latest year**
- 285,882

**Selection of Participants**
- Census

**Geographical Coverage**
- Provincial- Rural and Urban

**Type of Assessment**
- Standardized Test

**Type of Institution**
- Public

**Format of Assessment**
- Written

### Institutional
**Main Use of Data**
- Tracking the impact of reforms on student achievement levels
- Policy reforms
- Informing teacher training programs

**Levels of Result Reporting**
- School, Regional

**How are Results Disseminated**
- Printed report only

**Challenges and Areas for Improvement**
- Data Processing

---

**Focal Person:** Mr. Hamid Mehmood
**Designation:** Program Officer SAT
**Email Address:** shiningstarforall@gmail.com
Key Findings and Comparisons

This section presents a comparison of all assessment systems on key issues related to frequency of assessment systems, scope & coverage, use and purpose(s) of data, information dissemination methods and LMTF domains being covered by each of the assessment system.

1. Language in Which Assessment is Administered

<p>| Table 5.1: Language in Which Assessment is Administered |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Names/Institution Names</th>
<th>Languages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urdu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Status of Education Report</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Education Assessment System</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnostic Assessment, PEACE Balochistan</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directorate of Staff Development</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab Examination Commission</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kashmir Education Assessment Centre</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial Education Assessment Centre, Sindh</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial Education Assessment Centre, KPK</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Achievement Test, Reform Support Unit</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.1 provides information on the language in which administration is administered. The survey results indicate that ASER is the only assessment which is administered in all national and regional languages. Majority of the assessments are administered in both English and Urdu. NEAS conducts assessments in all regional languages except for Pashto.

2. Year of Establishment and Frequency

<p>| Table 5.2: Year of Establishment and Frequency |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Names/Institution Names</th>
<th>Year of Establishment</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Every year</td>
<td>6 times a year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Status of Education Report</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Education Assessment System</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnostic Assessment, Balochistan</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directorate of Staff Development</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab Examination Commission</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kashmir Education Assessment Centre</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial Education Assessment Centre, Sindh</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial Education Assessment Centre, KPK</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Achievement Test, Reform Support Unit</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.2 provides information on when the assessment system was established and how often it has been administered. PEACE is the oldest assessment system which was established in 2002 in Sindh and KPK and has
been conducted every year since then. In case of KPK, the assessment was conducted every year from 2005-2008 but after 2008 it was conducted in 2014 and subsequently in 2015. In Balochistan, the assessment was conducted by NEAS from the year 2004-2009, after which PEACE Balochistan under the Provincial Education Department has been conducting education assessment every four years. ASER is the largest household base citizen-led assessment which was piloted in 2008 and is conducted across Pakistan annually. Kashmir Education Assessment Centre has most recently started conducting assessments. The first cycle of assessment took place in 2013 and the second cycle will take place in 2016. Student Achievement Test is also a recent assessment which was started by Reform Support Unit with support from Education & Literacy Department, Sindh. It takes place every year.

### 3. Funding Source

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Names/Institution Names</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grants from International Organizations</td>
<td>National Budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Status of Education Report</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Education Assessment System</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnostic Assessment, PEACE Balochistan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directorate of Staff Development</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab Examination Commission</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kashmir Education Assessment Centre</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial Education Assessment Centre, Sindh</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial Education Assessment Centre, KPK</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Achievement Test, Reform Support Unit</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.3 clearly indicates that the majority of learning assessments in Pakistan are funded by the national budget. Up to 2013, National Education Assessment System was being funded by grants from international organizations but from the year 2014 onwards, it’s being funded by the national budget. Director of Staff Development and Punjab Examination Commission conduct assessments only in Punjab and are supported jointly by national budget and grants from international organizations. PEACE Sindh, PEACE KPK and KEACE are funded only by the national budget.
### 4. Purpose(s) of Assessments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Names/Institution Names</th>
<th>Purpose(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monitoring education quality levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Status of Education Report</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Education Assessment System</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnostic Assessment, PEACe Balochistan</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directorate of Staff Development</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab Examination Commission</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kashmir Education Assessment Centre</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Provincial Education Assessment Centre, Sindh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial Education Assessment Centre, KPK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Achievement Test, Reform Support Unit</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Survey respondents were asked to indicate the purpose of these national/provincial assessments. Table 5.4 summarizes the responses from respondents. Monitoring educational quality, policy formulation, teacher training reforms and curriculum improvement are the some of the main purposes of most of the national/provincial assessments. It is apparent that student certification and student selection were not common purposes for national/provincial assessments.
5. Type of Institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Names/Institution Names</th>
<th>Institute Types</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Status of Education Report</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Education Assessment System</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnostic Assessment, PEACe Balochistan</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directorate of Staff Development</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab Examination Commission</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kashmir Education Assessment Centre</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provincial Education Assessment Centre, Sindh</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial Education Assessment Centre, KPK</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Achievement Test, Reform Support Unit</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.5 shows the type of institutions covered by each of the assessment. Public sector institutions are covered by all assessment systems. ASER, Directorate of Staff Development and Punjab Examination Commission are the only assessment systems which cover all three institution types: public, private and madrassah/maktab.

6. Type of Assessment

Figure 5.1: Type of Assessment

Figure 5.1 shows that more than half the assessments represented in this survey conduct standardized test in schools. ASER is the only household based citizen led assessment in Pakistan conducted by Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi. Directorate of Staff Development conducts formative test every six months.
For each assessment, figure 5.2 shows the number of participants assessed in the latest year. Directorate of Staff Development assessed the largest number of participants in 2015 with 2,500,000 children at Grade 3, 4 and 5 in Punjab. Punjab Examination Commission tested 220,000 children at Grade 5 and 8 in Punjab. ASER, which is the largest citizen led household based assessment, tested 195,723 children aged 5-16 across Pakistan for language and arithmetic competencies. Kashmir Achievement Test (KAT) is a relatively new assessment system which tested 1000 children at Grade 4 in AJK.

7. Selection of Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Names/Institution Names</th>
<th>Selection Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Census</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Status of Education Report</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Education Assessment System</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnostic Assessment, PEACe Balochistan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directorate of Staff Development</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab Examination Commission</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kashmir Education Assessment Centre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial Education Assessment Centre, Sindh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial Education Assessment Centre, KPK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Achievement Test, Reform Support Unit</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.6 illustrates whether these tests are administered on a selected representative sample or an entire population of students of a particular grade(s). Directorate of Staff Development, SAT and Punjab Examination Commission are the only assessment systems which are administered on the entire population of students. ASER, NEAS, and PEACe Balochistan select student and children on the basis of two stage stratified sample. Kashmir Education Assessment Centre, PEACe Sindh and PEACe KPK administer test on a representative sample selected randomly.

8. Exact Age Groups/ Grades Covered

Figure 5.3: Age Groups/ Grades Covered

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment System</th>
<th>Grades Covered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASER</td>
<td>Age 5-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEAS</td>
<td>Grade 4 and 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEACe Sindh</td>
<td>Grade 4 and 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balochistan</td>
<td>Grade 5 and 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEC</td>
<td>Grade 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT</td>
<td>Grade 3,4,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KAT</td>
<td>Grade 3 to 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5.3 presents the exact age groups/grades covered by each of the assessment system. From the figure it can be generalized that there is a group of assessment systems (NEAS, PEACe Sindh, PEACe KPK and PEACe Balochistan) that conduct assessment at the primary and middle level. In Punjab there are two organizations conducting assessment: DSD and PEC. DSD covers primary level and PEC covers primary and middle level. In KPK, the assessment covers students at primary up to the middle level. ASER assesses children aged 5-16 years at the household level.
### 9. LMTF Domains Covered

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Names/Institution Names</th>
<th>LMTF Domains</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Literacy &amp; Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Status of Education Report</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Education Assessment System</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnostic Assessment, PEACE Balochistan</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directorate of Staff Development</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab Examination Commission</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kashmir Education Assessment Centre</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial Education Assessment Centre, Sindh</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial Education Assessment Centre, KPK</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Achievement Test, Reform Support Unit</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.7 indicates the LMTF domains covered by each of the assessment system. As the table demonstrates, unsurprisingly, Literacy & Communication as well as Numeracy & Mathematics are the two most commonly tested LMTF domains, and are covered by all assessments. Science & Technology and Culture & Arts also appear in almost all of the assessments. In stark contrast are the domains of Physical Well-Being, Social & Emotional and Learning Approaches & Cognition, which are not tested by any assessment system.
Dissemination Method of Assessment’s Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Names/Institution Names</th>
<th>Dissemination Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Printed Report Only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Status of Education Report</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Education Assessment System</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diagnostic Assessment, PEACE Balochistan</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directorate of Staff Development</td>
<td>×</td>
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<tr>
<td>Punjab Examination Commission</td>
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<td>Provincial Education Assessment Centre, Sindh</td>
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<td>Provincial Education Assessment Centre, KPK</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Achievement Test, Reform Support Unit</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The dissemination of results of assessments provides insight on whether the institutions conducting assessments are open to self-criticism, promote transparency and involve various stakeholders. Table 5.8 provides the dissemination methods of assessments’ results as indicated by the survey respondents. Almost half of the assessment systems disseminate their results through both printed and online report. ASER, DSD and PEC use both printed and online report and have made an online database too to present their results. Almost all assessments systems indicated that national reports and summaries/presentations were made and/or distributed to key stakeholders at conferences/seminars.
Chapter 6
Discussion and Conclusion
Chapter 6: Discussion and Conclusion

Over the past decade, international and national education stakeholders have begun to prioritize improvement of the quality and learning over quantity of education in developing countries. Increasingly, education stakeholders are no longer satisfied with how many children are attending school, but they are also concerned about how well each child is learning at schools. The period from 2000 to 2015 (Dakar EFA mandate) emphasized more on assessing the basic competencies of reading and numeracy, and in some instances of science. The period from 2015 onwards saw the global emphasis on moving beyond literacy and numeracy to assess range of cognitive and non-cognitive competencies in hopes of providing all children a strong foundation for their futures. Outcome document of the Sustainable Development Goals and recently crafted Incheon Declaration have raised the bar for education in terms of both equity and how to perceive quality.

Box I: Incheon Declaration –World Education Forum 2015

10) We commit to promoting quality lifelong learning opportunities for all, in all settings and at all levels of education. This includes equitable and increased access to quality technical and vocational education and training and higher education and research, with due attention to quality assurance. In addition, the provision of flexible learning pathways, as well as the recognition, validation and accreditation of the knowledge, skills and competencies acquired through non-formal and informal education, is important.


The Global Compact on Learning by the Center for Universal Education at Brookings, makes a similar call for lifelong learning.

Box II: Global Compact on Learning by the Center for Universal Education

We cannot afford to wait another generation to ensure that all girls and boys are learning and equipped with the skills, knowledge, and competencies needed to live healthy, safe, and productive lives.

Source: Center for Universal Education. 2011, 4

Measuring progress towards these goals will begin with the assessment of learning, to determine both whether students are acquiring the required knowledge and competencies and whether a system is providing students with the appropriate education to acquire these outcomes. Even at the individual level, in both wealthy and poor countries, both parents and children want to know whether or not they will succeed in school, or in learning a second language, or be able to get a job with the skills that they have or might have. This trend has been paralleled by a significant increase in the use of educational assessments as a way to measure gains and losses in quality of learning.

In alignment to the global trends, an interest in assessment has grown in Pakistan too to improve ways of measuring student achievement, and to reach marginalized populations within a country.

Pakistan has witnessed a robust period of policy reforms in the field of curriculum and assessments since 2001. From 2001-2003 curriculum ‘revision’ was undertaken in measured and tempered phases. In 2005/6, curriculum of all grades and subjects (grades I-XII including ECE and Literacy)
underwent a comprehensive reform embedded in three mega concurrent initiatives of the Ministry of Education, viz. i) the National Education Policy Reform process (NEPR); ii) the national curriculum reforms, and the undertaking of the first ever National Education Census (NEC) of all service delivery units in education (www.moe.gov.pk). These reforms have taken place at multiple levels since the nationwide Devolution Plan of 2001, post 18th Amendment in 2010 and Local Government Act in 2013. In 2009, National Education Policy was announced by the Federal Government which accepted the need for curriculum development and assessment along modern lines in order to face the challenges of globalization and learning as a lifelong process.

Box III: National Education Policy 2009 - Improving Student Assessment

Assessment system currently suffers from several deficiencies in promoting quality education. The one with more sinister outcomes is the practice of rote learning which stops the mental growth of the child and blocks innovative learning. Efforts have to be made to address this issue and need for inculcating critical and analytical thinking skills for producing life-long independent learners have to be emphasized. Assessment mechanism should be such that analytical thinking and critical reflections are tapped and encouraged.

Source: National Education Policy 2009, Chapter 6, Section 6.4 (115), Pg 48

Box IV: Punjab Education Sector Plan - Examinations/Assessments

Assessments need to encourage higher order thinking skills. Standards need to be developed/reviewed and implemented for exams conducted by PEC and BISEs. Expertise and capacity in assessment and evaluation in the province needs to be developed. Use of assessments for system diagnosis needs to be practiced, for which dissemination processes and feedback mechanism for PEC, PEAS and BISEs needs to be reviewed. All examination related bodies require effective coordination.

Source: Punjab School Education Sector Plan 2013-2017, Executive Summary, Summary of Key Strategies, Quality, Page XII

In addition to the national, federal and provincial reforms – each province has developed its education sector plan up to 2018/19 which was prepared in tandem to the post 2015 consultations keeping local priorities uppermost. The outcome documents or sector plans are sector wide in scope designed/pitched and targeted across all sub-sectors mirroring most of the Post 2015 global agendas.
The previous chapter provided information on the various assessment systems being conducted across the country which not only helped in creating a baseline data to explore the depth and breadth of education assessments systems in Pakistan but also identified gaps and needs in terms of technical capacities for conducting large scale assessments, human resources, budgets and alignment with international standards. Whilst it is noteworthy that (a) the majority of these assessment systems are funded by the national budget; (b) half of these assessments undertake standardized school based comprehensive tests; (c) the majority of these assessments are conducted over a large sample; (d) almost all assessments systems indicated that national reports and summaries/presentations were made and/or distributed to key stakeholders at conferences/seminars; many areas still presents significant challenges. A brief discussion of these challenges is presented below:

1) The majority of these assessment systems conduct assessments at either or all of grade 3, 4, 5 and 8. None of the assessment systems formally test children at lower primary and lower elementary level(grade 1, 2, 6 or 7) leading to the assessment systems being concentrated at only upper primary and upper elementary level.

2) Major tests assess basic domains – primarily literacy and numeracy, and sometimes science and social studies—, with the common result of neglecting the broader range of non cognitive skills such as the critical thinking, logical reasoning, social & emotional, physical well being, arts etc.

3) None of the provincial/national school based assessment systems (excluding Punjab) assess children belonging to private schools.

4) Majority of the times, teachers neither are sufficiently trained and able to understand the data and use it to influence their teaching, nor do they have adequate time and authority to make adjustments to their instruction, including such aspects as pacing, sequencing, the examples and exercises they use, and supplementation, among others.

5) Last but not the least is the continued failure to coordinate assessment with the other major functions of the education system. For assessment to improve classroom instruction and learning, it must be in full and functional harmony with a system’s curriculum, teacher training and support, textbooks and teaching learning materials, planning, budgeting and all other education departments.

In Pakistan as a Learning Champion country we need to thus focus on the following three critical elements to make assessments meaningful and reflective of constructive learning processes for both students and teachers: coordinate assessment systems with other major departments/functions of the education system such as curriculum, teacher training workshops, textbooks etc; the front-line education actors have the capacity, knowledge and authority to understand student assessment to improve classroom practices and student learning outcomes; and finally the assessment team has the technical ability and the technology (the hardware and software) to be able to construct reliable, valid and appropriate tests and to archive, analyze and disseminate the results in a coherent, comprehensible and truly useful manner.
Chapter 7: Recommendation

The following recommendations emerge from the study:

1) **Scope of 'high-stakes' assessments:**
   Define the scope of 'high-stakes' assessments as a basic entitlement under 25 A to ensure that each child 5-16 learns and not simply goes to school. Comprehensively address sustainability of assessment through institutional commitment, trained personnel, funding and rigor at provincial and national levels for quality assurance.

2) **National Assessment Forum:**
   For the next 10 years there must be a consensus to mobilize all stakeholders conducting assessments (public and private) to meet annually, share initiatives agree on common set of indicators for public reporting and actions as a community of practice in Pakistan to inform reforms and policy.

3) **Dissemination of results at the school level:**
   Whilst it is noteworthy that findings of the assessments’ results are made public by the institutions, there is a need to ensure that the responses students provide on specific items from a test are provided to schools, teachers and the teacher educators. This will allow them to adjust lesson designs, delivery and their own assessments, to concentrate on weaknesses through mixed summative and formative assessments for formative purposes.

4) **Assessments to be a part of teacher training programs:**
   Continuous assessments must become a part of the pedagogical/ instructional and learning culture of teachers with formal iterative feedback on whether children are learning or not. By making assessment a part of the pre and in-service training of teachers it will develop local widespread capacity for assessment for widespread need for learning accountability. This will ensure a greater alignment between external standardized assessments and those assessments, both summative and formative, that teachers lead.

5) **Ensure simplicity and comparability of assessments:**
   There is an urgent need to ensure simplicity of assessments so that it is widely understood by all stakeholders who can then take action for solutions. The data analysis must be kept simple, clear and comprehensible to be able to be widely understood and comparable by all teachers and parents. Unless the data is understood by change agents, it cannot be used as a diagnostic tool for learning challenges.

6) **Consistent indicators of learning outcomes:**
   Work towards consistent indicators of learning outcomes for each level for ease of measurement, ensuring that the 'child's interest is central' – measuring where the child is at not where the curriculum and learning outcomes suggests that the child should be; the baseline must be the child first.

7) **Use of ICT to conduct assessment:**
   Finally, it is also important to mention the nascent but rapidly increasing use of ICT (information and communication technologies) to conduct assessment. The use of technology brings many advantages to the process of administering the assessment such as the ability to decrease cost, reduce cheating and accelerate the analysis and reporting of results for large-scale assessments.

To summarize, it is important to underscore the critical importance of working with a combination of measures and measurement strategies that would enable provincial and national level
assessment systems to provide information for evaluating local education programs and informing instructional practice for accountability, certification/selection and pedagogic purposes to optimize education delivery and outcomes. We sincerely hope the upcoming National Education Policy 2016 will set the stage to establish assessment results as a concrete diagnostic tool to inform decisions and actions at all levels of an education system – policy, planning and practice. Our national policies (and provincial sector plans) will have to be thus inverted looking at learning baselines first in each sub-sector of education prior to designing access strategies that may or may not address learning outcomes. The proposed National Assessment Forum would be a vital platform to build consensus and seek innovative methods to diagnose and improve learning outcomes in Pakistan aligned to national and global commitments being finalized under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in general and SDG 4 on education in particular. This comprehensive approach is the only one to ensure the essence of Article 25 A as a constitutional and fundamental right and entitlement in reforms, policy and measurable practice.
References


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