



Education in Rural Balochistan

Policy Brief

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The problem:

Pakistan ranked [154 out of 189](#)¹ countries in the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Human Development Index (HDI) ranking in 2019. The HDI looks at long-term progress in three basic dimensions of human development, i.e. a long and healthy life, access to knowledge, and a decent standard of living.

24% of Pakistan's population lives below the national poverty line, 31% of people in rural areas and 13% in urban areas are below the poverty line. Moreover, nationally 38.8% (rural 54.6%: urban 9.4%) of the population are poor based on the multidimensional poverty index (MPI).

Balochistan is disproportionately behind the other provinces on socio-economic indicators of poverty. Despite being the least populated province, Balochistan has the second highest rate of multidimensional poverty.

As studies, detailed in the next section, show poverty is intrinsically related to lack of literacy. According to the PSLM Survey (2018-2019), the literacy rate of children above the age of ten in Balochistan is 40% (male 54%: female 24%), while the overall literacy rate is 34% and 56% in rural and urban areas respectively. Moreover, literacy rate of women living in rural areas is only 17%, whereas the overall national rural female literacy rate of Pakistan is 49%.

Studies find that a household whose head has attained more than secondary school-level education performs significantly better than all other households.

Current Policies on Education in Pakistan

Under section 25-A, the State of Pakistan shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of five to sixteen years in such manner as may be determined by law. With the passing of the 18th Amendment,

education has become a provincial subject and so each province can make its own education plans. The [Balochistan Education Sector Plan](#)² for 2020 – 25, is part of the [Balochistan Education Project](#)³. This plan analyses the challenges faced by the Government of Balochistan in the province and provides a roadmap for implementation of inclusive education.

Findings from the PAR Study

The Participatory Action Research on Dynamics of Household Poverty and Inclusive Development in Balochistan with focus on Women's Empowerment was conducted in four villages of Loralai, Khuzdar and Kech. This longitudinal study found the villages to be lacking proper education facilities.

Adult literacy rate in the four villages of Loralai ranges from 2.84% to 16.3%. Only Yaroo Shar village has a primary school for girls and none of other villages have girls' school. Each of village has either a primary or a high school for boys. However, primary school in Mara Khurad Malak Fateh Muhammad is closed due to non-availability of teacher. About 54% of the school age children in these villages are out of school.

In the four villages of Khuzdar, all the villages either have a primary school or a high school. Sabzal Khanzai has a primary school which is not functional for quite some time. Killi Yar Muhammad village has functional primary schools for both boys and girls. Killi Mamojo and Hinar Noghey villages have high schools for boys. However, Killi Mamojo has a high school for girls closer to its vicinity. There are challenges of access to school facilities for both boys and girls in these villages due to which about a considerable proportion i.e., 46% to 89%, of children of school age are out of school. Similarly, adult literacy rate of these villages ranges from 23% to 43%.

The villages in Kech have a literacy rate ranging from as low as 5% for village Balochabad to

50% for village Nazar Muhamamd Ward. All the sample villages have school facilities for boys and girls (except for Peerani Lamb where separate education facility for girls is missing). However, in village Balochabad the school is available (building constructed in 2016) but it is non-functional due to non-availability of teachers.

13% of the respondents of the PAR study, stated illiteracy and lack of employable skills to be a poverty push factor in Wave 1. Illiteracy and lack of skills has a likelihood occurrence of 29% as a Poverty Push Factors in Wave 1. The research found, literacy and education have a likelihood of 9.3% for being a poverty pull determinant. In Wave 2, the respondents believed illiteracy and lack of skills to have a likelihood of 6.5%

As per feedback from the respondents (LHI, FGDs and SES), longer school distances and non-functional schools are the key reasons for struggling rates of gross enrolment (decreased from 66% in 2013-14 to 57% in 2018-19) for education statistics in the province.

Policy Recommendations

Understanding that poverty is exacerbated by lack of literacy, it is essential to work towards increasing the literacy rates, especially for girls in rural Balochistan, to truly graduate the rural poor out of poverty. This can be done by implementing the following policies:

1. Responsibilities of the Federal Government

Article 25- A was passed by Senate and National Assembly thus the Federal government must support the provincial governments in multiple ways. The two levels of governments must coordinate regularly to discuss progress. the Federal Government must, provide technical backstopping and monitoring; conduct research studies and ensure gender mainstreaming to achieve parity between girls and boys.

The federal budget for 2020-21, the government of Pakistan has allocated [PKR 83.3 billion](#)⁴ for Education Affairs and Services. In 2019-20, Pakistan spent 2.3% of its GDP on education; this is the lowest in the region and the government is spending far less on education that what is recommended by UNESCO. To meet the indicators specified in SDG 4 (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all), the federal government must play a more active role in implementing education related policies in provinces.

2. Local government to work with stakeholders

The local government must be asked to coordinate with other stakeholders working in the region. [District SDG](#)⁵ committees, notified by Additional Chief Secretary, P&DD, GoB are headed by Deputy Commissioners (DCs), for all the districts of Balochistan. They aim to facilitate SDGs mainstreaming into district level development planning through awareness raising, SDGs advocacy and effective coordination.

The local government must also coordinate with the social pillar formed by LSOs, VOs and COs to tap into 300,000 households working for their own development in nine districts of Balochistan under EU-funded BRACE Programme.

3. Continue Data Collection and Analysis

Government of Balochistan currently has an Education Management Information System (EMIS) as well as a Real Time School Monitoring System which collects gender disaggregated data under the Balochistan Education Project. The GoB must continue these efforts beyond the life of any and all funded programmes, and

coordinate with the Federal government to share progress.

Together, the State must conduct regular qualitative analysis of the unique challenges faced in accessing schools and student retention for girls of school going age.

4. Improved and Accessible Schools

The available schools should be re-evaluated with a gender lens, ensuring the schools are fit for girl students, i.e. they have, boundary walls; gender segregated toilets; access to safe drinking water; facilities for differently abled girls; and have women teachers coming into their duty stations as they should. Girls are also discouraged from walking to schools for security reasons; the parents fear their daughters can be harassed or assaulted; for this the government must come up with a security policy, in collaboration with the local police, for girl students.

In many districts of Balochistan, walking to far off schools is a huge deterrent for girls' education. To ensure more girls can access educational facilities, the government needs to adapt to region's topographic needs and initiate a hybrid model of teaching. Mobile classrooms will allow teachers can go into different

villages to take classes for girls at primary and secondary education levels. For this the government of Balochistan can work with organisations already working on [Accelerated Learning Programmes in Balochistan⁶](#).

5. Government led campaign on girls' education

The federal and provincial government should lead a campaign to raise awareness on benefits of girls' education. The local religious leaders should be included to assure parents that religions promote learning for women and men alike. The campaign should also address the harmful effects of child marriages and young-age pregnancies so girls have the space and opportunity to complete their education.

Torch bearers like Malala Yousafzai, from each district should be appreciated on a national and provincial level to encourage girls and highlight that they too can contribute to society in a similar manner by pursuing education.

This campaign must be well covered by national and provincial media, so the parents of out of school girls can understand how sending their daughters to school will help pull them out of poverty.

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