

EDUCATION GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

In all DMCs, education governance exists within a legal, political, and policy environment unique to that DMC. Variations across DMCs can be expected in the policy and planning capacity, level of commitment to change, openness and transparency of policy and administrative decisions, and extent of participation in decision making.

Major changes, often encouraged by international agencies, are taking place in education governance among most DMCs. In varying degrees, at different speeds, and following a range of paths, there is growing devolution of education responsibilities and, in some cases, decision-making authority. This general trend can have profound effects on many facets of the education system, e.g., the actors involved in education decisions; strategies for change; opportunities for localizing curricula; operational meaning given to such concepts as quality, efficiency, and relevance in education; and how education services are financed. Decentralization may have an equally profound effect on the direction and content of the roles of international agencies.

This chapter analyzes the issues and trends in education governance and management, most particularly the trends of evolution of the structure of policy making and planning.²⁴ The policy and planning environment at each decision level is described. Two country case studies of somewhat different approaches to devolution of education decisions are described. The potential benefits and risks are identified, and the conditions necessary for sustaining cycles of planning, monitoring, knowledge use, and education improvement are explored.

A. Policy and Management Environment

Education systems function within a policy and management environment that either constrains or enhances their performance. This

²⁴ Education policy making, as the term is used here, is typically a process of making major education choices and setting directions for the education system or one or more of its subsectors. In practice it is an intensely political process involving high-ranking bureaucrats, elected officials, and a variety of concerned groups. The transparency of the process varies across governments and cultures.

environment varies by DMC and, where decentralization is undertaken, may be unique to each community. Common to most DMCs is a pyramid organization of administration, centralized policy authority, and multiple centers of education decisions. Policy and management, in addition to being situated in a wide range of political ideologies, traditions, and evolving structures, tend to be characterized by large public bureaucracies with a complex variety of ministries and central agencies with overlapping responsibilities.

1. Central Level

Virtually all DMCs follow a pyramid model, in which national policies, programs, and logistics are formulated by central ministries. The planning of education is typically associated with multiyear national plans formulated in the center. The most common planning cycle—five years—has traditionally been the exclusive responsibility of planning and education bodies in the center. Multiyear national education plans, unless revised annually, tend not to have strong records of implementation. At times constructed with little local input and with questionable education statistics, these plans frequently serve primarily as visions rather than sets of explicit actions. The Pakistan Country Sector Study states: "... since universal primary enrollment has been the goal of all development plans in Pakistan, it is important to note that implementation lapses and shortfalls in targets have been a common feature of the plans" (PIDE 1997, p. 42).

As described below (pages 106–117), education decentralization and development of monitoring and evaluation capacity are altering the process and efficacy of planning. The central ministry of education works through a network of provincial, regional, and district education offices that largely duplicate the structure of the central ministry and are responsible for ensuring that central policies are communicated and implemented in schools. Individual schools are managed by head teachers, whose authority and responsibility differ by country, but whose job usually involves some combination of school management, school-ministry communications, school-community relations, and instructional supervision. The administrative and management issues at the various levels of the pyramid differ and, given the new pressures for decentralization and community participation, may change considerably.

As education systems and other services have grown, bureaucracies have burgeoned. For example, the education sector in Cambodia employs 75,000 workers, half of all public employees. Administrators comprise more than one fifth of all education personnel (ADB 1996h). In the Lao PDR, the number of staff in nonteaching positions in 1994/95 represents more than 20 percent of the number of teachers (Mingat 1996).

Clarity has often been the victim of growth. In Cambodia, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports was, until recently, organized into 16 departments, averaging 58 staff members per department. An ADB study estimated that nearly 1,300 staff were employed across the 13 provincial headquarters and 1,750–2,000 staff in district bureaus (ADB 1996h). Considerable inefficiencies arise from the absence of any clear delineation between the functional responsibilities of provincial and district headquarters, respectively.

Responsibility for education is often distributed across several ministries, a condition that further complicates effective coordination. Examples include Cambodia, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, and Lao PDR. Table 4.1 shows that many groups are involved in policy development and operational control of the education system in Kazakhstan.

Table 4.1: Overlap of Major Policy Functions between Ministry of Education and Other Government Agencies, Kazakhstan

Function	Ministry of Education	Overlap With
Education policy	Drafts policies and regulations.	Cabinet of Ministers.
Curriculum policy	Develops “conceptions,” elaborates standards, develops humanities curriculum.	Cabinet of Ministers, Institute of Educational Problems.
Higher education policy	Develops regulations and oversees issues related to private institutions.	Cabinet of Ministers.
Teacher education policy	Projects teacher staffing needs.	<i>Oblast</i> (regional) department of education.
School staffing levels	Ensures that staffing meets government norms.	<i>Oblast</i> department of education.
Education finance	Monitors expenditures and payments to institutions.	Ministry of Finance, <i>oblast</i> department of education.
Quality assurance	Operates the Department of Inspection (mainly for higher education institutions and national institutions).	<i>Oblasts</i> and <i>raions</i> with responsibility for schools.
Other functions	Statistics, health.	<i>Oblasts</i> , etc.

Source: UNESCO and ADB 1995.

Coordination is complicated by the existence of overlapping responsibilities of the Cabinet of Ministers, the central Department of Education, *oblast* (regional) departments of education, and, in some cases, also officials at the *raion* (roughly analogous to county) level, creating conflict in some cases (Box 4.1).

2. Intermediate Levels of Education Management

The importance of intermediate levels of education management varies across DMCs, with influence generally increasing as DMCs get larger. For example, provincial education offices in the PRC and India tend to be powerful relative to their counterparts in Cambodia or Pacific DMCs. Organizationally, education bureaucracies at provincial, regional, and district levels tend to duplicate the structure of the central ministry, e.g., each has offices for curriculum, testing, or facilities. This may result in duplication of effort and unclear lines of authority and responsibility. Much of the analysis of education effectiveness and managerial efficiency has focused on these blurred lines.

To ensure that nationwide strategies and programs reflect actual

Box 4.1: Central Ministry Management in Kazakhstan

The Ministry of Education has no sector-wide analysis, planning, or monitoring functions to support budget preparation and resource allocation. Creating those functions presupposes a new interpretation or amendment of the law on local self-government. Although the current law provides some budget implementation authority to the *oblast* (region), it does not provide for a national focal point for analysis, planning, or monitoring for the education sector as a whole. *Oblast* departments of education also have no responsibility and, therefore, no capability for local-level analysis and planning. The Ministry of Education has only rudimentary basic analysis capability.

Ministries and *oblast* departments of education are left without a focal point for market-oriented, sector-wide analysis, planning, or monitoring. Important education reform decisions are being taken without proper assessment either of the implications for costs and resources, for the operation of particular education subsectors, or for the education process. The Ministry of Education drafts education laws without adequate regard for their compatibility with—or implications for law and implementing regulations of—other sectors and areas of direct relevance to the education sector, e.g., taxation and property (UNESCO and ADB 1995).

needs and translate into desired outcomes at the local or institution level, ministries of education must effectively carry out several key responsibilities: (i) convey policy and program information from the central ministry to schools; (ii) convey data, e.g., school enrollment and book orders, from schools to the central ministry; (iii) ensure that schools are abiding by government policies; and (iv) occasionally, provide instructional leadership and supervision (though this is often interpreted as ensuring that schools are abiding by government policies).

The main bottleneck in intermediate-level administration is that provincial, regional, and district offices often lack the authority and the resources to do their job effectively (see, for example, Philippine Congressional Committee on Education 1992). Because of the insufficient delegation of authority, many mid-level administrators may have insufficient authority to make decisions or otherwise act on information available. Provincial education administrators may be expected to implement programs and projects that do not meet the needs of their particular area. For example, in many DMCs, regional and district education officials cannot dismiss nonperforming teachers or school administrators without lengthy consultation with the central authorities. Further, they cannot redirect resource flows to particularly needy schools without lengthy delays. And, because of inadequate funding, they may not give schools even minimal oversight.

3. School-Level Management and Autonomy

To the extent that decentralization makes the local community and school the focal point of much of the planning and activities related to schooling improvement, it also has a dramatic impact on the role of the head teacher. The traditional role has emphasized maintenance of administrative control, performance of bureaucratic routines, and commitment to rules for problem solving. The emerging role may include multiple goals, a focus on facilitating change, and use of evaluation and professional sources of information. The context of the new role suggests a more uncertain work environment and greater decision-making complexity.

The focus of a training program in the Philippines to prepare head teachers for decentralization is indicative of the potential new demands placed on head teachers by decentralization. The training program, which stands in marked contrast to training devoted to routine administrative tasks, includes such areas as (i) management of change;

(ii) instructional leadership; (iii) communication management; (iv) crisis management; (v) problem solving, resourcing, and decision making; (vi) decentralization; (vii) performance accountability; (viii) values development; (ix) physical facilities management; and (x) administrative discipline (Government of the Philippines 1996).

a. Head Teachers

Under changes taking place in education governance, head teachers may be at the cutting edge between the administration of education and the actual delivery of instruction to students. Yet few of them have adequate preparation for their job or authority to change the way their school operates. They have a difficult job that will only become more difficult over the next decade. One of the current ironies of education development is that the push toward decentralization now under way (to varying degrees) in virtually all DMCs shifts more responsibility to the group of education administrators least ready to accept it.

Head teachers generally have responsibility in four areas:

- *School management.* Currently this includes ordering supplies, ensuring teachers are hired and assigned, information gathering, and basic record keeping. In many DMCs, these are viewed as the chief set of responsibilities. The trend is toward more technical tasks and coping with professional problems.
- *School-ministry communications.* Completing reports required by the central ministry is a major task for head teachers in some DMCs. For instance, until just a few years ago, head teachers in Nepal had to complete a 52-page school data collection form for the school administration section of the Ministry of Education and a four-page survey, collecting much the same information, for the manpower and statistics section of the Ministry (Chapman and Dunghana 1991). Although such practices are becoming less common, head teachers in some other DMCs have been required to complete lengthy surveys about their school, one or more times per year. Head teachers also share responsibility with district education officers for ensuring that ministry policies and programs are conveyed to teachers and parents. As education decisions move downward, the head teacher interacts primarily with provincial and district authorities.
- *School-community relations.* This involves working with community councils, community development associations, parent-

teacher associations, parent groups, and other local organizations that have an interest in the school. The goal is often to encourage community support either of the school (e.g., teacher subsidies, facilities construction, maintenance) or of the schooling process (e.g., encouraging parents to make sure their children do their homework and to send their daughters to school). Decentralization may significantly extend the involvement of the community in education decisions. The head teacher becomes the key actor in coordinating community involvement.

- *Instructional supervision.* The extent to which school-level administrators regard instructional supervision as part of their responsibility varies across countries, with instructional supervision often falling to district inspectors or teacher supervisors. However, one common by-product of decentralization is an increased expectation that head teachers will play this role. This shift toward head teachers taking more responsibility for instructional supervision has fairly dramatic implications for their selection and training.

With few exceptions, instructional supervision is the function least well served by the typical allocation of responsibilities across the administrative structure of the ministry of education. Teacher supervision in most DMCs is the responsibility of officials operating from the provincial or (more often) district level. This removes the supervisory function from the administrator most aware of a teacher's pedagogic skills (e.g., the head teacher) and assigns it to individuals removed from the school, who visit it only intermittently and who often view their role more as one of enforcing rules than of demonstrating to teachers how they can improve their teaching.

In light of the range of issues likely to dominate education development agendas over the next several years, it is expected that the roles and responsibilities of the head teacher will experience more dramatic transformation than that seen at any other management level. In only a few DMCs do head teachers currently have the training or background to meet this challenge. Across much of Asia, massive support and training will be needed if decentralized school management is to lead to positive outcomes. Whatever education value decentralization holds may be largely lost if head teachers cannot translate it into concrete actions within their school and community.

B. Privatization

Although private schools have a long tradition in several DMCs, the majority of governments have been responsible for most education financing. The recent growth of private education has been in response to the expansion of public schooling, the disparities in education services available to different segments of the population, widespread dissatisfaction with education efficiency and quality, the movement toward decentralization of education governance, and the increase in the presence of the private sector generally (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2: Percentage of Private Sector Education Enrollments

Country	Private Primary	Private Secondary
India	25	52
Indonesia	13	60
Japan	1	15
Philippines	5	38
Singapore	35	1
Thailand	11	32

Source: James (1993) as cited in Bray (1996).

The proportion of private schools within a country can be increased in four main ways (Bray 1996): (i) transfer the ownership of public schools to private individuals or groups; (ii) allow private schools to develop while holding the number of public schools constant; (iii) give direct government support to private schools; and (iv) increase the private financing of schools that remain under government control. The most common strategy across Asia is to loosen regulations on private schools and to allow market forces to operate. The ministry of education generally still determines the curriculum, but private schools can implement it in the ways they think best.

The most common arguments for private schooling are that it leads to increased quality, number of school places, efficiency, and resources available to support education—the influx of private funds generally outweighs declines in public funding, and may be allocated more effectively.

Not all of these arguments carry the same weight. Whether private schools offer better-quality instruction or operate more efficiently depends on the type of private school. Bray (1996) distinguishes the

following four types: (i) the elite private schools, which generally provide good-quality education at a high price; (ii) schools run by religious or other nonprofit organizations, which provide an alternative to the public system and that may be superior, comparable, or inferior in quality; (iii) low-quality, low-cost institutions that cater to excess demand and give a second chance to those who are unable to get into (or stay in) the public system; and (iv) low-cost institutions that cater to students who would go to public schools but are discouraged from doing so by the various changes made in those institutions.

While private schools usually increase the number of school places, the impact of those places depends on whether they serve students who would otherwise not be enrolled in public schools, or merely provide an alternative opportunity for students who would be enrolled anyway. The evidence supporting their greater efficiency, however, is mixed. Some studies have found private schools to be more efficient than public ones, partly because head teachers of private schools have more incentives to be efficient and because they are able to employ part-time and other less-costly teachers (Bray 1996).

The efficiency of elite private schools is open to question because, while they provide high-quality education, it is typically at a substantially higher price than public schools. The quality of instruction in the low-cost private schools varies widely, but is often low. Nonetheless, in comparing price with quality, the family contribution for public schooling may be higher than is generally realized, in which case private education might have the advantage. Recent analyses of total expenditures (private and public) for public education have generally found family contributions for children's schooling to be much higher than previously thought (see, for example, Bray 1996). Bray argues that there is more de facto privatization in education than is widely recognized.

The extent of the state's role in financing education is a likely subject for debate for years to come (Box 4.2). Irrespective of the future balance between public and private provision of education, many of the same management skills are required for either group of schools to be effective.

Box 4.2: What Role for the State in Financing Education?

The 1980s and 1990s brought a considerable questioning of the role of the state in all sectors of economic and social activity. Challenges to the dominance of the state have come from awareness of the state's inefficiency and lack of responsiveness to market signals.

However, general agreement remains that the state should continue to be the lead actor in financing education, at least at the basic level. Burgess' view is that:

Arguments relating to market failure, redistribution and poverty, basic rights, and externalities...still point fairly directly to a significant role for the state in particular areas, which include infrastructure and regulation, social protection, education, health and the environment....Problems of market failure are particularly relevant in markets for basic health and education that are typically thin, incomplete, or missing. These are unlike normal private goods in the sense that there are pervasive externalities associated with their provision which are not captured in private calculations of costs and benefits (Burgess 1997, p. 326).

A much simpler set of arguments focuses on equity per se. Namely, just as decentralization (discussed below) places the greatest strains on communities with the least access to resources, privatization can pose serious challenges to educational access for children (particularly girls) in poor families, for whom the costs of private education may be too high. Where analysis shows that privatization would have considerable net benefits—most often argued to be the case in the provision of TVE or higher education—the state may still need to play a role in providing targeted scholarships and other mechanisms to ensure equitable access for the poor and other deprived groups.

Thus while strong arguments can be made for privatization in areas in which the state does not have a clear advantage over private markets (e.g., industrial production), the rationale for a continued leading state role in the education sector remains strong (Bray 1998).

C. Decentralization and Localization

While most DMCs have experimented with community-centered development in education or other policy spheres at various points in the past, policy making and planning in the DMCs have, for the most part, been the realm of central governments. Legally or by tradition, formal responsibilities for developing major policies and comprehensive planning related to the education sector have most frequently resided with the national legislature and within ministries of education, finance,

and planning. Based on the assumption that policy is primarily an activity of senior officials in the central bureaucracies, international agencies have given much attention to technical assistance and capacity-building projects designed to better inform and support policymakers in their work.

Nonetheless, a shift in the locus and processes of policy and planning control in education is well under way in several DMCs and is in the initial stages in others. The motivations for movement of education decisions away from the center reflect dissatisfaction with existing centralized systems. The objectives include (i) finding an alternative or supplement to central government financing because of insufficient central resources by requiring local governments to share financial responsibilities and develop private support; (ii) improving efficiency of education as part of a general movement toward market-based development strategies to replace central planning; (iii) increasing the efficiency, relevance, and effectiveness of education by encouraging participation of parents and the community; and (iv) reflecting new models of planning and decision making that, for purposes of increased relevance and improved quality, emphasize wider participation and collaboration.

Decentralization²⁵ generally involves the granting of some of the national government's authority to lower-level units, and typically opens the way for the establishment or development of local institutions that are, to a degree, autonomous from the central government. Local authorities are generally given expanded rights to develop and allocate local resources, coupled with new responsibilities for bearing program costs. Table 4.3 briefly summarizes the current status of education governance in eight DMCs. Subsequently, two cases (India and the PRC) are described in more detail. On the one hand, experiences in the DMCs provide some evidence that decentralization can strengthen local government units financially and legally. However, it is important to recognize that increased discretionary authority often comes alongside a decrease in funding from the central government. As discussed below in the case of the PRC, decentralization may pose a challenge to equity, since poor communities may be poorly positioned to take advantage of new financial and planning autonomy, and simultaneously least able to meet the increased burdens on local financial and human resources.

²⁵ Terms frequently used in discussing decentralization include localization, individualization, devolution, democratization, deconcentration, debureaucratization, and privatization.

Table 4.3: Education Decentralization in Selected Developing Member Countries

Center	Province or Region	District	Village
China, People's Rep. of			
Macro management or macro guidance. As part of a decentralization program, central government developed a financial responsibility system to authorize raising of funds at local up to provincial and central levels.	Implementation of national laws, regulations, and policies; length of schooling, yearly enrollment; selection of textbooks, number of teachers and teaching salaries.	Within national guidelines, responsibilities are determined by provincial government. Local governments are permitted to raise resources through various forms of taxation.	Community education committees generate funds and material assistance; engage in macro management, supervision, and assessment of schools; and encourage community participation.
Indonesia			
Beginning of dialogue on development of a more limited role emphasizing establishment of regulations, setting standards, evaluation.	Coordination of implementation of policy of basic education; partner with the center in planning and managing teacher training; mediator between education authority at district level and central ministry.	Beginning of dialogue on steps to improve planning and management capacity at the district level; consideration of training local expertise.	The role of school parent-teacher associations in school management is being gradually strengthened.
Kyrgyz Republic			
Establish national policies, plans, and programs; develop legal and legislative base for education; develop and maintain national research and development installations; provision of national standards, testing, and certification.	<i>Region:</i> Gradual assumption of responsibilities for regional planning, standards, and finance; coordination of associations and groups involved in education		
Nepal			
Nepal Planning Commission sets guidelines for broad national policy and planning providing the Ministry of Education (MoE) overall education development directions. MoE drafts national policies and plans, coordinates national-level programs, and conducts monitoring and evaluation.	<i>Region:</i> The Regional Education Directorate (RED) coordinates, monitors, and evaluates programs at regional level; RED has authority to recruit teachers at the secondary level.	The 75 districts, through the District Education Office (DEO), are implementing units and district-level coordinating, monitoring, and evaluation units. Each district has an education committee representing community organizations, parents, and head teachers. The committee reviews district-level programs.	The School Management Committee (SMC), consisting of an elected local chairman and representatives from parents, oversees school development activities and approves programs to be forwarded to the DEO. The SMC raises local funds in support of the school and mobilizes community for other school assistance.

Table 4.3: Education Decentralization in Selected Developing Member Countries (cont'd.)

Center	Province or Region	District	Village
Pakistan			
The federal Government is responsible for national policies and programs for all social sectors including education. The federal MoE sets policy standards, develops the curriculum, prepares national plans and budgets (with Ministry of Finance). MoE further acts as a technical resource and as a channel of communication on national education policy to the provinces.	The province has primary responsibility for implementing education plans and programs, and formulating provincial policies, regulations, and procedures. Primary education management is through separate directorates. The province is also responsible for production of textbooks.	The provinces are divided into divisions, which are further subdivided into districts and sub-districts or blocks (<i>tehsils</i>). The district has authority to recruit teachers and select school sites.	The village education management committees manage day-to-day school activities.
Papua New Guinea			
Foundational policies for all levels of education, curriculum development; teacher training, examinations, and certification; planning and professional support to provinces; organizing supply of textbooks; management of tertiary institutions and national high schools; mobilization of funds and donor liaison.	Development of policies regarding school fees; implementation of provincial education plans; data collection for national-level ordering and distribution of textbooks and materials; appointment of second-level teachers; teachers' salaries; financial aspects of capital works; operation and maintenance costs.		Responsible at primary and elementary levels for nonsalary budgeting for operation and maintenance; maintenance of teachers' houses; expansion and maintenance of adult literacy.
Philippines			
Formulation of policies, strategic planning, and budget preparation; development of standards for facilities, curriculum, and teachers; research and development; monitoring and program assessment.	<i>Region:</i> Technical assistance in local instructional and program improvement; monitoring and evaluation of Division office; budget coordination; management training of head teachers and supervisors. <i>Division:</i> Policy implementation; division strategic planning; program development and implementation; instructional supervision; monitoring and evaluation of district and school performance.	Organization of school-based in-service training, organization of distribution system for textbooks and materials in district; general administration support to schools; management of district-level indicator systems.	

Table 4.3: Education Decentralization in Selected Developing Member Countries (cont'd.)

Center	Province or Region	District	Village
Viet Nam			
The Ministry of Education and Training has major responsibility for policy formulation, national examinations, directing and inspecting all education curricula, and managing directly more than 40 universities. Other ministries also control and manage various kinds of education institutions. Central education authorities act as redistribution mechanism when local resources are insufficient.	The provinces operate college-level institutions (established to meet the local human resources demand) and all secondary schools; 80 percent of general education budget is paid from local resources (province and below).	Districts manage primary and lower secondary schools. (Much support for these schools comes through mobilizing local resources.) Local contributions cover much of the expenditures on building construction, teachers' salaries, and school fees.	All schools have an association of parents and students. Parents are asked to pay more of the costs for education.

Source: Country sector studies.

1. The India Case

The scope of constitutional, legal, and administrative changes possible through comprehensive education decentralization policies is well illustrated in the case of India. As in many DMCs, the policy making, planning, and administration of schools in India is a complex process implemented through a number of institutions at various levels. With many widely dispersed schools, poor vertical and horizontal communication, and limited capabilities in monitoring and evaluation, achieving effective management is difficult. Over the years, many efforts have been made at partly decentralizing decisions to the district level. These have met with limited success.

In 1992, India laid the foundation for a significantly different pattern of education governance by amending its national constitution. This action is seen as important both symbolically and substantively. The Seventy-Third Constitutional Amendment authorized states to establish a three-tiered (district, block, and village) governance structure of locally elected bodies—the “Panchayati Raj” institutions—and to transfer to these bodies certain authorities from state government agencies. Primary education was one of the most important areas to come under the control of Panchayati Raj institutions (Box 4.3).

Box 4.3: The Panchayati Raj Initiative, India

Jain and Hochgesang (1995) have analyzed the Panchayati Raj initiative in India. They explain that:

As a part of the long process of evaluation of institutional framework for the development of rural areas, the system of Panchayati Raj assumed importance. Though the concept of democratic decentralization was to bring in the Gandhian concept of *grama swaraj*, it could not, however, be realized as it was generally affected by political and administrative factors. With the introduction of the Seventy-Third Constitutional Amendment, a new initiative for strengthening the system of Panchayati Raj was taken. For the first time adequate representation for scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and women was provided at all levels. In spite of the fact that many questions regarding the functions and finances remain to be resolved, the constitutional status accorded to the Panchayati Raj bodies means that they will undoubtedly continue to play a key, multifaceted role in rural development.

These changes brought new roles and new stakeholders at each political and administrative level. The center, through the Ministry of Human Resource Development and the Department of Education, has traditionally been deeply involved in policy making, national-level planning, finance, and technical support. Under the reforms, many of these functions will continue, and the central leadership in technical support to the districts is expected to increase, at least for a time. Generally, the changes represent a movement toward defining the role of the state in terms of research and development, setting standards, and evaluating performance.

At the state level (Table 4.4), state ministries of education are supported by state-level departments and directorates or secretariats of education, all of which are accountable to the chief minister of state. Historically, district-level government units had critical roles in administration and management. Within the education sector, this level of the hierarchy included a district education officer and staff, who were directly responsible to the state department of education. Under the Panchayati Raj legislation, these relationships have changed somewhat, amid an overall decline in the role of traditional district-level authorities.

At the district, block, and village levels, reforms have at least begun the process of shifting “significant resources and responsibilities to Panchayati Raj institutions, including appointing and transferring teachers, allocating funds to schools, generating resources through fees and donations, and academic supervision” (World Bank 1990).

Table 4.4: Responsibility of Panchayati Raj Institutions for Primary Education, Selected Indian States, 1995

State	District (<i>Zilla Parishad</i>)	Block (<i>Taluka or Samiti Panchayat</i>)	Village (<i>Gram Panchayat</i>)
Andhra Pradesh		Manage elementary and higher elementary schools.	
Gujarat	Primary education; recruit primary school teachers; construct school buildings.	Establish primary schools; primary education.	Encourage participation in primary schools.
Karnataka	Establish and maintain ashram schools; promote primary education.	Promote primary education; construct, repair, and maintain schools.	Promote public awareness of and participation in primary schools; ensure enrollment and attendance in primary schools.
Madhya Pradesh		Establish primary school buildings.	Inspect schools; construct and maintain primary schools; distribute free textbooks and uniforms; manage scholarships for scheduled caste/scheduled tribe primary-school children; organize nonformal education.
Maharashtra	Establish, maintain, inspect, and repair primary schools; provide teaching aids to primary schools.	Promote primary education.	Promote education.
Rajasthan	Ensure proper functioning of primary schools.	Promote primary education.	Supervise primary schools; transfer, post, and disburse salaries of primary school teachers.
Uttar Pradesh	Construct and maintain primary schools.	Establish and maintain primary schools.	Establish primary schools.
West Bengal	Construct primary schools in flood-affected areas; supervise primary schools.	Promote primary education.	Construct primary schools in flood-affected areas; distribute textbooks.

Source: Jain and Hochgesang 1995.

At the school level, the reform has also expanded the role of head teachers beyond largely routine administrative tasks such as drawing up timetables, establishing standards for student promotion, assigning

teachers to classes, determining expenditures on instructional aids, and raising extra funds for the school. Increasingly, head teachers are expected to assume more responsibility in fostering a conducive teaching and learning environment, and, more broadly, to assist the community in local planning.

Since the 1992 constitutional amendments, significant changes have begun as Panchayati Raj institutions (or simply “panchayats”) at the district, block, and village levels have become fully operational. The intent of the new framework is to lead to broad-based community support for primary education, school-level responsibility for effective instruction, and a system of professional support from higher to lower administrative levels. The depth of these changes varies from state to state. But if fully implemented, the reforms will require the building of new institutional capacity, new management systems, and new individual skills.

The multifaceted approach to restructuring educational governance in India, involving four broad strategies, may yield insights into similar efforts in other countries. The process began with “necessary amendments to the constitution, adopted in 1992, which established Panchayati Raj institutions in all states” (World Bank 1990). In principle, this first step devolved responsibility for primary education to district-level panchayats. Second, training was provided to village education committees and school head teachers, facilitating their participation in district-level planning exercises aimed at school improvement. In addition, capacity-building exercises for state- and district-level institutions improved their ability to support the block and village levels. The final action focused on the development of a management information system to provide timely and accurate information to all management levels.

Systems of communication and coordination, particularly between district and state and among district, block, and village will need to be developed to support changing roles in policy and planning and resource allocation. Planning responsibilities at the district level necessitate an improved base of more sophisticated technical knowledge, stronger monitoring and evaluation skills, and a supporting information system. At the village level, new education committees have been formed with authority for allocating resources to improve school efficiency and quality. Head teachers and the community as a whole need to become informed in their new roles of supporting teaching and learning, and in assessing school-level quality.

2. The PRC Case

From 1949 to 1978, the PRC was characterized by highly centralized policy making, planning, and administration. Local governments were given little discretion in implementing centrally ordained policies. As part of a broad program of economic and fiscal reform launched under Deng Xiaoping in the late 1970s, the PRC developed new policies affecting education governance, designed to encourage provincial governments to expand revenue collection efforts. A major objective of these measures was to test the management capabilities of townships, and, moreover, to test the potential of rural areas to raise funds and accept responsibility for managing primary and middle schools.

Significant changes emerged in the mid-1980s. In 1985, the Communist Party of China issued the Resolution on Reform of the Education System, which called for devolution of decision-making and budgetary responsibilities toward the local level, and stated that local conditions should dictate the timing and character of measures toward achieving nine-year compulsory education (Lewin et al. 1994).

In the same year, the Ministry of Education became the State Education Commission. Although the Ministry of Education would later be reestablished as part of a restructuring of government units in 1998, this represented another important step in education decentralization. The State Education Commission was given increased powers for coordinating efforts by all agencies involving education.

Amid the transition to a nine-year system of education, codified in the 1986 Compulsory Education Law of the PRC, decentralization has taken the form of administrative and financial devolution, with an emphasis on the latter. Arguably, increased reliance on the mobilization of local resources—to be supplemented by central government subsidies—was a critical step in diversifying education funding, and also provided increased autonomy and flexibility in school-level management (Mok 1997). At the same time, Hannum (1999) notes the implications for equity, stating that, “the growing urban-rural education gap suggests that reforms in the 1980s reinforced a historically important dimension of social stratification” (p. 193).

Overall, the national reform movement has clearly been an ongoing and dynamic process, involving all administrative levels. For example, provinces make frequent adjustments in response to feedback from local areas. A more general overview of the responsibilities of national, provincial, municipal, county, and township levels is as follows.

The central Government retains authority for creating basic laws and policies. Its key responsibilities include setting the overall direction of development, preparing medium- and long-term national plans and supervising strategy implementation, designing the national curriculum, and setting national education standards (e.g., teacher qualifications, length of basic education, university entrance requirements). The central Government is also chiefly responsible for coordinating regional programs, conducting national research and development, monitoring education outcomes, disseminating successful experiences to lower levels, and promoting equity in education services.

The provinces implement all national laws, policies, and mandates on education. To allow for necessary adaptations to local settings, provincial governments have the authority to establish education policies that are consistent with national policies. For example, provinces are encouraged to modify curriculum according to local conditions and are allowed to choose, or even develop, textbooks. Finally, provincial governments are held accountable for meeting education finance goals, as prescribed under contractual agreements with lower-level governments.

Townships and villages are involved in financing school construction and in meeting other capital expenses. In practice, townships exercise a degree of influence over policy, by making decisions about allocation of funds directly to schools. Townships and villages also share with the province responsibilities for monitoring performance. Under the decentralization process, local educators and scholars have begun responding to increasing demand, and are taking the lead in developing more private and *minban* education institutions (Mok 1997). At the school level, head teachers manage relationships with the community, participate with school staff in developing teaching materials, and supervise teachers. An important function of head teachers is the mobilization and use of community resources to develop flexible strategies to improve school quality.

Education policy in the PRC is guided by strong centralized leadership. At the same time, regions bear considerable responsibility for implementation, and the many tasks associated with management of the system are divided among all levels of government. Much of the new policy, or national experiment, is reported to be working very well; however, the PRC has experienced serious problems of inequity across and within provinces during devolution. There frequently appears to be a trade-off between equity in education opportunities and the flexibility,

ability to adapt, and innovation achieved through decentralization (Box 4.4).

Variation in levels of available local resources across localities has translated into large disparities in expenditures on capital construction and teacher salaries, and also into differences in the quality of school facilities and the availability of teaching and learning materials. Generally, areas having more financial resources and experiencing more rapid economic growth provide better education services than the poorer areas. Disparities in public financial resources for education (i.e., urban versus rural, or coastal versus interior) are often quite pronounced. Differences arising from relative shares of students in primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions notwithstanding, statistics in Lee (1998) indicate that per capita budgeted expenditures on primary education in Beijing were 4.7 times those in Hubei in 1990. Moreover, gaps in educational resources between wealthy and poor communities appear to be widening (Hannum 1999). In addition, disparities in inputs appear to have led to differences in education outputs, although the degree of this linkage is less clear.

The PRC has placed heavy demand on regional human resource planning, at times distinguishing between coastal and interior areas. In coastal areas, which are comparatively rich in technical and scientific

Box 4.4: Inequities Resulting from Decentralization

Decentralization in the PRC has facilitated local initiatives and led to increased mobilization of local resources. Arguably, much of the progress made in basic education during the past decade is attributable to the introduction of decentralization. However, the PRC “is not immune from the usual disease—regional disparity—which is brought about by decentralization” (Cheng 1994, p. 62).

To varying degrees, researchers argue that decentralization has meant a perpetuation of financial shortage and a serious threat to educational opportunities in poor communities. “To them, if schools are to survive, money has to come from elsewhere, presumably from the “state”. To these places, the central government would regain its legitimacy only if it could resume its financial responsibility in education” (Cheng 1994, p. 62).

The disparity in the PRC is a reflection of a tug-of-war between the ideology of the planned economy on the one hand, and the ideology of the market economy on the other. In addition, gaps in education are interrelated with broader socioeconomic disparities within the PRC.

personnel and advanced education facilities, the political, geographic, and economic environment has accelerated two trends in economic development: (i) increasing number and diversity of mostly small township and village enterprises (TVEs or *xiangzhenqiye*) and (ii) larger export-oriented industries. Both of these have fueled economic growth in the coastal regions, and their promotion is seen as critical to expanding national output. Education reform at all levels is expected to contribute, particularly in terms of supply of human resources, to these national economic development programs.

The unprecedented growth of an export-oriented economy has led to urgent problems in education in terms of demand for skills produced by basic education. Such growth has also raised the question of how regional higher education institutions can effectively inculcate the increasing array of complex skills needed to further develop the export-oriented economy and to increase the PRC's international competitiveness among market economies.

The challenge to policymakers, therefore, is the creation of a completely new model of education governance, a process with ramifications for change at many levels: i.e., individual skills, institutional capacities, and resources. The challenge to planners and administrators is to provide useful information to policymakers and to make the new model more responsive, particularly with respect to evolving local and regional economic demands.

D. Achievements, Risks, and Problems

Although decentralization in various forms has had a lengthy history in some DMCs, evaluating its progress is difficult. Several governments, including those of PRC, India, and Thailand, claim successes in implementing policies of decentralization, while successes as well as failures have been reported internationally. Some communities, without a mandate from the center, have helped improve their schools. The record would seem to show, however, that central actors are increasingly willing to test new policy ideas locally, to seek input from stakeholders, and to include people with field knowledge on national commissions (see the country sector studies).

Even in the absence of formal evaluation, recent experiences with decentralization in many regional education systems have provided broad lessons for policymakers and planners in DMCs. In particular,

problems often encountered include the following: (i) local authorities increase administrative activities but control remains in the center; (ii) the gap in education opportunity has widened between students in wealthy and poor areas; (iii) central government reduces its fiscal support to local areas; (iv) funds collected locally are not used locally; (v) the community focuses on issues of narrow self-interest; (vi) power over decisions becomes concentrated in a local elite; (vii) participation is viewed as too time-consuming; (viii) the desired level of openness and collaboration in decision making cannot be secured; (ix) school administrators and teachers resist outside participation; (x) local analysis of problems and supported changes may pose a threat to the political order; and (xi) the extent of participation in planning may be highly controversial (country sector studies, Shaeffer 1992).

Successful decentralized education programs often depend on the capabilities of local government (Box 4.5). The experience of Papua New Guinea has broader relevance, extending beyond the Pacific DMCs (Group 7). Several key lessons have been drawn:

Effective local government, which has the potential to coordinate community development and local services and infrastructure, is particularly important in countries comprising many scattered islands, yet it is noticeably weak, even dysfunctional, in most Pacific islands. In ... Samoa, rural water supply schemes that have been most successful are the ones in which local reluctance to participate in “self-help” schemes forced government to manage them. In many provinces in [Papua New Guinea], primary health and education

Box 4.5: Rural Development Projects in the Pacific

King and Gannicott (1993), after examining rural development projects, comment that very few aid agency-assisted projects (in the Pacific) that rely on commitment from beneficiaries have been sustained for a significant period after agency funds have been expended. Even projects that have as one of their goals the creation of sustainable self-help, such as UNDP’s Integrated Atoll Development Project or the United States Peace Corps’ cooperative marketing programs, have failed to be sustained once the volunteers left. The reasons behind the relative absence of self-help activities are complex, but a number of contributory factors stand out. One is a perception among communities that it is the responsibility of government to provide improved services and infrastructure. In many countries in the Pacific, a passive, recipient attitude has been influenced by traditional cultural values, by the impact of colonial administrations, and in some cases, by the relatively easy availability—at least at the national level—of large foreign aid flows (ADB 1996e).

services run by communities assisted by provincial governments are so poorly administered that they are in a situation of near collapse (INA 1997).

In addition:

Many donors retain faith in the idea that the inefficiency of the state apparatus can be compensated for by designing community-managed, participatory development projects, and that more effective development processes might be achieved by working directly with communities. Unfortunately, there is little evidence to show that community-managed development projects are more efficacious than those managed by the state (INA 1997).

It is not surprising that new expectations for local planning and participation in education decisions may involve uncertainties, obstacles, and risks. Central bureaucracies accustomed to being the only policy and planning actors must now share responsibilities. With shifts in some functions to the district and village levels, e.g., the flow of central moneys directly to districts, stakeholders at the provincial level may lose valued control. In addition to the new policies, laws, and institutions that are required for a new decision-making approach, an extended period may be required before partnerships between levels of government can become effective (Box 4.6).

Decentralization may only mean transfer of autocratic behavior to

Box 4.6: Mobilizing Local Participation, Pakistan

Prior to decentralization efforts, all schools in a given province were overseen by a single Director of Education, often resulting in the relative neglect of primary and lower secondary education. Decentralization initiatives were attempted to increase the involvement, participation, and mobilization of communities, as a means to promote basic education and improve school quality. In practice, however, communities have often not been well organized or motivated, and steps to constitute village education committees, school management committees, and parent-teacher associations have only begun to clearly define community members' roles or their linkage with education functionaries (PIDE 1997).

Further, "There is a need to sensitize the population at large, prepare them and make them responsible for eventual takeover of the local-level institutions. For this purpose empowering the District and Tehsil-level functionaries of the Education Department [are needed] to promote community mobilization and make use of their powers to give local support to communities in administrative and financial matters" (PIDE 1997, p. 47).

local institutions. On the other hand, local governments and communities may become highly dissatisfied if only administrative functions are delegated to them and neither the resources nor decision-making power are transferred. At the heart of the reform process is the decentralization of powers and responsibilities from the national and provincial levels to the district and local levels. Unfortunately, the issue of who is responsible for what is not often clearly understood. Further, any attempt at evaluation of the success of decentralization must raise the question: Valued by whom? For example, do central and provincial policymakers and planners have the same evaluation criteria as parents and teachers? Must there be winners and losers resulting from decentralization?

E. Planning and Sustaining Decentralized Education Changes

To achieve the goals of Education for All, the Declaration of Jomtien concludes "... new and revitalized partnerships at all levels will be necessary, partnerships among all subsectors and forms of education ..." (UNDP et al. 1990).

The changing patterns of governance require new approaches to planning. The traditional, centralized planning model, reflected to varying degrees in the popular five-year national plans found in most DMCs, attempts to set targets based on given or assumed priorities, to translate targets into a set of inputs with associated costs, to allocate responsibilities for implementation, and, perhaps, to develop detailed implementation procedures. The basic assumptions of this approach include (i) that general targets can be translated into specific education inputs; (ii) that accurate data can be acquired on size, number, and costs of inputs; and (iii) that implementation is a straightforward process of administrative decisions. Experience suggests that this model is seriously flawed, as indicated by the poor record in attaining the targets of national plans.

The traditional planning approach, which has a poor record under centralized structures, may have even less validity as education decentralization proceeds. Decentralization policies, as they develop beyond deconcentration, involve a range of local stakeholders in a process of developing and assessing ways to improve education and acquire supporting resources (Box 4.7). Interaction and dialogue, often

Box 4.7: Conditions for Successful Policy Implementation

- Reforms must be based on the needs expressed by the people, and success is more likely to be achieved where there is genuine community participation in the formulation and implementation of policy and projects.
- Education policies must be implemented within the overall policy environment of government.
- There must be linkages between education policies and the overall vision of government.
- The use of pilot programs allows for close evaluation and refinement of innovations; but pilot programs are often linked to high levels of funding, partly to ensure their success. Governments find it difficult though to maintain such high levels when the programs are to be introduced more widely and instituted on a national basis.
- Innovations supported by facilitation, information, and systematic monitoring have a better chance of implementation.
- There is a need to systematically measure achievement in terms of quantitative and qualitative performance indicators.
- Recurrent budgets must recognize the costs that derive from development budget initiatives.

Source: INA 1997.

in face-to-face groups, suggest a more open-ended, inquiry-oriented model of planning. Center-local partnerships, if transparent and collaborative, rely on communication and consensus, not merely political power, to be effective. A new model of planning and decision making thus emerges: initial targets are temporary benchmarks of heuristic value only, expert knowledge from the outside becomes only one input to decision, information and communication among stakeholders keep the planning process moving, and education practice and research illuminate major decisions.

The concept of central-local partnership can be controversial. Partnership may be an association of individuals or groups with very different perspectives and beliefs. This relationship usually involves a combination of teamwork, conflict resolution, and community collaboration.²⁶ Thus, success of partnerships in planning,

²⁶ Shaeffer makes the following distinction between collaboration and participation: “*Collaboration* in this sense, is a consultative process at best, where the new actors share the burden with the traditional administrators of education and help to improve the conditions of classroom teaching, to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of schools, and to deliver their

implementation, and sustaining reform depends on the group's expectations of its members, the ability of individuals to learn from each other, and the recognition that rewards basically go to all members of the group. Collaboration, therefore, may include debate, argument, negotiation, discussion, and compromise. Planning and implementation of decentralization of education governance may require skills and understanding not often prominent in traditions of centralized planning.

Sustainable decentralization requires developing new skills and insights among individuals and additional capacity among institutions to manage continually education change. Required planning and actions include (i) creation of demand for improvement (given the limitations of supply-driven assistance); (ii) creation of reliance on local resources; (iii) participation and sharing of information; (iv) identification of stakeholders; (v) division of tasks among stakeholders; (vi) diagnosis of community needs; (vii) identification of relevant existing local organizations; (viii) formulation of methodology for mobilization of the community; (ix) development of technology for planning, implementation, and monitoring; and (x) capacity building and long-term commitment.

Sustainability depends on adequately answering two fundamental and interrelated questions. First: What decision-making authority is best allocated to each administrative level? Second: Which education activities are best carried out at which level? The answers can be tested only through experience and may vary according to country and local context. Moreover, further questions require answers: Where are the economies of scale? What are the comparative advantages of different management options?

At the school level, sustainability requires at least three conditions: (i) shared goals regarding the learning objectives of the school; (ii) professional, student-focused commitment among teachers; and (iii) autonomy to allocate instructional resources flexibly. At the same time, schools must be held accountable to the community for outcomes within the context of national indicators. These are challenges for which many education systems are ill prepared.

The changes in governance with decentralization of certain authorities and increased involvement of citizens in education and

services, without quite becoming a 'partner' in the process. *Participation*, then, would add 'intervention' to the above definition—the ability to get involved in governance, policy, and administration; to serve as a more 'equal' partner in planning, managing, and evaluation; and to gain power (and empowerment) through the process" (Shaeffer 1992, p. 280).

political decisions require increased levels of information and analytical skills. Sustainability suggests the need for learning through, e.g., continued cycles of design, redesign, study, evaluation, exchange of information, and action. The typical monitoring procedure is unlikely to be sufficient if it is limited to tracking the delivery of goods and expenditure of funds and if it relies only on the traditional midterm and final program and project evaluations. Fundamentally, the following are needed: (i) a planning and evaluation process that assists the development and critique of information, (ii) communication processes that foster individual and organizational learning, and (iii) a political and administrative context in which such learning translates into monitored actions and continued inquiry.

In developing decentralization systems, two basic questions suggest a fundamental choice: Is the central government willing to support local conditions that lead to full partnership in the planning of education and community-level ownership of significant education decisions? Or: Is the prime interest to foster a centrally controlled system that more effectively monitors local units?

F. Improving School-Community Relations

In Table 4.5, Williams (1997) compares “government-provided education” with “collaborative government-community education.” Certainly, over the last several decades, much of the remarkable growth and development of education in the DMCs has been attributable to government-provided education. The changing patterns of education governance, however, responding to limitations of central management, have brought a new focus on local communities and their relations with schools.

Most communities face a number of common education problems, e.g., fees and other costs borne by parents, school-work relations, and persistent dropouts. Such concerns, under certain conditions, may provide a common purpose and sense of priorities, and may facilitate community dialogue on school matters. Supporting conditions include experience of the community in participatory decision making,²⁷

²⁷ Reimers suggests that the kind of intelligence needed to address school problems at the local level is “process intelligence, not intelligence about contents. What is needed is a change in paradigm regarding how education systems change and learn from their experience, rather than a set of policy prescriptions to be implemented by schools” (Reimers 1997, p. 148).

Table 4.5: School and Community Models in Education Provision

	Type of Education		
	Traditional Community- Based	Government-Provided	Collaborative Government-Community
Purpose of education	Socialization into community; survival of community.	Socialization into national culture; political, economic development of state.	Socialization into national and local cultures; serves local and national "improvement".
Nature of knowledge to be acquired	Transmission of local economic skills and community norms.	Transmission of state-approved knowledge.	Negotiable; usually state-approved knowledge adapted to local needs.
Emphasis	On community.	On individual and state.	On individual as member of both community and state.
Vision of community's role	All-encompassing.	Passive recipient; potentially disruptive of government's project.	Negotiable; ranging from community as focal point of development effort to community as important arm of the government.
Role of government	None, to the extent that government does not interfere.	Assumes complete responsibility for provision of education.	Negotiable; ranging from source of support for education defined by community to virtually complete control.

Source: Williams 1997.

willingness of governments to share control while continuing to provide resources, and commitment on the part of public and private organizations to a process of continuing learning. The last condition implies that coping strategies or solutions to problems emerge from examination and study of local experience as well as from analysis by outside technical expertise (Shaeffer 1992).

Schools, for their part, can share information, technical knowledge, and facilities, and contribute labor to community projects. Efforts in these directions can build a foundation of understanding making community support more feasible. Communities are not of one mind, of course, and may not place a high priority on education. Yet, with enough interest and funding, numerous types of school support become possible (Table 4.6).

Understanding the potential for constructive school-community relations requires examining who the participants are, the contributions that the community can make to the school, and the ways in which the school can support the community. Those individuals and organizations

Table 4.6: Community Involvement and Improved Education

Area of Education	Type of Community Involvement
Provide support for instructional program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultivate an environment supportive of school program. • Improve enrollment, retention, attendance. • Monitor study at home. • Ensure that all students have adequate study space. • Identify and help students with problems. • Help students with family emergencies. • Boost morale of school staff. • Provide assistant or regular teachers. • Provide instruction in specific areas (where teachers lack expertise). • Pass on community knowledge. • Provide apprenticeships/work opportunities.
Supplement school resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donate land for school. • Donate labor/materials to construct/help build school building. • Repair/maintain facilities. • Donate equipment, learning aids (e.g., books, teaching materials). • Raise money for school.
Provide support for school management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure greater likelihood for successful implementation of school programs. • Foster responsibility among parents for children's learning. • Provide greater material support. • Provide human resources to reduce burden on school staff. • Supply expertise. • Assist in fund raising, provide moral support, give general advice. • Provide new ideas, serve troubleshooting functions. • Serve on advisory/management committees. • Assume joint responsibility (with school) for planning, managing, evaluating local school programs. • Come to assume, over time, major responsibility for local education, formal and informal, with government support and technical assistance. • Take over most of the management functions of the school, with minimal government assistance.

Source: Williams 1997, p. 57.

particularly significant in bringing school and community together include parents, teachers, local government, NGOs (often women's groups in particular), and, in some cases, local enterprises. National governments and international organizations can also play a supportive role, by setting policies, promoting pilot experiments, or otherwise shaping the environment for school-community partnerships.

The potential risks involved in devolution of education responsibility and authority were discussed earlier. Sometimes, moving

resource allocation decisions to provincial and local levels has had ill effects. Even in the communities capable of organizing successfully to participate in the support and management of schools, there will be setbacks. Agreement on problems to address does not necessarily mean agreement on solutions, and building and implementing strategic plans and plans of action may require unavailable technical skills. However, with the involvement of major stakeholders, the capacity to acquire necessary resources, and persistent leadership, the benefits of strong community involvement can be long-lasting, not only in education, but also in the strengthening of other sectors.