

SCHOOL SECTOR GOVERNANCE IN SINDH

1. The foundation for education in Pakistan is in Article 37(b) of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, which declares that the state shall 'endeavor to remove illiteracy and provide free and compulsory secondary education within a minimum possible period'. The **18th amendment to Pakistan's Constitution**, approved in 2010, abolished the Federal Ministry of Education and transferred full authority for school education – including for policy formulation, sector financing, and implementation – to the provinces. This transfer of authority was done on the understanding that education would be free and compulsory for all children between the ages of 5 to 16.

2. A continuing Federal role in education was later carved out with the establishment of the Ministry of Professional and Technical Training in July 2011 (renamed the **Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training** in 2014), whose areas of responsibility include higher education, technical and vocational education and training, non-formal basic education, adult literacy, inter-provincial coordination, and international cooperation. Its functions involve coordination, facilitation, technical and financial assistance, and meeting International obligations and commitments. The department is headed by the Secretary, Education and Professional Training and overseen by the Federal Minister of Education and Professional Training.

3. The **National Education Policy of 2009** calls for the education system to 'provide quality education to our children and youth to enable them to realize their individual potential and contribute to development of society and nation, creating a sense of Pakistani nationhood, the concepts of tolerance, social justice, democracy, their regional and local culture and history based on the basic ideology enunciated in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan'.

4. In Sindh, the responsibility for school education (up to the end of grade 10) and college education (grades 11 and 12) is split between the (i) **School Education and Literacy Department (SELD)**, which is responsible for early childhood education, adult literacy, and school education up to the end of secondary school (i.e., up to the end of grade 10); and (ii) the **College Education Department**, which is responsible for the college education (i.e., grades 11 and 12). SELD is headed by the Secretary of Education, while the College Education Department is headed by the Secretary, College Education. Both departments come under the responsibility of the Sindh Education and Literacy Minister. SELD's mission is to:

- Increase equitable access to quality early childhood education, primary and secondary education to promote social cohesion and to provide greater opportunities for learning, participation and 21st century skills to marginalized groups, particularly girls and women;
- Improve the quality of learning outcomes through strengthening the teaching/learning process through innovations; and
- Strengthen governance and service delivery by improving performance capacity.

5. **At the provincial level, SELD** is responsible for overall policymaking and providing leadership in curriculum, educational standards, assessment, textbook development, as well as program design and implementation. **SELD has several directorates**, including those with responsibility for schools, curriculum and research, monitoring and evaluation, private schools, and non-formal basic education. The **SELD's reform support unit** was established in 2006 as a means of building SELD's institutional capability, streamlining education delivery structures, and providing policy advice to improve education sector governance, access and quality. SELD established a PPP node in 2013 with the aim to preparing and implementing PPP projects in the education sector. This was the first sector-based PPP node established by the Sindh government.

The **SELD PPP node** is implementing, amongst other initiatives, the government's education management organizations program. Responsibility for the day-to-day operations of SELD in areas such as teacher recruitment, placement, transfers, and school infrastructure maintenance is largely devolved to district education departments, which are headed by district education officers. At the sub-district level, learning coordinators provide academic guidance and supervisors are tasked with school monitoring.

6. The SELD also oversees several semi-autonomous government state bodies, including the Sindh Education Foundation (SEF), the Sindh Textbook Board, the Sindh Teachers Educational Development Authority, the Sindh Provincial Institute of Teacher Education, and 29 teacher training institutes. The **Sindh Education Foundation**, which was established in 1992, is a semi-autonomous government organization with its own board and managing director. The SEF's mandate is to support education in the province through various interventions. The bulk of its programs support low-fee private schools through student-based subsidies to private educational providers to enroll students at no cost to the student. SEF also supports improvements in the quality of education through professional development and capacity building for its private partner schools and teachers. SEF programs include the assisted schools program, the adopt-a-school program, the middle and high school program, and the promoting private schools in rural Sindh program. Most of SEF's programs are at the elementary level. However, recently they have started expanding their middle and high school programs.

7. The **Sindh Textbook Board** has the overall mandate to develop textbooks from grade 1 to grade 12 in all science and humanities subjects in line with the provincial curriculum. It constitutes textbook review and quality assurance committees, along with the SELD's curriculum bureau, and must approve all textbooks. The **Sindh Teacher Education Development Authority** was established in 2010/11, to play an overarching standard setting, regulatory and monitoring role for teacher education and training in Sindh. Teacher training is provided by the **Provincial Institute of Teacher Education** and **district-based teacher training institutes**. The operation of 6 teacher training institutes is currently being outsourced to private organizations by the SELD. **Private universities and colleges** also play an important role in the provision of teacher training, including the Aga Khan University and the Notre Dame Institute of Education, although these are regulated by the **Federal Higher Education Commission**.

8. The **Sindh Universities and Boards Department** is responsible for overseeing universities (although the bulk of the responsibility for universities lies with the Federal Higher Education Commission) within the province. It is also responsible for overseeing the operation of provincial **Bureaus of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE)**, whose role is to develop and administer province-wide secondary school examinations in grades 9–10 and higher secondary school examinations in grades 11–12. There are six public sector BISE in Sindh, with Karachi having separate BISE for intermediate and secondary schools. All other BISE administer both intermediate and secondary school examinations. The Aga Khan University has a private sector examination board. Other forms of student assessment, such as the province's standardized achievement test, are conducted by SELD using private sector institutions.

9. Inter-provincial coordination of education policies rests with the Federal-provincial council of common interests. The Inter-Provincial Education Ministers' Conference is a coordinating body established to bring national cohesion in education curriculum and standards. It meets regularly to discuss issues of common interest. A National Curriculum Council has also been constituted by the IPEMC at the Federal level.

10. Figure 1 summarizes the structure of school education governance in Sindh.

Figure 1: Sindh School Education Sector Governance Structure

