Sindh Province of Pakistan
School Education Sector Plan and Roadmap for Sindh (SESP&R) 2019-2023

Final Appraisal Report

14 June 2019

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List of acronyms used in this document

AQAL	Advancing Quality Alternative Learning
CBO	Community Based organization
CPM	Chief Program Manager
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DCAR	Directorate for Curriculum, Assessment and Research
DEO	District Education Officer
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ELD	Education and Literacy Department
ESA	Education Sector Analysis
ESPDG	Education Sector Plan Development Grant
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
HM	Head Master/Head Mistress
HT	Head Teacher
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
IP	Implementation Plan
IRC	Indus Research Center
ITA	Idara-E-Taleem-O-Aagahi
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LEG	Local Education Group
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MTFF	Medium-Term Fiscal Framework
NFE	Non-Formal Education
P&D	Planning and Development
PEACe	Provincial Education Assessment Center
PITE	Provincial Institute for Teacher Education
RSU	Reform Support Unit
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SELD	School Education and Literacy Department
SERP	Sindh Education Reform Program
SESLOAF	Sindh Education Student Learning Outcome Assessment Framework
SESP	Sindh Education Sector Plan

SESP&R	School Education Sector Plan and Roadmap for Sindh
SMC	School Management Committee
SSB	School Specific Budget
STEDA	Sindh Teachers Education Development Authority
TTI	Teacher Training Institute
TWC	Technical Working Committee
WHO	World Health Organization

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The first education sector plan for the Sindh Province of Pakistan covered the years 2014/15 to 2018/19. The Province had received support from the GPE, first for the development of the plan (US$ 250,000) and then for its implementation (US$ 66,000,000).
2. The successor plan to that SESP is the recently developed School Education Sector Plan and Roadmap for Sindh (2019-2023), which was again developed with the GPE's support. It is the Provincial Government's wish to follow a similar road and obtain the GPE's support for the implementation of this plan. Overseeing that multi-stakeholders process is the Provincial Local Education Group (LEG).
3. The LEG, whose thirtieth meeting discussed and approved the appraisal principles being here applied to the draft plan, is a high level forum where the educational provincial authorities, the external cooperating partners and the civil society organizations meet to discuss the main education policies and support the Government's efforts to promote education. It is the case in Sindh—and not at all a generalized situation around the world—that the LEG is a unified body that is participatory and effective in following up on decisions.
4. The plan appraisal principles, as established by the GPE, are based on a five-dimensional assessment on:
    - Leadership and participation in the planning process
    - Soundness and relevance of the plan strategies
    - Equity, efficiency, and learning in basic education
    - Coherence of the strategies
    - Feasibility, implementability, and monitorability of the plan
5. These dimensions are assessed by someone who did not play any part in the activities contributing to the development of the plan and who is independent from all stakeholders. That hopefully brings in a fresh eye to the document review. In this appraisal, the strategic choices and policy orientations are not judged as such, but only in relation to their feasibility, relevance to stated challenges and coherence. An effort has been made to understand them in the given national and provincial context.
6. The output of the appraisal exercise is a set of recommendations (and accompanying analyses) submitted to the concerned parties: the SELD, the donor partners and the CSOs. These recommendations (summarized in Table 1, pages 23 to 26) are exactly what they are called: recommendations. The parties involved retain the decision to accept, revise or reject them.
7. The GPE Secretariat's just submitted (8 June 2019) comments about the SESP&R were communicated to the external appraiser. It is important to clarify that the two reviews are separate and are not expected to necessarily converge, even though some considerations from the two sides can and will mutually resonate. One such recommendation (no. 16 in Table 1 in this Report) is directly taken from the GPE Secretariat's comments. Another useful comment from the

GPE Secretariat regarding a need for historical figures to be included fits with the current recommendation to add a chapter reviewing the implementation of the first SESP (no. 5).

II. LEADERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION IN PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Leadership and ownership

8. Genuine ownership of the SESP&R is best demonstrated by the historical coming together of two separate initiatives. As a result of the general elections that took place in the Sindh province in July 2018, a new leadership was put in place and the School Education and Literacy Department had a new Minister and a new management as a consequence.
9. To mark the new leadership's political will in taking up the education challenges, a Roadmap was developed shortly upon assuming management. The Roadmap focus was on the three issues of access, quality and governance of the education system. As summarized by the Secretary, SELD, at one of the consultative workshops, "The amount of challenges faced by the education department is enormous but the fundamental issues are categorized under the three overarching themes of access, quality and governance."[1]
10. On the other hand, the SESP had been developed earlier in 2018 as a classic technocratic exercise, with the financial support of GPE's ESPDG and the technical support of IIEP. The two exercises could obviously not viably continue as parallel processes and concerted efforts were undertaken to have them converged. Through a number of consciously organized discussions, harmonization was achieved. The resulting SESP&R—combining the two exercises into one name—is thus a concerted coming together of the political will to deal with education challenges, and the technical education planning process. The ownership of the goal orientations and of the plan targets was allowed to converge at a maximum level.
11. The technical support was provided through a number of international and national consultants throughout the process. While one could certainly wish for a more balanced distribution of drafting inputs between outside consultants and inside education staff members, the appraisal process found a very real and sharp grasp of the technical issues within the concerned SELD staff.
12. A Technical Working Committee (TWC) oversaw technical matters related to the SESP development process and was purposely divided into seven sub-committees. It was at one of their meetings in November 2018 in the presence of the Minister for Education that the decision was made to combine the Sector plan and the Roadmap processes.

<u>Official plan period</u>

13. The SESP&R (2019-2023) is in effect set to run for four years: 2019/20, 20/21, 21/22 and 22/23, which clearly appear as such in the implementation plan. That is a departure from the previous plan, SESP 2014-2018), which ran for five years: 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19. This changed

[1] Consultative workshop – Civil Society Dialogue, January 6, 2019, ELD.

schedule was initially justified in order to align with the electoral process, with the next general elections taking place in 2023.

14. In discussions with the stakeholders, a majority of them agree that the election in 2023 should not impact the education plan. To begin with, the new leadership issuing out of the 2023 elections would need some months of transition time; those months would be usefully used to finish the current plan.
15. Furthermore another year would substantially increase the likelihood of achieving the plan targets, some of which are quite ambitious. More generally, it is good practice for the education policy orientations to reflect, not a particular political party, but the needs and feelings of the civil society in general. That is one reason why the consultation with the non-state stakeholders is so emphasized in assessing the plan processes.
16. Also, an indication that the SELD management really has 5 years in mind is that in their recent written comments about the SESP&R (*School Education Sector Plan and Roadmap for Sindh (2019 – 2023): Comments on SESP& Road map 2019-2023 draft*—17 May 2019), the RSU refers to the "5 years period of the SESP" (p.4). **It is therefore suggested to consider extending the SESP&R for five years, allowing it to run from 2019/20 to 2023/24 rather than 2022/23**.
17. What this change requires is simply a revision of the implementation plan where an additional column would be added and the distribution of outputs across years would be revised.

Participatory process

18. All stakeholders indicate that wide consultation was conducted about the new plan. Most of them acknowledge the efforts of SELD to attract contributions to improve the plan.
19. Particular mention is to be made of two consultative workshops held in January and February 2019 with the leadership of the Minister for Education and Literacy and of the Secretary of School Education and Literacy Department. They were attended by 150 and 130 participants respectively, both from rural and urban areas of the province, many of which were from the civil society.

Language barrier.

20. Also involved in consultations were the district-level management. There are 29 districts distributed across 6 divisions. Both the ESA findings and the SESP&R targets were presented to all district and divisional education officers for discussion. However, from observations made in the appraisal process in discussions with several DEOs, many didn't unfortunately understand much of the content because of a language barrier.
21. While English is an official government language, the level of proficiency in it is rather low. For example a recent study by the British Council in Pakistan in 2015 found that "C level" English language proficiency by university level students was achieved by only 12 percent of the tested student population (British

Council, English Language in Pakistan's Higher Education, Research Report (2015), www.britishcouncil.pk.

22. It was observed during the appraisal discussions that when ideas in the plan were translated to them, the DEOs reacted positively to the targets. **It is recommended that, for a better communication of the key ideas, a translated summary of SESP&R should be distributed to the districts.**

Finance and Planning and Development Departments

23. Some stakeholders have noted the meager participation of the Finance and the P&D Departments in this planning process. These two departments are particularly important to ensure alignment of the Education orientations with the overall provincial orientations. Furthermore, many financial issues are involved, for which support from the responsible department is crucial.
24. To be sure, efforts were made by SELD to involve these departments but without much success. They were invited to be part of the TWC but did not participate. They were also requested to take part in a core group that was set up to deal with simulation and projections but, again, did not do so. As is the case in many places in the world, mechanisms to integrate planning processes across sectors are challenging to establish, but efforts must continue.
25. While the SDG4 Unit in the SELD Department does administratively report to the P&D Department, the department's importance is mostly to ensure that the required contribution of education to the overall provincial endeavors is being fulfilled.
26. **Efforts should continue even after the plan is adopted to involve them and take into account any considerations they would need to provide.**

III. SOUNDNESS AND RELEVANCE OF THE SESP&R STRATEGIES

Evidence-based education sector analysis

27. As part of the new sector plan process, a very substantial situational analysis (ESA) was conducted in the province as a basis for the sector plan. There was a diversity of contributors to the ESA that were gathered together, from specific papers to genuine research activities and using a multiplicity of sources. Among the main focus points that were analyzed, access and retention, out of school children, learning achievements, education governance and financing were obvious areas. But the ESA went into even more details regarding external efficiency of education including the labor force participation, the rate of return of education as well as its social impact.
28. The ESA findings highlight some major gaps, namely low participation in education, poor learning outcomes and serious management challenges. One such challenge that comes out forcefully is the seemingly pervasive political interference in district and school management. The ESA also showed among other things criticisms of the public-private partnership orientation of the provincial management of education system. While the approach has been generally successful in quality terms, the scope for expansion appears limited by the high costs involved and the resulting sidelining of the district-level management.
29. The ESA, however, suffered from two limitations. One is a lack of more recent information possibly for school year 2017-18. That was not possible because there was no school census for that year. The failure to conduct that census represented a serious gap in the Department's functioning, one that will have an impact in future analyses. That failure is not at all mentioned in the ESA document, and not emphasized in the SESP&R. I**t is recommended that that gap in the system's capacity is properly acknowledged and analyzed in the plan document and is guarded against for the future.**
30. A second limitation is the absence of a systematic review of the previous provincial education plan (SESP 2014-18). To be sure, the ESA provides several assessments of that plan within the relevant themes. What is missing in both the ESA and the SESP&R is a synthetic review that assesses the overall plan performance and that attempts to identify the enabling or challenging factors. The importance of such an assessment and identification is in the likelihood that many of those factors may be around again before the new plan. Lessons learnt would then be very useful to keep in mind while setting targets and formulating programs.
31. One of the points to be focused on in the analysis is to determine which of the three envisaged scenarios has come to pass and to analyze whether and how the financial resourcing of the plan was achieved. A very quick look at the education budget in the province for 2017-18 shows that it was 9.5 percent less than the projected budget (Rs. 191 billion compared to 211 billion expected).

That may inform on how to analyze the now envisaged funding gaps displayed by the simulation model.

32. **It is recommended that a chapter be added at the beginning of SESP&R to summarize the lessons to be learnt from the implementation of SESP 2014-18. That review would include an assessment of the amount of resources, financial as well as human and material that were mobilized, against the projections in SESP I. Both the enabling and challenging factors behind successes and failures would then be checked out against program activity lists.**

33. Very surprisingly, the ESA appears to be selective in covering issues in school functioning. An example is one of the more crucial initiatives recently taken by the Department to enhance the functioning of schools—namely the School Specific Budget (SSB)—which is completely ignored by the ESA. In view of the sheer amounts involved (more than 4 billion Rs. each year) and its potential effect in improving school activities, the SSB certainly should have been reviewed and its failure analyzed. This would have helped shaping actions in that direction.

Relevance of policies and programs

34. On the whole, the SESP&R strategies and targets are a response to the challenges and issues described in the ESA. As such the set of policies and programs in it are fully relevant.

35. **A sensible recommendation by the SDG Unit within the SELD Department suggests an adjustment of some of the language in the plan document.** They would like to see some of the SDG targets reflected in the way the plan programs and targets are formulated. The idea is not to copy the SDG targets but to approximate some of the language of SDG 4 at least as a long-term perspective. It would be a way of starting to educate the public about that important perspective.

36. There are two areas where one might find action missing given the importance given to them in the situation analysis. The first is the issue of "political interference". It is forcefully described in the ESA, writing, for example that:

> "Political interference in postings and transfers of teachers continues. Any reform effort will have to deal with these burdens and manage them."

37. For its part, in the SESP&R, while clearly stating that one of the "Overarching Goals to which the SESP&R is set to contribute" is to "Improve effective governance in education sector through strong accountability systems, adequate resources and strong capacities at all levels, without political interference and with effective political will" (page 15), there are no interventions or concrete activities set to go in that direction. To be sure, it is far from easy to identify programs that can concretely help solving those kinds of problems; but at least that difficulty should have been described, to show that a reflection has taken place about it. **In revising the plan document, it is recommended to think**

over the challenge of political interference in the posting and transfer of teachers and come out with a realistic and feasible proposal.

38. Also not explicitly mentioned as a key activity is teacher training in multi-grade teaching to face the dire situation of the many single teacher schools. The ESA writes: "Given than more than 65% classrooms have two or less teachers (Section 2.4.1, Table 23) it is a serious concern for Sindh. More research and better planning of curriculum, textbooks and teacher training to cater to the ground reality of multi-grade teaching should be a very high priority in targeting improved learning."
39. However, the SESP&R does not list that type of training as a priority action. **Given the sheer prevalence of multi-grade classes in the province, the in-service training of teachers to help them deal with multi-grade environments should be explicitly listed as a priority action in the framework of their continuous professional development.**

School Specific Budget

40. The School Specific Budget (SSB) allocation was initiated in 2011. Under that new system each school was to receive a non-salary budget to help running the school in an efficient and smooth way. The move was an excellent one towards giving financial autonomy to schools to meet the necessary expenditures required for running the pedagogical, social and administrative functioning of the school. But, as the Chief Program Manager-RSU noted in a recent report[2], the initiative ended "in a smoke".
41. The utilization rate was close to zero for multiple reasons including lack of financial experience by the heads of schools. There was a lack of coherence in bringing the reform about: the money was meant for the head teachers to use autonomously, but the government financial rules require that to withdraw money from that budget you needed to have what is called a "drawing and disbursement" power. But such power could not be given to most head teachers.
42. There is another example of a reform where the more substantial part—the budgetary allocation—was realized, but where the softer one—the regulatory part—failed to be thought out and consultation was lacking. The SESP&R should agree with the CPM that such money is more than necessary to procure teaching and learning materials including laboratory materials and that SELD "may revisit the SSB in terms of execution modality by focusing on financial training & capacity building of the end users."
43. **It is therefore recommended that the SSB be retained in the education budgets to come while reforming the utilization procedures in consultation with the Financial Department, and embarking on a financial training campaign of head teachers and SMC chairs. As some**

[2] Asif Ikram ; *Second Sindh Education Sector Reform Project SERP-II, 2013-2018 Implementation and Completion Report* ; May 15, 2019.

CSO suggested, this should be part of a basic, printed, set of standards available to all HMs.

Science teaching

44. The plan emphasizes the need for recruitment of science teachers, writing "During the period of this Plan's implementation, a greater emphasis will be placed on recruiting and deploying science teachers". That is excellent. However, the how is missing in such an extreme situation: if it is true, as the ESA states, that "only 5 percent of public school teachers have a science qualification at the bachelor's degree level or higher"[3], then simple routine procedures will not work to alleviate the situation. More creative initiatives are needed here.
45. **Facing a situation where "only 5 percent of public school teachers have a science qualification at the bachelor's degree level or higher", the SESP&R is called upon to come up with more creative initiatives.**

School retention

46. The issue of school retention is crucial. The school system is failing to retain the children that make an effort to register and attend. The cohort-wise dropout fluctuates between 50% and 61% in primary (ESA, Table 19). In such a situation, there is no point in censing out-of-school children because our system keeps creating more of them each year.
47. To face that situation, the SESP&R document has one main activity to show (3.6) in one Program (3): Equitable enrolment and retention. Three activities are listed there, two of which refer to ECCE: (a) Design and conduct mobilization campaigns, (b) Establish mechanism for parent-teacher collaboration on ECCE, and (c) Organize school-based campaigns to orient parents on ECCE, health hygiene, nutrition, childcare and sound parenting practices.
48. **Clearly more needs to be proposed and done here. Even simple actions responding to the most common reasons presented as causing dropouts would be better than unproductive "mobilization campaigns", e.g. prosecuting corporal punishment, encouraging detailed reporting and follow-up by HTs, school feeding in selected areas, mobilizing SMCs, and other actions.**

Soundness of the implementation plan

49. The implementation plan is an effective companion to the SESP&R document, listing activities under eight programs (three programs dealing with access, two programs dealing with quality and three programs dealing with governance). For each activity, the output expected for each plan-year as well as the costs are clearly described. In addition, one institution is designated as the responsible entity for the implementation of the given activity. In that sense, the implementation plan is sound, although some consolidation could make it more effective as the examples below show.

[3] ESA (2019), page 128.

50. As mentioned by the CPM in a note, the list of activities in the IP must match the stated program objective. And, similarly, the listed responsible entities should match the legal mandates. He was specifically referring to Program 2 (Adequate and equitable provision of school infrastructure) which targets formal and non-formal schools whereas all activities thereunder only refer to formal education.
51. Another example is under Program 5 (quality inputs and processes), where two separate activities are proposed, to (a) Revise and draft revised curriculums for formal education and (b) Revise curriculums to remove gender biased content. This separation is in fact assuming that the staff in charge of curriculum revision will leave in it content that is gender-biased. **That should not be the assumption, particularly in this era of mainstreaming gender issues. The activities should be reformulated into one set, clearly calling for bias-free curriculum.**
52. From focus group discussions with the concerned staff (curriculum and textbook fields), an institutional analysis of the capacities of DCAR/PEACe was felt as not indispensable (5.6.1) to start supporting those units. The human, material and financial needs are known and should be filled. Therefore human, material and financial support to the curriculum/textbook units should be directly planned with any necessary institutional analyses taking place in parallel.
53. The decentralized implementation of the SESLOAF (Sindh Education Student Learning Outcome Assessment Framework) with activities 5.7, 5.7.1 and 5.7.2) should be moved from activity 5.7 to consolidate Activity 5.2.1 (training of teachers in assessment). Still under Program 5, the main activity 5.8 (Develop a quality assurance policy framework at all levels, linking Districts and departments) is unclear to the concerned staff. It should be either clarified or removed.
54. **It is recommended to revise the content of Program 5 within the Implementation Plan to achieve the following: (a) to enlist human, financial and material support to the concerned units with the institutional analyses possibly running in parallel; (b) to shift main activity 5.7 in consolidation of activity 5.2; (c) clarify main activity 5.8 or else remove it; and (d) include curriculum field testing to improve relevance.**

Risks to implementation and the mitigation of risks

55. The province is quite prone to a number of natural disaster risks to which the education system must be prepared and adopt mitigating strategies. The province was seriously affected by the 2010 flood crisis, with:
    - 1,327 schools that were totally destroyed
    - 1,909 schools that were partially destroyed
    - 1,246 schools that were occupied and
    - 202,258 school children that were directly affected.

(source: RSU)

56. More recently, drought alerts have been issued. A January 2019 Sindh Drought Needs Assessment Report states that:

> "Overall 15% of the surveyed households reported migration of their members at some point during the last 6 months; 10% of the households performed routine seasonal migration whereas only 5% migrated due to the prevailing drought in Sindh."

57. It is good practice for the education system to keep these risks in mind when formulating plans and, especially, to ensure that the response systems display a sufficient level of readiness. Both the ESA and SESP&R documents are silent about these issues. **It is therefore recommended that a section be added to the plan document, dealing with disaster risk mitigation, with particular emphasis on the most affected districts.**

IV. COHERENCE OF SESP&R POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

Coherence among the strategies, programs, and interventions

58. Most strategies are coherent among themselves. A notable exception was raised by the Engineering and Works Team. According to them there is an on-going ban on opening new schools in the province. This needs to be thoroughly checked as it would make part of Program 2 activities impossible. The second main activity of the program, "Construct new schools, especially for post-primary grades based on needs", with three sub-activities involved, would indeed be made invalid if the ban were confirmed.

ECCE ages

59. There is incoherence between the recently developed ECCE standards and the ECCE policy. While the Policy is clear that pre-primary education is concerned with children of 4 to 5 years of age, the Standards refer to 3-5 years. As far as the Simulation model is concerned, it only refers to one single age group: 4 years—which in fact should be 5. That will also facilitate the computation of the relevant GER

V. PLAN FEASIBILITY, IMPLEMENTABILITY AND MONITORABILITY

Financial feasibility

60. The basis of the projection of the financial resources is to be updated. The ad hoc simulation model used as a source the Medium-Term Fiscal Framework (MTFF) for the period 2017/18 to 2020/21. However, a more recent Budget Strategic Paper was issued on 25 April 2019 for the period 2019-20 to 2021-22 (http://fdsindh.gov.pk/site/userfiles/1557390567_52813.pdf). It shows a substantial reduction in the total expenditure for the Province for 2021/22 at 1,354 billion Rs., i.e. 72 billion less than the 1,426 billion Rs. appearing in Table 3 of SESP&R.
61. However, Table 3 is prudent in that it converts the projected government expenditure into constant prices (using Pakistan GDP Deflator) after deducting debt servicing (not shown in the MTFF table itself!). Using the same method of estimation with the new provincial total expenditure could lead to an increased funding gap of perhaps more than 25 billion Rs., up from 22 billion.
62. More generally, the plan document should be more transparent about sources and calculations. With just two tables and half a dozen paragraphs, it does not provide enough indications on the financial resources projection for years beyond the MTFF period. Also, data not provided by the MTFF, such as debt servicing expenditures which are included should cite the sources. **It is therefore recommended that the costing values of SESP&R be updated to take into account the most recent MTFF and that the costing section of the document be expanded to include more details on the projection if financial resources.**
63. The section on projected financial resources also needs to be more transparent on the methodology that was used to project resources for year 2022/23 (not part of the MTFF). For that matter, the entire chapter on costing in the plan document should be expanded in order to give more details for stakeholders' understanding.

System capacity

64. Access to and retention in school are key issues in Sindh. However there is no entity in SELD that is dedicated to supervising strategies about them. It is noted and commendable that the SESP&R sets a target to establish a new strategic planning unit within the SELD Department. But will that new unit play this supervisory role? What is required is a provincial equivalent to the Directorate of Schools that exist at the regional level. The plan document should elaborate on the issue and include an interim solution.
65. Given that the current directorate of M&E focuses more on human and material controls than on plan activities, an interim arrangement needs to be spelt out

about how the plan implementation will be monitored in the first one or two years.

66. Two major planned activities relate to doing a systematic, household-based census: an out of school children survey (1.1.7) and an illiteracy survey (1.1.8). These activities, which are assumed to be conducted or supervised by the district education offices, should be avoided. While census activities may seem misleadingly easy, they in fact are extremely complex. By asking the district offices to conduct or supervise those surveys, the plan will be inviting high risks of under-or over-reporting, and reliability questions.
67. Besides, what is needed is an estimate of the magnitude of the problem, not an exact match of supply and demand. That estimate can be obtained from other surveys and censuses done by more technically prepared institutions (general census, MICS surveys, household surveys, etc.) in which the Department should try to include its key data.
68. **It is recommended to replace activities 1.1.7 and 1.1.8 that in effect require district offices to conduct or supervise systematic censuses of out-of-school-children and illiterate adults, with more effective collaboration with technical institutions to obtain the desired data.**
69. Taking from the GPE Secretariat's comments of June 6, 2019, it would indeed be beneficial to add to the implementation plan a column on the funding source of each activity. This will help resource availability in the plan as well as accountability in the process. Without downplaying the challenge of having external donors detail their funding programs before the plan is adopted, **it is recommended to add a column in the Implementation Plan about funding sources for each activity.**

Robustness of the monitoring and evaluation framework

70. Despite stating that "Quality early childhood care and education (ECCE) plays a critical role in preparing a child for school", the SESP&R fails to include a KPI for the pre-primary sub-level. **It is recommended that a pre-primary-related KPI be added to the list at the end of the plan document.**

Simulation model

71. The simulation model is in draft form as more updated data is still expected. Even then, there is a need for a cleaner set of tables where temporary working bits are removed, making sure all tables, columns and rows have proper heading etc. That may seem obvious, but it will save time for the ELD Team that will take over and help them in their ownership struggle.
72. On the age structure, the Model seems inaccurate: its formulas count as: preprimary, the children population of age 4; as primary education, the children population of ages 5-9; as middle education, the children population of ages 10-12; and as high school education, the children population of ages 13-14. These must be changed as the primary age group is officially 6-10.

73. The Model should also be revised for NFE: it assumes 100% centers are operated in schools whereas in fact almost all centers are community-based;

74. To conform to the IP, the financial projections should be based on per-learner subsidy paid to CBOs rather than teachers' salaries.

VI. EQUITY, EFFICIENCY AND LEARNING FOCUS IN BASIC EDUCATION

Gender issues

75. The gender Working Group recently undertook a gender review of the main School Education Policies and Strategies. They reviewed, in particular, the draft SESP&R 2019-23 and their review is by and large positive. They conclude that "The final draft of the SESP (2019-2023) is so far the best example of a gender sensitive strategy and plan". The Group highlights that "Strategies have been proposed to increase both enrolment and retention of girls". "Under quality, the need to deploy more female teachers especially in rural areas is mentioned and strategies to recruit them, especially in rural areas have been suggested. Also, under the issue of poor governance and management, there is mention of the low numbers of women employees and of a policy to build their capacity and to promote them."

Caste issues

76. According to available information[4], at present there are roughly 2.9 million Hindus in Sindh forming 7.5% of the total population of the province. Sindhi Hindus in Pakistan (i.e caste Hindus accounting for 86% of the total Hindu population of Pakistan as of 1998 census) are mainly into small to medium sized businesses. They are mainly traders, retailer/wholesalers, builders as well as into the fields of medical, engineering, law and financial services. However the scheduled caste Hindus (Dalits) are in a poorer state with most of them as bonded labor in the rural areas of the province.

77. Members—and children—of the scheduled castes are evidently subject to discrimination and specific anti-discrimination measures are called for for equity purposes. The ESA raises the issue but so discreetly as to mostly go unnoticed in the discussions. It says :

> "The study also found that a number of children were not allowed to attend schools because of caste problems while a number of children dropped-out because they either had to work full time to earn a living or help their families in their work."[5]

78. Surprisingly, the SESP&R is totally silent about the issue. And whenever this issue was raised during the appraisal discussion, it was met with uneasy silence. **It is highly recommended that the issue of children from scheduled caste background be addressed in some way as a matter of improving equity. In case not enough data is available on the problem, then further investigation should be planned.**

[4] https://www.travel-culture.com/pakistan/sindh.shtml, accessed 6 June 2019 (Travel & Culture Services (Pvt) Ltd. Pakistan).

[5] ESA (2019), page 59.

79. A number of listed activities in the Implementation Plan are about "thinking" about the problems rather than "acting" on them. In most cases, some concrete activities are feasible, even if perhaps not exhaustive. Examples:

    a. (3.3.3) Assess existing incentives and develop new initiatives which are not cash-based (for girls);

    b. (3.5.5) Develop training courses related to inclusion of girls and marginalized children

    c. (4.1.1) Conduct an institutional analysis of the capacities of SELD units related to teacher training and professional development (STEDA, PITE, DCAR, TTIs)

    d. (4.1.2) Develop a capacity development plan to strengthen the teacher training and professional development function of SELD

Nutrition courses

80. Several activities under Program 3 (Equitable enrolment and retention) are meant to promote nutrition practices through school teaching. But, in the absence of school lunches being offered and organized in schools as a practical ground, and given the variety of nutriment availability in the province, it makes more sense to base nutrition awareness on communities than on schools.

Mother tongue

81. Contrary to other parts of the country and the world, Sindh uses the mother tongue as medium of instruction. So that students have the opportunity to have textbooks in Sindhi, Urdu or English. That is an excellent pedagogical choice that should positively impact learning.

VII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

82. After reviewing the School Education Sector Plan and Roadmap for Sindh and talking with the major stakeholders, the appraisal concludes that the SESP&R 2019-23 is a plan that is fully owned by the Provincial Government and that was developed in a transparent and participative way. It benefits from the support of the provincial interested civil society. Together with the accompanying Implementation Plan, Results Framework and Simulation Model, they are technically sound documents that should be endorsed and supported by the GPE after the recommendations summarized in the below table are addressed.
83. In fulfilling the appraisal purpose of assisting the government in strengthening the SESP&R and enhancing the country's chances in the GPE application, the following table summarizes the recommendations that are submitted by the appraiser for consideration. As seen in the table, there are 18 recommendations here submitted to the Department and stakeholders' consideration.
84. Although the vast majority of the recommendations have been discussed and confirmed during the several focus-group discussions, it is up to the Department to choose the kind of response to be applied, considering the time available. The following table simply lists the recommendations and provides a reference to the (numbered) paragraphs where the full explanations are given.
85. The serial number is a simple additive list of the recommendations in the order of appearance. The "level of urgency" refers to whether a given recommendation needs to be addressed before plan endorsement (1), during plan implementation (2), or does not need to be addressed in case the Department is in disagreement (3).

Table 1: Summary of the key recommendations with their level of urgency

Serial no.	Level of urgency	Key passage of the recommendation	For more detail, see paragraphs
1	1	It is suggested to consider extending the SESP&R for five years, allowing it to run from 2019/20 to 2023/24 rather than to 2022/23.	13-16
2	2	It is recommended that, for a better communication of the key ideas, a translated summary of SESP&R should be distributed to the districts.	20-22
3	3	Efforts should continue, even after the plan is adopted, to involve the two departments of Planning & Development and of Finance in the process, and to take into account any considerations they would need to provide.	23-26

4	2	It is recommended that the gap in system's capacity that was caused by the failure to conduct a school census for 2017/18 be properly analyzed in the plan document and is guarded against for the future.	27-29
5	1	It is recommended that a chapter be added at the beginning of SESP&R to summarize the lessons to be learnt from the implementation of SESP 2014-18. That review would include an assessment of the amount of resources, financial as well as human and material that were mobilized, against the projections in SESP I. Both the enabling and challenging factors behind successes and failures would then be checked out against program activity lists.	30-32
6	1	A sensible recommendation by the SDG Unit within the SELD Department suggests an adjustment of some of the language in the plan document. They would like to see some of the SDG targets reflected in the way the plan programs and targets are formulated. The idea is not to copy the SDG targets but to approximate some of the language of SDG 4 at least as a long-term perspective. It would be a way of starting to educate the public about that important perspective.	35
7	1	In revising the plan document, it is recommended to think over the challenge of political interference in the posting and transfer of teachers and come out with a realistic and feasible proposal.	36-37
8	1	Given the sheer prevalence of multi-grade classes in the province, the in-service training of teachers to help them deal with multi-grade en-vironments should be explicitly listed as a priority action in the framework of their continuous professional development.	38-39
9	2	It is recommended that the SSB be retained in the education budgets to come while reforming the utilization procedures in consultation with the Financial Department, and embarking on a financial training campaign of head teachers or SMC chairs. As some CSO suggested, this should be part of a basic, printed, set of standards available to all HMs.	40-43
10	3	Facing a situation where "only 5 percent of public school teachers have a science qualification at the bachelor's degree level or higher", the SESP&R is called upon to come up with more creative initiatives.	44-45

11	3	Clearly more needs to be proposed and done to face the student retention issue. Even simple actions responding to the most common reasons presented as causing dropouts would be better than unproductive "mobilization campaigns", e.g. prosecuting corporal punishment, encouraging detailed reporting and follow-up by HTs, school feeding in selected areas, mobilizing SMCs, and other actions.	46-48
12	1	Under Program 5, the separation of two activities (a) Revise and draft revised curriculums for formal education and (b) Revise curriculums to remove gender biased content is in fact assuming that the staff in charge of curriculum revision will leave in it content that is gender-biased. That should not be the assumption, particularly in this era of mainstreaming gender issues. The activities should be reformulated into one set, clearly calling for bias-free curriculum.	51
13	1	It is recommended to revise the content of Program 5 within the Implementation Plan to achieve the following: (a) to enlist human, financial and material support to the concerned units (curriculum and textbooks) with the institutional analyses possibly running in parallel; (b) to shift main activity 5.7 in consolidation of activity 5.2; (c) clarify main activity 5.8 or else remove it; and (d) include curriculum field testing to improve relevance.	51-54
14	1	It is recommended that a section be added to the plan document dealing with disaster risk mitigation, with particular emphasis on the most affected districts.	55-57
15	1	It is recommended that the costing values of SESP&R be updated to take into account the most recent MTFF and that the costing section of the document be expanded to include more details on the projection of financial resources.	60-63
16	1	It is recommended to replace activities 1.1.7 and 1.1.8 that in effect require district offices to conduct or supervise systematic censuses of out-of-school-children and illiterate adults, with more effective collaboration with technical institutions to obtain the desired data.	66-68
17	1	It is recommended to add a column in the Implementation Plan about funding sources for each activity.	69

18	1	It is recommended that a pre-primary-related KPI be added to the list at the end of the plan document.	70
19	2	It is recommended that the issue of children from scheduled caste background be addressed in some way as a matter of improving equity. In case not enough data is available on the problem, then further investigation should be formulated.	76-78

Annex 1: Partial list of persons met

Note: The names listed here are only those who were duly recorded at the meetings, and many were not. Apologies are presented to those who did meet and whose name is not listed. Apologies also for the inevitable misspelling of names.

Name	Organization
A) LEG Members	
All LEG members who attended the 30th or 31st LEG meetings held on 20th and 31st May 2019 respectively	
B) Reform Support Unit	
Asif Ikram, PAS	Chief Program Manager
Mujeeb Rehman Khatri	Senior project Manager-SESP
Muhammad Luqman	Coordinator
C) Curriculum and Textbooks	
Ghulam Asghar Memon	Director, DCAR
D) School Infrastructure	
Abdul Aleem Lashari	Additional Secretary (PDF)
Engr: Feru Mal Rohra	Chief Engineer, EW Region, Sukkur
Engr: Nizamuddin Shaikh	Chief Engineer, EW Region, Hyderabad
E) Girls Stipend	
Hamid Mahmood	Program Officer and data Analyst
Mansoor Tariq Zaidi	Computer programer
F) Teacher Training	
Abdul Majeed Bhurt	Director, STEDA
Nusrat Kalhoro	Director, CPD
Aheed memon	Assistant Director, PITE
Haroon Laghari	Director, TTI
G) ECCE	
Amna Hussain	Consultant, ECCE

H) Directorate of NFE	
Muhammad Alam Thaheem	Director
Imtiaz Ahmed Qureshi	Deputy Director
Mehboob Elahi	Provincial Coordinator, AQAL/JICA
I) HRMIS	
Tahseen Fatima	Director HRMIS
J) Division and District Officers	
Saba Mahmood	DEO (Primary), Karachi South
Imtiaz Ali Bughio	DEO (Elementary & Secondary High School, Karachi South
Mushtaq Ahmed Khosa	Assistant Education Officer, Kashmore
Gulshon Byt	Larkana Division
Dost Ali Mallah	DEO, Sujawal
Dolat Ram	DEO, Elementary and Secondary, Tharparkar
Koewal Ram	DEO Primary, Tharparkar
K) Teachers, Principals, Head-Teachers	
Rizwana Abbasi	Principal
Domika	NTS Teacher (JST)
Rabbiya Chohan	IBA HM
Muhammad Anwar	Head Teacher GGPS M.A. ALVI
Ms. Hanifa	GGSS New Rauchaireluie
Afshan Iram	JST GGSS TK Jiswani Burns Road Saddor
Ms. Khadija Utt	In-Charge Head Mistress, GGSS, Genu BA'5 Allana
L) Donor Partners	
Asif Abrar	Education Specialist, UNICEF
Muhammad Akram	Education Specialist, UNICEF
Fayaz Uddin Afridi	Education Specialist, UNICEF
Abid Gill	JICA
Lila Ram	USAID
	UNESCO
M) CSOs	
Sadiqa Salahuddin	Executive Director, IRC

Baela Raza Jamil	Executive Director, ITA
Shahpara Rizvi	Director, SEF
Sindhu Baloch	SEF
	Senior staff, SEF (several)
N) Technical partners	
Mariela Buonomo Zabaleta	Senior Program Officer, UNESCO-IIEP

Annex 2: A key excerpt table from the Sindh MTFF 2019-2022

Table 2: Medium Term Fiscal Framework 2019-22 (Rs. in billion)							
Description	**Actual 2016-17**	**Actual 2017-18**	**Budget 2018-19**	**Revised Forecast 2018-19**	**Forecast 2019-20**	**Forecast 2020-21**	**Forecast 2021-22**
TOTAL REVENUE (A=B+C)	**692.9**	**783.2**	**923.2**	**854.3**	**1,030.2**	**1,136.4**	**1,253.0**
Federal Transfers (B)	**539.9**	**592.4**	**680.1**	**634**	**760.4**	**836.9**	**920.6**
Revenue Assignment	437.1	508.1	605.3	564	665.8	732.4	805.6
Straight Transfers	80.4	53.5	43.5	43.5	46.6	49.8	53.3
Development Grants (PSDP & Foreign)	10.7	17.1	15	11.4	30.1	35	40
Other Grants (OZT)	11.8	13.7	16.3	15.1	17.9	19.7	21.7
Provincial Revenue (C)	**153**	**190.8**	**243.1**	**220.3**	**269.8**	**299.5**	**332.4**
Sales Tax on Services	78.5	99.1	120	110	134.4	150.5	168.6
Other Tax Receipts	65.9	76.2	103.3	92.9	113.6	125	137.4
Non-Tax Revenue	8.6	15.5	19.8	17.4	21.8	24	26.4
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D=E+F)	**760.9**	**854.2**	**1,117.1**	**934.3**	**1,183.3**	**1,263.5**	**1,354.2**
Current Revenue Expenditure E	550.8	619.7	773.2	712.7	827.9	873.7	927.4
Employee related expenses	234.1	274.3	345.7	305	366.9	397.5	428.3
Pension payments	70	92.6	99.3	114	115	120.2	132.2
Operating and and write off loan Maintenance Exp.	105.2	87.3	133.8	105	139.5	143.9	148.6
Grants, Subsidies	119.2	138.1	165.7	160	176	179.7	183.6
Interest	15.3	17.5	19.6	19.6	19.6	20.6	21.6
Physical Assets, Project Pre-Investment	7	9.9	9.1	9.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Discretionary Space / SNE					10.8	11.8	12.9
Development Expenditure (F)	**210.1**	**234.5**	**343.9**	**221.6**	**355.4**	**389.8**	**426.8**
Provincial ADP	170.8	178.5	252	164.6	245.3	269.8	296.8
On-going	155	129.1	202	160	196.2	215.9	237.5
New Schemes	15.8	49.4	50	4.6	49.1	54	59.4
District ADP	23.7	26.7	30	17.5	35	35	35
Federal PSDP	8.7	20.8	15	11.4	30.1	35	40
Foreign Projects Assistance	6.9	8.5	46.9	28.1	45	50	55
OPERATING BALANCE (G)	**-68**	**-71**	**-194**	**-80**	**-153.1**	**-127.2**	**-101.1**
NET LENDING ITEMS (H)	**9.8**	**54.3**	**19**	**46.9**	**59.5**	**65.8**	**72.7**
Net Food Account -State Trading	-19	-35.4	-4.1	-9.4	-10.1	-10.8	-11.6
Net Public Account	28.8	89.7	23.1	56.3	69.6	76.6	84.2
FISCAL BALANCE (I=G+H)	-58.2	-16.7	-175	-33.1	-93.6	-61.4	-28.5
FINANCING (J=K+L+M)	**76.9**	**27.4**	**150.4**	**13.5**	**70.1**	**48.9**	**33.1**
Net Capital Receipts and Expenditure (K)	**-11.2**	**8.7**	**95.4**	**2.7**	**89.7**	**72.4**	**45.6**
General Capital Receipts	6.2	25.8	75.8	9.7	75.8	55.8	25.8
Current Capital Expenditure	-21.8	-20.2	-27.3	-35.1	-31.1	-33.4	-35.2
Foreign Projects Assistance	4.4	3.1	46.9	28.1	45	50	55
Carry Over Cash Balance (Opening) (L)	**88.1**	**18.7**	**55**	**10.8**	**-19.6**	**-23.5**	**-12.5**
CLOSING BALANCE	**18.7**	**10.8**	**-24.6**	**-19.6**	**-23.5**	**-12.5**	**4.6**

Source: (http://fdsindh.gov.pk/site/userfiles/1557390567_52813.pdf) accessed 24 May 2019.