SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY: THE STATUS OF EDUCATION

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Global recognition of Accountability and an intrinsic dimension of governance

Accountability is defined as: “as the obligation of power-holders to account for or take responsibility for their actions”

Accountability in public sector is about a) official performance and; b) to ensure that public officials serve public interest in a transparent and efficient manner.

What is Social Accountability?

“an approach towards building accountability that relies on civic engagement, i.e., in which it is ordinary citizens and/or civil society organizations who participate directly or indirectly in exacting accountability” (Malena et al 2004)

Why Social Accountability matters?

Improved governance
Transparent and responsive government
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

THE STATUS OF EDUCATION IN KHANEWAL AND VEHARI DISTRICTS

I) Low enrolment rates in public schools particularly in rural areas
II) High incidence of drop-out
III) Gender disparity in schools
IV) In-effective school management committees
V) Teachers' absenteeism

THE ABOVE MENTIONED PROBLEMS ARE FURTHER COMPLICATED BECUASE OF:
I. Just 2% of the GDP is spent on education
II. Mismanagement and misuse of allocated funds
ILM IDEAS PROJECT ON SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

PROJECT OBJECTIVES
 Researching factors contributing to low enrolment, drop-out and, gender disparity in primary education
 Intra-administrative issues affecting the performance and management of state officials
 Improving access and the delivery of education through the concept of social accountability

GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE (Khanewal and Vehari Districts' of Southern Punjab)

METHODOLOGY
 Key—informant interviews, focus groups and informal meetings with state officials and citizens
 Citizens Report Card (CRC)
PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

CAUSES OF LOW ENROLMENT AND DROP OUT
- Inadequate strength of teachers grossly undermines retention of students
- Non-availability of classrooms for primary age (1-5 years) school children discourage parents to send their children to public schools
- Entrapment of poor people in poverty
- Social deprivation
- No mechanism of registering and resolution of parents concerns concerning the quality and delivery of education

CAUSES OF GENDER DISPARITY
- Boys schooling is preferred over girls schooling especially in rural areas
- Female are expected to stay at home when parents are depended on securing livelihood from harvesting
- Access to school and discontinuation of education after primary level
PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

INTRA-ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
- Cumbersome and regressive leave seeking mechanism of school teachers
- Demotions and stopping of promotions of junior officials due to favouritism
- Extra-official duties assigned to school teachers by the provincial government are contemptuous
- Inordinate fines of school teachers by district monitoring officials

IN-EFFECTIVE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES (SMC)
- Instead of electing chairpersons, the common practice is that the head teachers in male and female schools nominated the chairman of the PTC.
- Interactions are held between the head-teacher and the chairperson
- PTC meetings are not held in a formal way because the head teacher and other teachers do not directly report to the community
Challenges in the structures of Social accountability

EMERGING CONTEXTUAL FACTORS
- Political regime which guarantees rights and entitlements of the poor and the socially deprived
- Political culture rooted in democratic decentralisation
- State policies framed in a top-down fashion; implementation ignores social and political realities

STRUCTURAL PROBLEMS IN STATE-SOCIETY RELATIONSHIP
- Information and access to official documents is seldom granted to citizens
- Citizens voice is weak because existing accountability structure is hierarchical; vertical accountability is non-existent
- A social accountability system requires continuous research unpinned by reforms into existing accountability structures
THANK YOU