

# **Capacity Building and Training of School Management Committees**

*by*

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## Acronyms/Abbreviations

ADDEO	Additional Deputy District Education Officer
AED	Academy for Educational Development
AEO	Assistant Education Officer
AKRSP	Aga Khan Rural Support Programme
ASDEO	Assistant Sub-Divisional Education Officer
AWARE	Action for Welfare and Awakening in Rural Environment
BCEW	Bureau of Curriculum and Extension Work
BLCC	Bunad Literacy Co-ordinating Council
BPEP	Balochistan Primary Education Programme
CPBC	Community Participation Beneficiary Cell
CRAMT	Contract Reviewing Management Training
CTA	Chief Technical Adviser
DC	District Commissioner
DEO	District Education Officer
DFID	Department for International Development
DOE	Department of Education
DPE	Directorate of Primary Education
DSD	Directorate of Staff Development
FEF	Frontier Education Foundation
GOB	Government of Balochistan
GoNWFP	Government of NorthWest Frontier Province
GoP	Government of Pakistan
GoPunjab	Government of Punjab
MSU	Multi-donor Support Unit
NEP	Northern Area Project
NEAP	Northern Area Education Project
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PB	Participatory Beneficiary
PDP	Participatory Development Programme
PEP	Primary Education Programme
PEP-CO	Primary Education Programme Co-ordination
PEP-ILE	Primary Education Programme-Improving the Learning Environment
PEP-MCO	Primary Education Programme-Management and Co-ordination
PEQIP	Primary Education Quality Improvement Program
PMSP	Punjab Middle Schooling Project
PSE	Problem Solving Exercise
PTA	Parent Teacher Association

PTSMC	Parent Teacher School Management Committee
SAHE	Society for the Advancement of Education
SAP	Social Action Programme
SAPP	Social Action Programme Project
SCSPEB	Society for Community Support for Primary Education in Balochistan
SEF	Sindh Education Foundation
SESWA	Shewa Educated Social Workers Association
SMC	School Management Committee
SPEDP	Sindh Primary Education Development Programme
TRC	Teachers Resource Centre
UNICEF	United Nations International Children Education Fund
VEC	Village Education Committee
WVEC	Women's Village Education Committee





# **Capacity Building and Training of School Management Committees**

Shahrukh Rafi Khan and Fareeha Zafar<sup>1</sup>

## **I. Introduction**

The Government of Pakistan is implementing a Social Action Program (SAP) to improve the delivery of basic social services including basic education, primary health, population welfare and rural water supply and sanitation. Within the context of this program, the first Social Action Program Project (SAPP I), with partial donor support, had a three-year duration from 1993-1996. The second project (SAPP II, 1996-2000) is now being implemented. Community participation is among the main themes in the delivery of social sector services.

Lessons from our research can be incorporated in the second current phase of the SAP now underway. SAP, in its newsletters, highlights the importance of "community participation." The Participatory Development Program (PDP) made a small beginning by funding 14 projects in 1996 (for a two-year period) based on the principle of community participation. Sixteen projects were selected for the second phase. If community participation makes the difference then the PDP, while a laudatory attempt, is a small one.

Our contention is that contracting out a few pilot projects to be executed in a participatory manner seems an ineffective way of associating participation with SAP. If the purpose of these pilot projects is to investigate whether participation works, it is again pointless since there are many successful NGO community based schooling initiatives underway. A better approach, and one adopted for this study, is to investigate which of the key aspects of participation and collective action work for community schooling. More important, which of these principles can be readily applied to all SAP rural schooling projects. We feel that this would be a much more meaningful way to associate participation with SAP.

It is true that SAP's concern with participation goes beyond the PDP. SAP encourages community participation in site selection, hiring of local female teachers and on-going community participation via school management committees (SMCs) or parent teacher associations (PTAs). This is in fact the most effective way of introducing community participation in schooling. These committees consisting of teachers, parents and local notables have been vested with managerial and financial powers. How effective these efforts are is investigated in this research. In addition, we explore how SMCs/PTAs can be made more effective and the kind of capacity building and training that can make a difference.

This study is based on three major sources of information. The first includes field visits, interviews with school staff, School Management Committees/Parent Teacher Associations (SMC/PTA) members, government line department officials, NGO members, educationists and donor organization members and a review of documents and reports. The second source is an extensive review of the literature. The third is a small national field survey of government and NGO SMCs/PTAs. The findings from the three sources are broadly consistent and reinforce each other, although findings from the sample survey are more negative than those emerging from the literature review.

In section II, we present a conceptual framework that sets the context for participation in education. In section III, we present background information on SMCs/PTAs based on field visits, interviews with staff of schools, NGOs, line departments and donor organizations and documents. In section IV, we complement these findings with a literature review of research studies on SMCs/PTAs, particularly on training, and complement this with the findings of a small national study on these issues.

## **II. Conceptual issues**

The collective action framework is the broad area within which to view community participation.<sup>2</sup> In this regard, education has some special features. In the general case, Olsen (1971) showed that, due to the free-rider problem, collective action was likely only if the

benefits to any one individual were enough to offset the total costs to the community from some particular action. Applying this theory to rural water supply in Pakistan, Khan (1999) showed that collective action or participation in rural water supply schemes is likely if objective conditions dictate that marginal benefits will be close to marginal costs for most individuals. As it turned out, in many cases, this held true since a uniform tariff was applied to all villagers and the nature of many water supply schemes were such that all had potentially equal benefits.

Education is a more complicated case of participation and collective action. First, not all members of the village stand to directly benefit from the school. The direct benefits are likely to accrue only to those parents whose children or relatives are currently in the school. Second, the beneficiaries are not a stable population as in the case of rural water supply or health. When a particular child graduates out of primary school, the parents or relatives of that child are no longer direct beneficiaries. Of course, the whole community is an indirect beneficiary in that better quality schools adds to the reputation of the community and will at least provide a valuable service to forthcoming generations of grand-children and relatives if not current children or relatives.

Given this special nature of education, from whom should we expect participation? Our contention is that, since parents have most at stake and since the size of the parent teacher committees needs to be limited for effectiveness, the most interested parents should be on the committees. Teachers should naturally be on the committees as the key agents in delivering education. If we are right, we really should be concerned with PTAs rather than SMCs on prior grounds. This does not preclude cash, kind or labour contributions from the community, but it gives the parents precedence in overseeing schools affairs. However, given Pakistan's political and cultural milieu, one then has to address the issue of local notables or influential members of the community who would be excluded.

The role of notables is a complex one. In most cases, their presence on the SMC is merely form. They have no direct

personal stake in the school or any deep interest in education. However, as prominent members of the community, they have to be represented in all community matters. In some cases, their presence on SMC may merely allow them to appropriate resources that might become available. However, there are also situations in which they may take a charitable interest in the school and contribute to it financially. Thus, conceptually, having them on the SMC amounts to involving a potential sponsor. Our view is that while the notables sometimes play a benign role, the potential for harm is great and relying on them to play the parent's role is not sensible. Thus we knowingly endorse the concept of a PTA rather than an SMC. However, given the local power of notables, the state would have to run interference to ensure parents rather than notables have a voice in overseeing school affairs.

Given the efficient size of PTAs, only a few of the prospective parents will volunteer to be elected to be on PTAs.<sup>3</sup> Thus, education is even a more restricted case of collective action than implied above by the "shifting constituency" when students graduate from school. In fact, "free-riding" is built into PTA oversight by parents since parents not doing anything will benefit from the good efforts of those on the PTA. This is true the world over and this participation relies more on the civic sense and voluntarism of a few dedicated individuals rather than on the collective efforts of the community or even the concerned parents as a body. Support NGOs and donors who have a "one size fits all" perception of participation may end up being surprised about how little the standard model applies in this case.

One needs to be cautious about the kind of role specified for rural parents in school affairs. Given illiteracy or low education levels, parents are capable of playing the monitoring role. This would include ensuring that the school physical quality and facilities are well maintained and conducive to learning, teachers and students are punctual and interested and that the finances are in order. Developing these capacities should be the role that training should play. Expecting rural parents to play a part in pedagogy or

syllabus development would be unrealistic and such training would be wasted.

We are then left with the question of how to make the participation of the parents on the PTA effective. This has everything to do with the power dynamics on the PTA and little to do with decentralization of local administration. Decentralization and empowerment of local government has much going for it in other circumstances, but is not the key to good parental oversight. Khan. et. al. (1999) discovered that the major problem in effective parental oversight was the lack of power parents have relative to teachers or educational officials. If parents are to be effective, teachers have to have an incentive to listen to them. This is a key issue in effective parental participation that we will return to later.

### **III. Situation analysis of PTCs/SMCs including training and capacity building based on field visits, interviews and documents**

The experts interviewed are listed in Appendix I, and the documents consulted are listed in Appendix II.

#### **A. Role of SAPP I and SAPP II stakeholders regarding community participation**

In SAPP I, two of the four major elements of the framework focused on decentralization and community participation. These were as follows:

- Establishing a decentralized structure to clarify responsibilities for implementation of programs in each of the four social services.
- Instituting a Participatory Development Program (PDP) to encourage community participation and experimentation of innovative approaches through non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and related private institutions.

Based on the lessons learnt from SAPP I, community participation emerged as a key strategy in SAPP II. The design for community participation in the education sector is constructed on

institutionalizing the interaction between the community and school through the establishment of the school management committees or parent teacher associations (SMCs/PTAs). This incorporates social mobilization, financial empowerment and management training of SMCs/PTAs with a focus on enabling parents and community members to play a key role in the management of primary and middle schools. The community thus emerged as a major stakeholder in ensuring that services work for them. The operational plans of all the provinces include descriptions of the objectives, functions, procedures, modalities, activities and targets that pertain to the establishment and operation of the SMCs.

The community participation strategy under SAPP II has been reinforced through training programs for SMC/PTA members, monitoring of the community participation initiative and involvement of NGOs in social mobilization, training and monitoring. An important aspect of empowering communities has been the release of funds to SMCs/PTAs.

The scaling up of the PDP component in SAPP II was based on the recognition of the need for greater community participation at all levels in all social sectors. Subsequently, however, the program has been significantly reduced in size and its implementation delayed.

### ***1. Legislative and other roles of government in SMC/PTA formation***

The formal notification for the formation/reconstitution of SMCs and PTAs was issued simultaneously in all provinces in 1994 as a critical step for ensuring community participation in the implementation of SAPP.<sup>4</sup> In Balochistan, the first notification was for the constitution of Village Education Committees (VECs), later changed to Parent Teacher School Management Committees (PTSMCs).

There seem to be several problems with the government notifications. First, the statutory inclusion of non-parents into the

committee who may or may not be genuine stakeholders and as such may be able to subvert the functioning of the committees to suit their own agendas. Representation on the committee should be at the discretion of the committee members rather than imposed as a statutory requirement. Second, a teacher or head-teacher should be explicitly ruled out as the chair-person of the committee since there is a real conflict of interest in their assuming such a role. Third, the expectation of fund-raising on the part of the committees seems to be excessive and unrealistic. Finally, for the Punjab, the reporting requirements seem onerous and not all necessary.

The concept of community participation in school establishment and management was tested initially in Balochistan under the Balochistan Primary Education Program (BPEP) that focused on expanding girls' education in the province. Community consensus was essential for opening schools for girls in tribal areas and after the successful testing of a pilot project in one district, the community support process was adopted as a model by the Government of Balochistan (GoB) for the entire province. The strategy adopted was to create NGOs specifically for the task of community mobilization which were then supported by the GoB through annual contract funding for opening schools and forming PTSMCs. According to the latest data, approximately 2,200 PTSMCs and VECs/WVECs with operational bank accounts have been formed in the province supported by BPEP and the Primary Education Quality Improvement Program (PEQIP). Institutional efforts to ensure sustainability of these efforts include the establishment of the Beneficiary Participation Cell in the Balochistan Primary Education Directorate (BPED).

In NWFP, the first government notification was for the formation of VECs. In 1996, the VECs were changed to PTAs to make the committees more school focussed and to guarantee representation of parents. Membership of PTAs has in fact changed overtime with the greater inclusion of parents. PTAs are being made both by NGOs under contract to the government and by the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE).

The strategy adopted by the Government of NWFP and implemented in selected districts has been a little different in that existing NGOs have been contracted for the formation of PTAs. DEOs (District Education Officers) and NGOs have both formed PTAs. In some instances, this has been without a clear demarcation of areas resulting in some overlapping and confusion. The number of schools in the province is estimated to be around 22,000 and, so far, a total of 14,000 PTAs have been constituted. Of these, 1510 have been formed by 17 NGOs contracted for the purpose. The Community Participation Cell in the PEP-MCO (Primary Education Program – Management and Coordination) has the overall responsibility for PTA formation through NGOs while the DPE (Directorate of Primary Education) has supervised and monitored the work of its field staff in constituting PTAs.

The Sindh government has followed a similar approach with the Bureau of Curriculum & Extension Work (BCEW) assuming responsibility for PTA formation in collaboration with NGOs. This has resulted in 1860 PTAs being formed with support from DFID and 5,000 PTAs with support of UNICEF. A total of 7,500 PTAs are supposed to be functioning in the province. In addition, NGOs have been involved in forming PTAs under the ‘adopt a school’ as well as the rural and urban fellowship schools. The Sindh Education Foundation (SEF) has been responsible for these programs.

In Punjab, SMCs were already in existence in some areas and the notification in 1994 was directed at the formation of SMCs where none were in existence or for their reconstitution under the new rules. In all provinces, some changes have been instituted in the composition of SMCs/PTAs through additional directives following the initial notification from the government. In addition, the process of formulating legislation and legitimising the role of communities has started in Punjab, as in all other provinces, which is essential for providing a legal status to the SMCs/PTAs.

The Government of Punjab (GoPunjab) government has facilitated the establishment of SMCs through transferring funds



for classroom instructional materials and minor/major repairs, relaxation of procedures for purchase and repairs through special permission from the auditor general, and orientation/training and sensitization and awareness campaign through the media. The GoPunjab notified 48,000 SMCs in 1994-95, initiated school management training during 1997, and the government, DOE, MSU and an NGO (Bunyard), conducted a collaborative field survey of SMCs in 1998.<sup>5</sup> SMCs were reconstituted to shift financial and managerial functions to communities, to enhance enrollment, curb absenteeism, reduce the dropout rate and involve communities in petty repair and provision of classroom consumables.

All provincial governments released funds to SMCs/PTAs with operational bank accounts, and, in some cases, even to those without access to a bank by the end of June 1999. An annual release of funds is expected.

A major problem with the formation and training component under SAPP II is the short time frame given to NGOs to implement the program. Formation of SMCs/PTAs takes time and their training even longer. Unrealistic targets of forming and training PTAs in two to three visits to a community with no follow up reduces the whole process to a sham.

There is a need to differentiate between legislation and training and capacity building for community participation. The former lies within the purview of the government and can be achieved by decree. The latter requires commitment and expertise for developing human resources. In addition, there is a need to carefully demarcate the zones of SMC formation between the DEOs and NGOs to avoid overlap and confusion.

## **2. *Role of NGOs***

The nature of outreach activities required in forming and making SMCs/PTAs functional has placed part of the responsibility for community participation, organization and mobilization on regional and local NGOs. In Balochistan, the role of NGOs

emerged early in 1993, with the establishment of NGOs for the specific purpose of involving communities in the opening of schools, particularly girls' schools in remote areas. The terms of partnership were thus clearly articulated in the form of contracts between the government and NGOs. In NWFP and Sindh, the role of NGOs as intermediaries between the government and communities for community mobilization and PTA formation has emerged since 1996. The NGOs are seen as partners and representatives of the local community, parents and schools. In Punjab, where SMCs existed prior to the notification issued for their reconstitution in 1994, NGOs have been involved at a much later stage and mostly for social mobilization. Reforming the SMCs according to the changed composition of its membership requiring an increased administrative and management role by parents has occurred only recently.

NGO involvement has thus been critical in the opening of schools and in their formation, activation and reconstitution in all provinces with the exception of the Punjab. This has been achieved through a process of interaction via repeated visits to communities, facilitating them to elect their representatives for SMCs/PTAs and both formal and informal training in what the role of these committees should be.

Recognition of communities as vital partners in improving the quality of education is, in places, a relatively new concept in managing education. In some areas, the procedure is being revived after a long gap. Creating confidence and expertise among communities is required for the latter to assume responsibility for functions usually viewed to be the government's responsibility. NGOs play a vital role in this process that requires constant and continuous interaction with community organizations as with the government. NGOs have been less drawn on to contribute to the capacity building of government institutions and individuals in conceptualizing the dialectic of community participation and the possible power sharing this is likely to lead to.

### **3. Role of donors**

Funding for community participation activity has come from SAPP I and II and also in the form of separate projects funded by different donors. UNICEF has been involved in all four provinces in capacity building through training, development of training manuals and community empowerment initiatives. DFID has a strong community participation component with a focus on capacity building of government structures, institutions and NGOs in three provinces. In NWFP, this has focused on PEP-MCO, DPE including its' field staff, Frontier Education Foundation and NGOs. In Sindh, the Sindh Education Foundation, Bureau of Curriculum & Extension Work, DPE and field staff, and NGOs have been included in the process. In the Punjab, SAP including the DFID (Punjab Middle Schooling Project) and UNICEF are the main donors. In Balochistan, the process of community participation formed part of the Balochistan Primary Education Program (BPEP) supported by the Academy of Educational Development (AED, Washington) and the World Bank, particularly to increase girls' education. The Primary Education Quality Improvement Program (PEQIP) supported by The Royal Netherlands Government has also been involved in opening girls' schools following the community support process. The approach of the Netherlands government to community participation has been to add the training of PTAs to the teachers training component in Balochistan and NWFP.

For donors, community participation, including the formation of SMCs/PTAs, has been viewed as part of a process of decentralization, although this is perhaps not how the government perceives it. The dichotomy of perceptions is responsible for the funding agencies emphasizing training and capacity building of all actors as part of the process of devolution of responsibilities, while the education departments equate access to funds as the means of SMCs/PTAs empowerment.

**B. SMCs and PTAs: role of government, teachers, parents and communities**

On the one hand, it appears that where community involvement was ensured prior to the establishment of schools, as has been the case of new schools established under the community support process in Balochistan, NWFP and Sindh, there is greater participation by the community in the functioning of the schools. On the other hand, the official notification of forming SMCs/PTAs by the government in existing schools has resulted in a group of nominated individuals, with little interest in the running of the school, assuming a representative role. It has also led to minimal representation of parents, and a general resentment by teachers of a body perceived by them as having been set up for supervising and monitoring their performance. The repeated reconstitution of SMCs, giving increasing authority to parents, has drawn an angry response from teachers' associations in the Punjab who have resorted to strikes, protests and even legal action against the education department. The fault also lies with the aggressive media strategy adopted by the government promoting the role of the community without taking the teachers' unions into confidence.

Parents' role in management can be effective in ensuring that the schools are functioning and the teachers are doing their job. It is also possible for them to provide some minimal support in the form of labor, materials and funds. However, as mentioned in the conceptual framework, since the majority of parents are not literate, it is not possible for them to monitor the quality of education in terms of its pedagogical content and other aspects of quality, although they can judge if the child is able to read, write and do simple mathematics. Also, poverty is likely to result in decreased participation of communities in the education of their children as parents hustle to make a living.

The importance of having communities and parents take an interest in the local school has emerged from the failure of education departments and their field staff to provide functioning schools. This has resulted in high dropout and low retention of

children at the primary level. Given this premise, the role of parents/communities becomes essentially one of ensuring that teachers are present and education is taking place. However, there is a difference in how the DOEs, teachers, NGOs and parents/communities perceive the role of SMCs/PTAs. There is also a difference in perception and actual practice.

The government has raised the issue of decentralisation, meaning a greater role for the community and parents in the management of schools as well as financial contribution from the community. However, the DOE and teachers prefer the SMC/PTA to provide material help in the form of repairs, construction and maintenance to the schools as well as funds. NGOs perceive the formation of SMCs/PTAs and parental involvement as a move towards decentralisation of authority with the SMCs/PTAs becoming more influential and empowered in determining the quality of education and school management. There is a need to further clarify the role of communities so that the training and capacity building of SMCs/PTAs can be directed towards the responsibilities these bodies are expected to assume.

In Balochistan, in schools opened under the community support process (CSP), the post of a teacher is seen as a village asset and has been accepted as such by parliament. Thus, the teacher has to be local and her appointment has to take place according to a set of established criteria including her selection and appointment by the PTA. NGOs were contracted to initiate the CSP based on fourteen steps for opening a community school. Empowerment of communities, as understood by NGOs in this province, is involving them in opening schools and building their capacities in school administration, management and financial affairs, ensuring the regular attendance of the local teacher and advocating for the right to quality education of their children with the government. The empowerment component needs to be built in more consciously as the government's perception of community participation is to shift the burden of education on to communities without giving them the right to question line departments on their performance.

The role of the Department of Education and their field staff comprising thousands of male and female education officers and learning coordinators also needs to be reviewed in the changed scenario of community participation. It is quite apparent that the field-staff rarely performs assigned duties. Without delving into the issues involved in poor performance by carrying out field supervision and becoming accessible to the SMCs/PTAs, it is not possible for communities to interact with them.

The teacher and his/her role is critical for quality education, but it also is generally out of the purview of the community, which can only put moral pressure on the teacher to attend school but is not in a position to remove or replace him/her. The community can appoint additional or supplementary teachers from its' own resources if necessary. The community can also arrange teacher training but cannot force the teacher to participate in the training or to implement it in the classroom. The community can ensure that the teacher is local in the case of an area where a new school is being opened, but it cannot do too much with existing teachers or with political interference in postings and transfers.

The initial focus has been on ensuring that funds allocated for classroom consumables and petty repairs are deposited in the bank accounts opened by communities and are, in reality, spent on the items for which they have been earmarked. Training of SMCs/PTAs in accessing those funds and utilising them is, therefore, the first step. However, even before this, provincial governments' finance departments and departments of education need to develop simple mechanisms with clearly identified rules and regulations for the disbursement of these funds.

The SAPP-II Education Core Reform Program and Core Reform Program Monitoring Indicators for each province are explicit on the community participation component. These include, for example, the number of active PTAs as demonstrated by the involvement of fathers and mothers in school related procurements (annual repairs and educational materials) and facilitation of school operations. The means of verification for

these include DPE records of money transferred in non-lapsable grants to PTAs and post-audit documents, reports of PTA training programmes including registers of attendance and reports of Third Party Monitoring. All the indicators relate to the PTAs and/or release of funds, and not to the need of training and capacity building of Departments of Education as well as other concerned departments, such as the Finance Departments, whose understanding of decentralization is critical to their acceptance of SMCs/PTAs handling funds.

All provincial Finance Departments are reluctant to release funds to the divisional or district level. In their perception even the District Commissioners and/or District Education Officers are not professionally trained to handle funds at their level. The SMCs/PTAs are viewed with great suspicion and the conviction that they will misuse the money released to them.

Putting teachers and parents into a confrontational mode by not taking teacher unions along is counter-productive for achieving the objective of participation. Also, it is important to clarify the roles of SMCs/PTAs, and make them less oriented to paying for supplies, in order to target the training and capacity building more sensibly. Finally, it is necessary to work with the Finance department officials to raise their comfort level about trained SMCs/PTAs handling funds.

### C. Training and capacity building

In all provinces, the SMCs/PTAs are elected for a specific time ranging between 1-3 years. The process of election and re-election after the time limit is over assumes that continuous training will be available to communities for the process to become sustainable and/or that communities will have become sufficiently skilled and empowered to elect and train new members. Non-governmental organisations, involved in the formation of SMCs/PTAs, see capacity building as an on-going continuous process of empowerment, of which training is an essential component. Training is related to the perceived role of SMCs/PTAs and has to be delivered in a specific time period. However, capacity building

includes both structured and unstructured forms of learning, planning and working through initial orientation, continued interaction and backup support to communities including CBOs/VECs/SMCs/PTAs. It also includes making sure that these organisations remain active in holding regular events for parents, teachers and school children.

Capacity building and training also needs to be discussed at the level of the NGOs and the SMCs/PTAs. For NGOs, both those created for the specific purpose of forming SMCs/PTAs and those already existing and involved in development activities, the need for their own training and capacity building has led to the development and use of fairly similar modules. NGOs involved in PTA formation and capacity building have also followed a similar process with some common themes including social mobilisation, awareness raising, and identifying the role of community organisations in education focusing on some skills such as opening a bank account, record keeping, calling and recording meetings and election procedures.

In Balochistan, community participation was ensured from the very beginning of school identification and establishment so that in some areas, clusters of PTSMCs have moved to another stage of forming education councils for articulating their needs and communicating these to the DOE. However, the geographical environment and large distances involved in the province requires substantial ongoing support to NGOs to continue their role as support organisations for the community support process, which presently, is extremely fragile. This argument was strongly articulated by PTA members who stated that they were not in a position to constantly travel to the district headquarters and intercede with the education authorities on every matter pertaining to the school and the teacher.

In NWFP, in the first phase, the terms of the contract between the GoNWFP and NGOs included only PTA formation, for which a number of informal meetings/sessions were held with the community and PTA members. Contractual arrangements after



October 1998, included training of PTAs as part of making them functional that was to take place once the training manual was ready.

In Sindh, a phased programme of training NGOs and the DOE field staff followed by training of PTAs was developed and implemented. In these three provinces, training and capacity building of the NGOs involved in PTA/SMC formation has been a part of the community participation activities under the provincial education programmes. The approach to training and capacity building of SMCs in the Punjab has been very different. The reconstitution and activation of SMCs through the DOE and in some districts through NGOs has required awareness raising of their role and in involving them in school related activities to make them functional.

Some of the main lessons are that capacity building is a larger on going process of which training is one element. Resistance to community participation and the role of SMCs/PTAs in the management of schools on the part of the Department of Education and its' field staff is reflected in a generally negative response on their part to training. Finally, Department of Education field staff members that cite socio-cultural constraints to women's participation outside the home generally reject formation of mothers' committees. While illiterate males and fathers are acceptable as members of SMCs/PTAs, the same latitude is not given to women.

#### D. Training and capacity building initiatives

In NWFP, the first phase of the training programme was initiated in July 1999. A 'Trainers Guide for PTA Training' developed on an initiative supported by UNICEF has been pre-tested by two NGOs, AWARE (Action for Welfare and Awakening in a Rural Environment) and SESWA (Shewa Educated Social Workers Association). Meanwhile, all NGOs have conducted informal awareness/training sessions with PTAs according to their own understanding of the concept including the role and function of PTAs. The Community Participation Cell of PEP-MCO

responsible for these activities is staffed by two persons, one male and one female, and there is a short-term consultant who is responsible for the awareness campaign on PTA formation and roles. Almost all training organized by them has been conducted by resource persons/consultants from outside the organization. The Royal Netherlands Embassy and Gesellschaft For Technische (GTZ) have introduced a component on parent teacher relations into the teacher-training program of PEP-ILE (Primary Education Program – Improving the Learning Environment) which is supported. This delivery is by teams of master trainers to teachers in the learning and training centers throughout the province. This group of master trainers also has the potential for training PTAs.

In Punjab, the Directorate of Staff Development (DSD) has conducted training of 45,000 SMCs, specifically with Head Teachers and SMC co-signatories at the district level and in some cases at the *tehsil* level in 1997. The training was based on the SMC Booklet developed by the DSD and the Society for the Advancement of Education (SAHE). In addition, materials on community participation were also produced under the Punjab Middle School Project (PMSP) head teacher-training component. The DSD has its own team of trainers who are responsible for teacher training. SAHE also developed a training manual titled 'Community and Education' in the national language. This has been distributed to NGOs, education field staff, and teachers involved in SMC activities, by the Primary Education Quality Improvement Program (PEQIP) in Balochistan, by Sindh Education Foundation (SEF) in Sindh where it was translated into Sindhi, and by DFID in NWFP. SAHE has a team of ten trainers. NGOs involved in forming and orienting SMCs include Sudhaar that has access to a number of resource persons for training.

In Balochistan, the community support process was initiated by the Society for Community Support for Primary Education in Balochistan (SCSPEB). At a later stage, three other NGOs were established in other parts of the province for forming PTSMCs. These include the Rural Community Development Council (RCDC), Loralai Awami Falahi Markaz (LAFAM) and Society

for Community Participation and Promotion of Education (SCOPE). These NGOs have a number of teams of education promoters comprising one male and one female who have the capacity to form and train PTSMCs, although so far their focus has been on meeting targets of forming PTA/SMCs. Within the Directorate of Primary Education, the Community Participation Beneficiary Cell is essentially a liaison office between the DPE and NGOs. It has a staff of two persons who have little field experience.

In Sindh, the expertise of the SEF and the DOE through the Bureau of Curriculum and Extension Service (BCEW) has been built up to provide training to PTAs. The Teachers' Resource Center (TRC) was the main NGO involved in training of trainers and development of training modules and manuals. TRC's own capacity has been increased in this area. The province has, at present, 34 master trainers, 12 social mobilizers and several of the DOE field staff that have been trained specifically in PTA formation and capacity building.

Community participation does not form part of most formal education including teacher education and training programmes in the country. There is, therefore, an absence of conceptual clarity on issues of community, participation, devolution and decentralization among government officers and field staff of the DOE as well as the teaching community. While it is possible to effect cosmetic change through directives, structural changes can only become operational and effective once all the actors/stakeholders have a common perception of the issues involved and the expertise and information necessary to facilitate change.

In the initial phase, therefore, only those NGOs and individuals that have the required expertise should undertake training and capacity building exercises. NGOs and CBOs also require training, as they are more likely to be in constant contact with communities. Education field staff and teachers need to be trained to ensure their acceptance of the roles of the community and

themselves in the changed management system. Government officials need to become aware of the changes likely to result from communities participating in the management of their local school as well as other development initiatives. Teacher training programmes need to be revised to incorporate the new strategies and information.

### **1. *Alternative models of training and capacity building***

The PTA/SMC initiative has brought a number of partners into the process of improving the quality of education. Alternative models of training and capacity building depend on who is involved in the training process, which is responsible in the initial stages of the training and what is required for the sustainability of the process. The present actors include the Directorates of Education with their field staff, Bureau of Curriculum, Directorate of Staff Development, Provincial Education Foundations, and NGOs. Two models of forming, training and strengthening SMCs/PTAs seem to have emerged, i.e. through the DOE field staff and through NGOs.

The impact of different strategies promoted by UNICEF, AED/World Bank and DFID, with the former two focusing on quantity and numbers and the latter on quality and technical support for sustainability, has also been central to the whole issue of community participation. A brief provincial review of training and capacity building initiatives follows.

#### **a. *Punjab***

The SMC initiative in Punjab, started about three years ago and inputs such as training and funding have been provided to the committees during 1997.<sup>6</sup> The training package and training has been organized through the Directorate of Staff Development (DSD) in conjunction with the Punjab Middle Schooling Project (PMSP). The SMC Booklet has formed the basis of most training and the Education Department was supposed to provide two booklets to each SMC as part of the training. However, few SMCs

received the booklet but, those who did, were found to be more organized. On the training itself, some of the SMCs felt that it left out some elements such as non-monetary role of the committee and conditions of usage of funds. There was also some lack of clarity on the role and mandate of SMCs with the result that the training has contributed only marginally to the functioning of the SMCs.

The DSD module also includes training of field administrators such as Directors, DEOs and DDEOs to orient them to the concept and role of SMCs and operational aspects of the SMC initiative. The module for field managers includes strategies for monitoring and supervision of SMC training, procedures for disbursement of funds, operation of public and private fund accounts and functions and duties of SMCs. It also includes organizational aspects such as, calling meetings, preparation of an agenda, conducting meetings, maintenance of cash book/accounts, responsibilities of office bearers and co-signatories, role of the SMCs in improving the quality of education, procurement of instructional materials and furniture and utilization of the government grant for repair and maintenance. In addition, the module provides techniques for data collection (with emphasis on the importance of accurate data), development of a performa for data collection, community mobilization to achieve the objectives of SMCs and development of indicators to assess the effective functioning of SMCs.

The training program is based on a cascade model, placing the training of a batch of 270 master trainers comprising of highly qualified staff members of the Government College of Education Training, the AEOs and selected NGOs at the apex. Each master trainer was expected to train a batch of approximately 50-80 members of SMCs, (2 members each from 25-40 SMCs); the two trained SMC members are in turn expected to train the other SMC members at 143 selected centers at the *tehsil* level. This was expected to result in the training of 62,500 SMC members. In practice, the program mainly targeted head teachers to the exclusion of parents and local influentials and reached very few

SMCs. The training workshops for master trainers and the SMC members are of 2 days duration. In addition, a one-day orientation workshops for DOE field officers were held at Divisional Headquarters.

More recently, NGOs such as Sudhaar have been involved in the formation and capacity building of SMCs specifically in Sialkot and Kasur districts. The process has been one of social mobilization based on a series of dialogues with the communities. This has included explaining the role of the NGO and SMCs to teachers and the communities, encouraging SMCs to identify infrastructure needs, assisting them in preparing proposals and generating local resources, and training SMCs in implementing their plans and maintaining accounts.

*b. NWFP*

Under the terms of partnership between GoNWFP and NGOs, the latter are expected to form and train PTAs. A phased approach to training and capacity building of PTAs is being followed; in the first phase, training a large group of potential trainers from among social organizers working with NGOs. The duration of this training is for three days. Those who were identified as trainers will be exposed to further training before they start the process of training DEOs and other field staff including ASDEOs, Learning Coordinators and some Head Teachers. The training manual under preparation is based on eight modules and is in the process of being revised and translated. The modules include the following: (i) training expectations; (ii) community and community participation; (iii) what is a school? (iv) What is a PTA? (v) Why is a PTA needed? (vi) Composition and responsibilities of a PTA; (vii) situation analysis of education in a community; (viii) PTA meetings, financial record keeping and maintenance of stock registers; (ix) and monitoring of a school. Another approach being followed to develop better understanding between teachers and parents is the one being incorporated in PEP-ILE's teacher training component that includes a one-day training on parent-teacher relations. An advantage of this approach is that the teacher can also become a resource for PTA training.

*c. Balochistan*

In Balochistan the training has been based on three modules including Contract Reviewing Management Training (CRAMT), Problem Solving Exercises and Partnership Building. The package is not available in a published form for use by NGOs/PTAs. The Society for Community Support for Primary Education in Balochistan (SCSPEB) has been involved in the formation of VECs/WVECs for establishing Community Schools and also in forming PT/SMCs since 1992. It identifies capacity indicators to include the following eight skills: (i) developing a quarterly work plan and implementing it; (ii) preparing quarterly and annual reports; (iii) preparing invoices; (iv) maintaining financial, administrative and activities records; (v) making decisions; (vi) monitoring schools; (vii) conducting meetings; (viii) and bank dealing. It can be presumed that at least some of these skills are communicated in the training of communities and PTAs.

*d. Sindh*

In Sindh, five modules have been developed with regard to PTAs including their structure and formation, need for social mobilization, generation of resources, role in school development and effective training focusing on skills. The three crosscutting issues are conflict resolution, gender and social development. The modules are presented in the form of manuals indicating the duration of each component and other necessary inputs. These manuals are comprehensive and user-friendly and are based on trainings for supervisors to be delivered over a period of 23 days. A revised three-day module has been adopted for training PTAs. A video titled 'You Can Make a Difference' with an explanatory training manual and a set of four posters has also been developed. The Department of Education and SEF gave training to DEOs and the education field staff in all districts before disbursement of funds to PTAs. The capacity of local NGOs was also built to follow up on trainings. These modules and manuals have been used in the training of 1860 PTAs in four districts of the province

under a DFID supported program. Other materials include a PTA Booklet prepared by the Government of Sindh and one by SEF.

There is still a lack of clarity on the roles of SMCs. However, training does appear to be assisting. SMCs that had access to a training booklet were more organized. In most cases, the Education Departments and their field staff have shown resistance to the concept of community participation and are reluctant to engage in the outreach necessary for successful training and capacity building. They have also stated quite clearly their inability to interact with communities in general and the SMCs/PTAs in particular.

## **2. *Different methods of capacity building***

As earlier indicated, capacity building is a much broader and long-term process with training as one of its components. It is based on frequent informal and formal visits and interaction with the community and on-going facilitation. There is a general feeling among the committee members that the DOE officials are not very active and interested in the affairs of SMCs and that very few of the officials visit them. This is in sharp contrast to the role of NGOs who have frequent interaction with the community.

Building the capacities of the different actors/institutions in the concept of community participation will require developing a set of approaches, modules and trainings for the DOE and field staff, NGOs and PTA/SMCs. Experience suggests that working through NGOs is better in the initial phases, with as much government input as possible, for a sustainable and hence cost effective approach.<sup>7</sup> In Sindh, it was felt that it was better to get the education department involved from the start for long-term sustainability and for the ownership of the SMCs by the Education Department. Thus in Sindh the Education Department field staff and NGOs were involved together and this has been a fairly successful strategy. In all provinces, with the exception of Punjab, NGOs have been involved in both PTA formation and training.



In theory, training and capacity building of the field staff of the Department of Education is the more cost effective approach. However, this is based on the premise that the educational system is responsive and efficient, which is not the case at the moment. If training of SMCs is then assigned to NGOs, the track record indicates that the task will be done, even though this means that government is excluded, unless the two can work together. In Balochistan, the community support process was very costly but this was because of the distances involved. In NWFP, involvement of NGOs has been central to the process that means that the trainers would have to be hired by the GoNWFP for future PTA training. In Sindh, the PTA formation has been conducted in selected districts, but it is effective because there is a pool of trainers available in both the education department field staff and the NGOs who can be used for further training. It is important to link cost-effectiveness to the success of the particular approach. It is too early to assess how successful the ownership of the PTA concept is among the government and its' trainers in Sindh, but the approach is an important one since, it can be taken to scale. From a sustainability perspective, one problem is activities are often linked to projects and everything appears to be working when funds are available. The government needs to be able to move beyond this with its own resources.

Presently, the Department of Education field staff has shifted many of the capacity building and training responsibilities on to NGOs. The long-term cost effective solution would require community participation to be integrated into government teacher training programs and the training of the field staff of the departments/directorates of education. The GOP-NGO partnership will remain important for creating the necessary checks and balances and can be used to monitor the impact of trainings.

### **3. *Different financing modes***

Financing of SMCs/PTAs is done through government channels with the main responsibility lying with the Finance Department. At present, there is no standard policy regarding the disbursement of funds to SMCs/PTAs. In no province have all the funds been

given to the community. They have either been divided between the offices of the District Commissioner and the PTA/SMC or the DEO and the community. In most cases, the funds for repairs have been given to the community while the DC/DEO office is bidding for the classroom consumables. There is also lack of clarity regarding the basis on which the funds have been allocated. For example, in Balochistan, a certain amount has been allocated per classroom while in the Punjab, allocation is per school regardless of its size or need.

Another issue is the identification of functional schools. There is no clear policy on whether funds should be given to functional schools in the absence of a PTA/SMC. The policy for disbursement of funds is equally ambiguous. In some cases, all the funds have been given to DEOs to disburse to the PTA/SMC. In other cases, a part of the funds have been put at the disposal of the District Commissioner and some amount has gone into the accounts of the communities. The division of funds is based on 50 percent funds being allocated for repairs and 50 percent for classroom consumables.

In the NWFP, for example, it was unclear as to whether funds had been distributed on the basis of the school or number of classrooms and no lists were available. However, an amount of Rs.131 million for approximately 2,100 schools had been disbursed before June 30, 1999, which can be assumed to be the number of PTAs with operational bank accounts in the province. In Balochistan, approximately Rs.16 million has been released to PTAs although there is no clear policy on the issue. Funds were earmarked on the basis of the number of classrooms but they have been given on school basis although even this was not very clear. In Sindh, approximately Rs.423 million has been released by the SED to 27,000 PTAs, all of which apparently have bank accounts. Funds have been given on the basis of number of classrooms. In the Punjab, about 28,000 SMCs, all of which have bank accounts, have been given funds and a total of Rs.1, 214 million has been disbursed. These include primary and middle schools. Funds for classroom consumables are in addition to these.

In all cases, the Department of Education considered the disbursement of funds as a major factor in the empowerment of communities. PTAs/SMCs have been reported as saying that this is the first time the government has placed confidence in them by giving them funds for the school. However, the distribution of funds to PTAs/SMCs is only a first step in trust building and needs to be supported by training and capacity building at all levels. Also, more clarity is needed on the criteria regarding the release of funds, the schools the funds are to be released to and how they are to be disbursed.

#### E. Gender issues

The importance of community participation in increasing enrolment of girls at the primary level was part of the rationale for the formation of SMCs. The policy on SMCs/PTAs therefore stated that there would be male committees for boys' schools and female committees for girls' schools. Preference has also been given to forming SMCs/PTAs for girls' schools in SAPP I and II. The role of mothers is thus seen to be critical in ensuring that girls were sent to school and community participation was essential to identify local female teachers. Despite this, there are very few female SMCs/PTAs.

In girls' schools, there was a healthier gender balance with about 40 percent SMCs reporting representation of mothers in the parents' category. In NWFP, the PTAs constituted by DEOs, even for girls' schools, have included the husbands of female teachers and other male notables. NGOs have however been able to form female PTAs. Gender composition of the SMCs in the Punjab reveals that mothers are included as members in only 18 percent to 22 percent of the committees.<sup>8</sup>

Field surveys reveal that, in most cases, female members of the community were not aware of the SMCs. Where women have been involved in the process, the presence of females (mothers of students) in the non-teaching category of committees seems to have a positive relationship with activities especially in relation to a reduction of dropouts.

## F. Northern area initiatives

Much of this section relies on SAP – NA (1999) and on interviews. The main Northern Area SAP initiative is a five year the Northern Area Project (NAP) that began in February 1998. The Government of Pakistan and the SAPP II consortium of donors fund the Rs. 950 million project. DFID is providing the technical assistance via the Northern Area Education Project (NEAP) that is under the administration of the British Council. While the main goal of the project is to improve quality and access to elementary education for the poor, especially girls, in the Northern Areas, in this context community participation and the functioning of PTAs is of particular relevance.

While no outside evaluation has been done to date, and a mid-term review is planned, SAP – NA (1999) presented what appears to be a very candid assessment of progress for the year 1998-99. A reading of the action matrix (pp. 29-45) indicates that in general NEP has been somewhat slow getting off the ground. However, the training of 2,000 PTAs/VECs (village education committees) is in progress and the necessary manuals are in place. Also, 98 percent of the PTAs/VECs were functioning two years after having been established. Action on the community schools development project is yet awaited and AKRSP is developing operational plans for this. There has also been little or no action on the training of master trainers and instructors.

On a general level, the low level of action is conceded and attributed to various factors. These include the lack of a financial management system that impeded the flow of funds, the dearth of experienced manpower and the ban on staff recruitment, over ambitious programming and a lack of various systems that needed to be put in place. The latter included systems for the community utilization of a recurring budget, provision of a per child subsidy to community schools, school mapping, merit hiring and data collection and reporting (EMIS). These systems are now in place and bans removed on staff hiring and therefore much more rapid progress is anticipated.

The lack of proper guidelines, manuals and training of PTAs/VECs meant that the non-salary budget could not be released to schools. Also, the technical cells of the Directorate of Education were not functioning and so schools could not get technical assistance for the maintenance of building and such funds were not released. This technical cell has now been established. Also, as earlier indicated, the guideline and manuals are now in place and the training of PTAs/VECs and ADEOs started from June 1999.

The Northern Areas represents an interesting case of educational experimentation. The SAP schools functioning on an endowment that yields Rs. 1,200 per month are at a critical stage. Clearly, the monthly income is too small. Realizing that schools are of different sizes, the government has decided to experiment with a per child subsidy. This is a bold move since it endorses the government commitment to supporting education, but not necessarily to be the provider.<sup>9</sup>

The AKES schools represent an interesting model for SMC functioning. AKES schools proved that SMCs do work. The communities had been mobilised to take an interest in their children's schooling, had contributed land and labour for the school building and for on-going improvements like boundary walls, a science lab or an examination hall. They took an active on-going interest in school affairs and had the power to replace poor teachers in consultation with the NGO. In one case, an SMC blocked admission because, due to excess demand, the classes were getting overcrowded. In turn, it began consultations with the NGO to build more classrooms. It also permitted the school to use the premise for evening classes for a girl's college, since none was available for miles.

Overall, the experts interviewed agreed that the prospects for community education in the Northern Areas are bright despite the slow start relative to defined objectives. One important reason is that it can build on the regions proclivity and tradition of collective action that AKRSP has already build on, refined and

established. Thus compared to other regions, progress is viewed to be quite satisfactory.

#### **IV. The state of SMCs/PTAs and their training: literature review and results of a national survey**

##### **A. Literature review**

The most important recent studies on the state of SMCs/PTAs and their training include World Bank (1996), Government of Punjab / MSU (1998), Bunyad (1998), International Institute of Education et. al. (1998), Merchant (1999), Gulrukh and Haque (1999), Beckley (1999), Elahi (1999), British Council (1999), Hussein (1999) and MSU (nd.).

Elahi (1999, p. 11) pointed out that notification of DEOs to form PTAs in Sindh was sudden and the action precipitous, so much so, that many parents, who did not even know what a PTA was, were suddenly members. The background section above and the results of the national survey in the next two sub-sections indicate a similar story for the other provinces. Since little was hence achieved, this created a credibility problem for NGOs who were later contracted. Interviews indicated that donors, anxious for target achievement and disbursements, pushed the process and in this regard are equally culpable.

Bunyad (1998) did a useful descriptive review of PTAs in 51 schools across nine districts of the NWFP. The researchers reported hurriedly constituted PTAs with no capacity building, confusion caused by multiple notifications, constant change in membership partly due to teacher transfers, a lack of understanding of the basic concept of a PTA on the part of all concerned, no understanding of roles and responsibilities, no training, no monitoring and evaluation system, neglect of the gender issue, no follow-up by the Directorate of Primary Education, no co-operation among DEOs and NGOs, political interference in the formation and activities of the PTA and no training for the education department in community participation in order to handle this complex task. More disturbing, there was

no parental involvement or contribution and teachers were operating accounts as sole signatories.

The results of the survey indicate that the NGOs engaged in more community mobilisation, created greater awareness among teachers and to some extent among parents. There were elections for membership among a sizeable number of the schools, all PTAs had a bank account and all PTA members contributed to it. Even so, NGO established PTAs were not engaging in systematic training and there was a lack of clarity about roles and responsibilities. While there was virtually no activity among government established PTAs, NGO established PTAs were meeting regularly. However, even NGOs hurriedly conducted school functions in anticipation of the study team's visit.

While there was no evidence of an improvement in teacher attendance, there was evidence that PTAs were engaging in collective activity such as contribution to building boundary walls, erecting sunshades and making financial contribution for electrification. Such collective action even pre-dated the formation of PTAs indicating that the potential for collective action is there. There were also some negative findings such as the use of false expectations about financial assistance as a motivational factor and deterring mother's participation using the pretext of cultural norms.

The study by the GoPunjab / MSU (1998) is probably the most comprehensive. A stratified random sample of 175 schools in Gujanwala and 150 in D. G. Khan was selected. An important objective of the study was to identify the success of the massive training program designed to cover 65,000 members via the training of master trainers. We report only some of the main findings here since the report is accessible.

Parents, particularly mothers, were under-represented on the SMCs while influentials were over-represented. Interaction of department of education officials and SMC members was very

limited and, in many cases, committee members were teacher's relatives.

At the time of the survey, training had not been received by two-thirds of the D. G. Khan SMCs and two-fifths of the Gujranwala SMCs. Also, the training was directed only at the head teacher and to a lesser extent to the other teachers. Only one-fifth of the SMCs in D. G. Khan and 6 percent in Gujranwala received the training booklets on SMC management and procurements. Just over a quarter of the SMCs in D. G. Khan and no SMC in Gujranwala received government funds. However, most of the SMCs that received funds (88 percent) maintained accounts and reported them to the members.

The activities the SMCs engaged in included committee meetings, visits to schools, meeting parents, teachers, heads and students, reviewing attendance registers, financial support to students and talking to imams. The objective of this activity was to increase enrolments, reduce dropout rates and contain absenteeism. The results of their analysis showed that training does seem to contribute to marginally higher activity levels. Also, female's representation on committees, government funding and access to training booklets was associated with higher activity levels.

MSU (nd., p. 6) also cites results of surveys to indicate that most SMCs tried to fulfil their functions, met at least once in the year prior to the surveys, visited schools and households and had meetings with teachers, parents and students, took steps to raise enrolment rates and reduce drop out rates, checked attendance registers, supported students financially and took steps to improve the classroom environment. There was however no meaningful interaction with the Department of Education and few took measures to improve teacher attendance.

Merchant (1999) reports on similar blanket notification of PTAs for Sindh schools as was the case in NWFP and Punjab. In 1998, with UNICEF support, 5,325 PTAs were to be trained. The training modules and manuals were developed for the purpose. In



all, the author notes that 7,000 PTAs have been trained, many with the DOE efforts by using department officials (RPs, LCs, and Supervisors) as master trainers, but that this does not show up in the Sindh Education Management Information System (SEMIS) database.

A one-day orientation workshop for department officials in July 1999 in Sindh highlighted some interesting issues. They perceived that there was a lack of clarity concerning their role, capture of PTAs by heads, political interference included take over attempts by the Khidmat Committees, fake PTAs chasing funds and educational officials demanding bribes to issue checks.

In May 1998, Rs. 423 million were allocated to about 26,914 PTAs. A study commissioned by the British Council Project Management Office (1999) reported that the allocation was based on poor SEMIS data, flaws in the formula for calculating grants and multiple administrative layers for processing of grants. Recommendations were directed at reforming and rationalising the grant delivery system. Also, Hussein (1999, p. 9) pointed out that there is a need for allowing more flexibility in expenditures to meet real needs identified by the committees.

Hussein (1999) made some interesting observations regarding SMCs/PTAs. She pointed out that the autonomy of the Punjab and Sindh SMCs/PTAs is compromised by mandating the head teacher to also be the chairperson of the SMC/PTA.<sup>10</sup> While the Sindh PTAs have a greater representation of parents on the PTA, their role regarding monitoring teacher performance is left ambiguous. The PTA is required to play a supportive role with an over-emphasis, because of the lack of balance, on purchasing and school infrastructure. While the role of the SMC has been spelt out for Punjab SMCs, it has created resentment among teachers and parents don't have any real implementing authority. However, if the department does take parent's complaints seriously, there is indirect authority but the problem of the head teacher as chairperson remains.<sup>11</sup> Balochistan PTAs suffer from both parents feeling un-empowered and teachers feeling resentful.

Reservations about PTAs in NWFP were cited earlier, but quarterly reports from Khwendo Kor (1999) and AWARE (1999) represent interesting accounts of what PTAs can achieve working with communities. The next sub-section reviews the results of a small national survey.

The literature review essentially confirmed the findings based on the field visits and interviews. The PTA/SMC formations were precipitous, so much so, parents on the committees were not aware of their existence. NGO formed PTAs met more regularly, but even they often showed poor performance. There is an over-representation of notables on committees and an under-representation of women. Much of the training has been directed at the head teacher who is often the most influential member of the PTA and hence not likely to monitor himself. Very few SMCs seemed to have training booklets though those that did had somewhat higher activity levels. Political interference in the functioning of SMCs/PTAs was rife. The allocation of funds was often based on flawed data and there appeared to be an overemphasis on purchases and school infrastructure. While survey reports suggest SMCs did appear to be performing many of the assigned functions, interaction with the Department of Education was inadequate and little was done about teacher absenteeism.

## **B. Results of a national survey**

This small survey of 149 schools provided us with the third tier of information on the functioning of SMCs/PTAs and their training and capacity building. The survey was funded by The Asia Foundation project on Basic Education housed in the SDPI. The larger objective of the survey was to compare the performance of NGO, private and government schools from several different perspectives. One of the questionnaires of the multi-questionnaire field study was exclusively aimed at investigating the state of collective action in basic education, particularly with reference to the functioning of SMCs/PTAs. This section represents the first reporting based on the analysis of this data.

Data for the study was collected through extensive fieldwork carried out in the Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, the NWFP and the Northern Areas between September and December, 1998. Since our focus was on NGO schools, we randomly picked the NGO schools from a sampling frame and then picked the closest government and private school to be included in the sample. In this kind of paired sampling, the randomness extends to the selection of government schools. Twenty-nine, 4 and 22 of the 43 NGO, private and government schools included in the sample had an SMC or PTA respectively. There was only one female SMC in the 86 Government and NGO schools visited. For details regarding the selection process and the actual schools selected, refer to Appendix III.

We have focused here on the training and capacity building aspects of the data.<sup>12</sup> The field-team held meetings with the administrators of the sample area. Based on these meetings and observations, a field report was written on the night of field visit. The field-team also fielded a structured questionnaire to the SMC/PTA. While this was the main source of information on SMCs/PTAs, questions on community participation and SMCs/PTAs were also fielded to households, communities and teachers. The results of the analysis of the data generated from this questionnaire are also reported. The PTA/SMC questionnaire is presented as Appendix IV.<sup>13</sup>

We start here with an overall self-assessment by government and NGO schools of their SMCs on a four-point scale of “poor” to “very good”. The question put to the committees was “rate how well do you think the SMC is doing in managing the school?” Eighty six percent (25) of the government SMCs rated themselves as “poor” or “fair” while only one rated itself as “good”. By contrast, 77 percent of NGO SMCs rated themselves as “good” or “very good” and only 18 percent rated themselves as “fair”. No NGO SMC rated itself as “poor”. It is naturally a cause of much concern why government SMC self-assessment is so low, particularly when an outside evaluation tends to be much harsher.

The motivation for forming SMCs could be an indicator of collective action and hence community maturity. We therefore inquired about who instigated the formation for NGO schools? In 82 percent of NGO schools (18), the idea was that of the NGO and only in one case was it that of the community. SMCs are now mandatory in government schools and so the more interesting question there is why only two-thirds (29) of the government schools sampled had SMCs.

On the face of it, SMCs did seem to be important in managing the school. About four-fifths of government schools that had SMCs (23) and 96 percent of such NGO schools (21) reported that the SMC managed the schools. Government school SMCs had more members such that about three-fourths of them (22) had nine or more members. For NGO schools, only about one-fourth (5) had nine or more members. Again, on the face of it, a larger membership could potentially represent greater representation of the community. Thus the more important question about membership is not the numbers involved but the composition.

Nine-tenths of all SMC members in government schools were teachers. In fact, parents were not represented on a single committee! This is a very serious problem and one that the government should take serious note of. The parent representation on NGO SMCs was higher at 9 percent, but even this was disappointing. Also, in four-fifths of such cases, parents continue on the committee when their child leaves the school. Teachers at 86 percent again represented the bulk of the representation on the SMCs. This says very little for actual community or parent participation in running schools. This is more so the case since in half the cases the NGO decided who would be represented on the committee and their representative was perceived to be the most influential on the committee. One could take some heart from the fact that in over one-fourths of the cases (6), NGOs sought the consensus of the community in appointing parents to the SMC. Also, most in the focus group discussion claimed that non-SMC members get some say in the decision making in both NGO and government schools.

The NGO SMCs met more frequently. About nine-tenths of them (17) reported meeting at least once a month, while 55 percent (16) of government SMCs reported meeting only once a month and the rest (13) reported meeting every other month or less.

There were some interesting commonality and differences in the perceived functions of the NGO and government SMCs. Ensuring teacher attendance, student attendance, student discipline, and adequate training and supplies were perceived as SMC functions by a much larger number of NGO committees compared to the government committees. The only function in which there was parity was with regards to the proper maintenance of the school. About 86 percent (19) NGO committees and 83 percent of government committees viewed this to be a function of the SMC. Thus government school SMCs have a rather limited perception of their role and this needs to be modified.

Teacher absenteeism was not perceived to be a problem in any NGO SMC and was noted to be a problem by one government SMC. Similarly, student absenteeism was reported to be problem by 14 percent (4) of government SMCs and by 23 percent of NGO SMCs (5). Naturally, none of these responses were unbiased. Both government (3 out of four cases) and NGO (all cases) SMCs claim to have had substantial success in dealing with this problem by talking to the students and approaching the relatives. Given that SMCs were predominantly composed of teachers, a biased response in this case was inevitable.

While one-fifth of government SMCs claimed to be facing no problems, 31 percent (9) complained about the lack of co-operation from other teachers. Thus, taking teachers into confidence in the training process is of vital importance in government SMC training. Forty-one percent (9) of NGO SMCs claimed to have received some training and all of them found it to be of value. Similarly, 38 percent (11) of government SMCs claimed to have received some training and 73 percent (8) of those receiving training found it to be of value. The important

question here is why 62 percent of the government SMCs received no training as they were supposed to?

Despite the notifications, only 29 out of the 43 sampled government schools actually had a SMC. Eighty six percent of the government schools rated the performance of the SMC as poor or fair. More distressing, nine-tenths of the SMC members were teachers and no parent was represented on even one committee. Government school SMCs had a very limited perception of their role that included an overwhelming focus on school maintenance. About two-thirds of the government school SMCs received no training by late 1998.

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

This study is based on three major sources of information. The first includes field visits, interviews with school staff, School Management Committees/Parent Teacher Associations (SMC/PTA) members, government line department officials, NGO members, educationists and donor organization members and a review of documents and reports. The second source is an extensive review of the literature. The third is a small national field survey of government and NGO SMCs/PTAs. The findings from the three sources are broadly consistent and reinforce each other, although findings from the sample survey are more negative than those emerging from the literature review.

We found that there has certainly been much activity regarding the establishment and training of (SMCs/PTAs) even though little has been achieved across the four provinces. Even so, at least the basic infrastructure has been established which could be improved and built upon.

As things stand, the constitution of the SMCs/PTAs has in most cases been via sudden notification, so much so, that many parents who had no idea what a PTA represents became members overnight. The repeated re-constitution of these committees to enhance the role of parents without taking teachers into confidence created resentment among teachers. Even if teachers were taken into

confidence, there is little reason to believe that they would welcome an additional layer of monitoring so close to home, particularly if it is by parents they consider their intellectual and social inferiors.

If participation of parents via SMCs were to make any progress, it would have to be accompanied by several concomitant changes. First, teacher's attitudes would have to be slowly and painstakingly changed so that they really do view parents as partners in the education of their children. Second, the incentive structures would have to be changed so that the teachers have a reason to listen to parents. Thus teachers' increments and promotions would have to be partly dependent on parents' assessment of teacher performance at least in terms of punctuality and good treatment of the children. The government officials have to accept the importance of this parental input and be welcoming of and responsive to this input. Finally, the training of SMCs/PTAs, in order to enable them to perform their mandated tasks, must accompany these changes. Thus, while we put training at the end of a sequence of changes that are necessary, the current fixation on training pushes it without the accompanying public sector reform that is needed. We feel that the current political scenario, with its focus on decentralization, is likely to achieve such public sector reform.

Without the other reform, the training is not likely to amount to much. This is borne out by the 'adopt a school programme' started in Sindh and Punjab where NGOs and the private sector are working with government schools to improve the quality of education. In actual fact, community participation is limited to the functioning of the NGO and some representation of parents on committees. The participation has not extended to monitoring the quality of teaching in the classroom.

Instead of the kind of empowerment mentioned above that is needed, both in Sindh and Punjab, the head teacher is mandated to be the chair of the committees. Thus the parents have little autonomy. In Punjab, there is at least a mechanism for hearing parental complaints in the government line department. However, with the head teacher as the chair, there is little chance of such

complaints being passed up. Also, research shows that the line department officials manifest complete disinterest and lack of interaction with communities and committees. Just as teachers must have an incentive to listen to parents so must the line department officials. Thus the evaluation of line department officials must similarly be partially based on parents' assessment of their efforts to work with them and committees to improve schooling.

There is much that needs to be done for improving educational administration. Even line department officials reported numerous wrong doings. Thus fake SMCs/PTAs were drawing funds, the process of issuing grants was susceptible to political interference and line department officials were demanding bribes to release grants. Research also showed that the basis of making allocations still needs much fine tuning to avoid mis-allocations and flexibility and committee discretion would be desirable in order for real needs to be met. Also, the SMC/PTA fixation with acquisition of school materials seems totally misplaced. Their major focus should be on working with teachers to improve attendance of students and teachers, co-curricula activities and other ways of generating greater interest in teaching and learning.

The documents and reports on this subject suggest that NGOs are more prone to engage in the kind of social mobilisation that may change community and teachers attitudes in the way desired. However, the scale of the task is so vast that these efforts do not amount to much. Also, even NGO initiated SMCs/PTAs show only relatively better performance than the SMCs/PTAs initiated by government educational department officials. While there is virtually no activity in most of the government formed SMCs/PTAs, at least the NGO formed committees were meeting regularly. However, the literature shows that, with some exceptions, they have not engaged in systematic training and even when NGOs have been contracted to form SMCs/PTAs, there has been a lack of clarity about roles and responsibilities among the various stakeholders.

The other factors that have a positive impact on SMC/PTA activity include having mothers represented on the committees. One study



found that the presence of mothers on committees was associated with lower dropouts from the school. Much needs to be done on this score since, in the Punjab, mothers had representation on committees in less than one-fifths of the schools. Another factor that was shown to be positively associated with enhanced activity levels was access to good training booklets. Several training initiatives have produced good resource material that could now be adapted to local conditions and more widely disseminated.

The results of our national survey, for the most part, confirm and reinforce the findings from the first two sets of sources. First, only two-third of the schools in the sample had committees even though it is now mandatory to have them. Second, parents were not represented on any of the government school committees and there was only 9 percent parental representation on NGO school committees. This is a very serious problem since, conceptually, true participation in education require most of all the involvement of concerned parents. Third, 86 percent of the government school SMCs/PTAs rated their performance as “poor” (compared to a 77 percent self-assessment of NGO schools as “good” or “very good”). Over half of them were meeting less than once a month (compared to nine-tenths of NGO schools committees meeting at least once a month) and the incidence of non-functionality was very high. Fourth, despite all the claims of the extensive training underway, less than two-fifths claimed to have received any training. Finally, the fixation on repair and maintenance stands out in perception as the purpose of SMCs/PTAs. About 86 percent of NGO school committees and 83 percent of government school committees viewed the proper maintenance of the school as an important function of the committee. Many more NGO school committees viewed ensuring teacher attendance, student attendance, student discipline and adequate supplies as part of their role.

On the positive side, even prior to the formation of the SMCS/PTAs, the communities had been engaging in collective action. Thus via collections they had built boundary walls and provided water and electricity for the school. Thus, the raw potential for collective

action is certainly there. Harnessing this potential is the real challenge.

## **Recommendations**

### **General**

We believe that probably the most needed and effective reform is the genuine empowerment of parents who are central to realizing the concept of “participation” in education. For this to happen, teachers and line department field officials increments/promotions must be partially based on the evaluation by parents. Until this happens, teachers will not take parents seriously and line department officials will have little incentive to interact with parent committees to improve the quality of schooling.

### **Specific**

#### ***Best practice***

The training manuals and materials developed by the Bureau of Curriculum and Extension Work (BCEF) and Sindh Education Foundation (SEF) are the most comprehensive and have also been tested in the field. Training materials were developed on a needs based assessment of head teachers and parents. On this basis, training and capacity building, according to a structured process, has already started and can easily be strengthened. Given that training manuals have still not been widely provided and that providing them does make a difference to committee organization and activity levels, a good investment of limited funds would be to test, adapt and widely disseminate the best of what is available.

Thus the options include the following:

- Develop and/or refine training materials;
- Test the materials developed in a few districts or in one province;
- Train a selected number of Department of Education staff in community participation;
- Create a GOP-NGO interface for SMC's training. This could be done via the Participatory Development Program (PDP), although PDP has stalled for the moment.

Initiating a new project with separate staff would not be a cost effective option, since much of the funding would get absorbed by salaries, infrastructure and administration, and therefore should be avoided.

The best practice from NGOs schools relates to the regular supervision and monitoring system ensuring school, teacher and child performance. There are a number of models that can form a reference point. For example, there is the Citizens Foundation model of the NGO playing the major role with limited representation of parents. Alternatively, there is the systematic monitoring and supervisory role of the NGO together with an active SMC/PTA as in the case of SAHE's community based schools in Pakpattan District in the Punjab and Khwendo Kor's community schools supported by GONWFP and DFID in Dir District of NWFP. In all three cases, it is the regular supervision of the schools, monitoring of the program and the follow up, in combination with regular training of teachers, education supervisors and SMCs/PTAs, which make the programs effective. The development and training of human resources involved at all levels has been critical to the success of the programs. The problem in government schools is that no one is ready to assume responsibility and parents, as the most affected stakeholders, are not adequately empowered to take the lead.

### ***Geographical focus***

Funds could be divided among the four provinces for one to two training positions to be made permanent by the government by the end of the SAPP II. In addition, a series of trainings over the period of SAPP II, based on the training materials already developed, could be organized. Our research show that training on the ground is not as widespread as claimed or commonly believed. In the case of Balochistan and Punjab, where training materials are still to be developed, funds should also be allocated for this activity as indicated in "best practice" above. The role of some NGOs has been pivotal in the process of SMC/PTA formation, training and/or development of training materials. Thus one or two NGOs from each province could be selected for support.

### ***Institutional mechanisms for training and capacity building***

There is a need to identify and specify funds for training and capacity building of SMCs/PTAs through NGOs under SAPP II. The existing and proposed cells dealing with activities relating to community participation should be given the mandate to develop the terms of partnership with NGOs who have a track record in training and capacity building of SMCs/PTAs. At the provincial level, the Community Participation Cell in NWFP, the Beneficiary Participation Cell in Balochistan and the proposed Community Participation Cell in the Directorate of Primary Education in Sindh, together with Sindh Educational Foundation (SEF), will be the concerned institutions requiring strengthening. In Punjab, the responsibility presently rests with the DOE, and so there is need to establish a Community Participation Cell as in the other provinces. The establishment of separate cells for community participation is important for the issue of legitimizing the role of SMCs/PTAs. One suggestion arising from our interviews was that a special SAP cadre could be created so that these officials are only transferred with in SAP. Thus the training invested in line department officials and their experience would not be lost to SAP when these officials are transferred.<sup>14</sup>

### ***Decentralization***

The increasing focus on decentralization demands that new systems be put into place for ensuring Government-NGO partnerships. The Provincial Education Foundations established for providing an interface between Government and NGOs/communities have not been very successful in playing this role. The recognition of civil society organizations, with experience of working with the Government as critical actors in the process of development, suggests that building the capacity of NGOs involved in the process of SMC/PTA formation and the development of training materials would lead to the development of new mechanisms. Again, the selection of one or two such NGOs in each province, focusing on selected districts, for building the capacity and training of the Departments of

Education, their field staff and SMCs/PTAs could be part of the capacity building for effective decentralization.

### ***Gender***

Since the process of involving women in SMCs/PTAs takes longer, DEOs and, in some cases NGOs, tend to bypass women in the initial stages. The role of female SMCs/PTAs, or female members of such committees has not been adequately identified and remains a gap in most awareness sessions, orientations, training modules and materials. Also, since research shows that the presence of mothers on committees enhances activity levels and reduces dropouts, an increased representation of women on such committees or separate mothers' committees is called for. The selection of NGOs for the implementation of future training could depend on their awareness and demonstrated commitment to gender issues in education.

### ***Financing mechanisms***

This issue is addressed at several points in this report, particularly in the financing modes sub-section. While our main focus is on training and capacity building, we proffer a few remarks based on what we heard and read. First, there is a dire need for inter-departmental co-ordination. For example, the educational department financial practice must be consistent with that of the Finance Ministry that releases the funds. Second, the database that is relied on for determining the allocation of funds needs much improvement. Third, the enormous red tape associated with the expenditure process needs to be rationalised and simplified. Fourth, there needs to be much greater clarity on the basis of which funds are to be allocated. Fifth, flexibility may need to be built into the expenditure process, as long as due accounting procedures are satisfied, so that true community needs to be met. Finally, corrupt practices, spoken of even by line department officials, need to be eliminated.

### ***Financing options***

Depending on the level of funding, the Norwegian government may want to consider working through SAPP II and specifying the utilization of its grant for the training and capacity building of SMCs/PTAs component within the education sector. This would be preferable for limiting the monitoring. The more monitoring intensive options are to directly enter into projects with selected NGOs for training and capacity building of SMCs/PTAs of government schools along the lines suggested above. In particular, this could include development of training materials where there is a gap as well training the DOE and field staff along with the communities. Another option is to fund NGOs under the 'Adopt a School Programme' with the proviso of setting up and training SMCs/PTAs for those schools if they do not exist.

## **Appendix I:**

### **Interviews**

#### **BALUCHISTAN**

Mr. Habibullah Khattak, Director General SAP  
Mr. Edwin Pasha, Education Specialist, P&DD  
Mr. M. Farooq Akbar, Deputy Director, PED  
Mr. Brian Spicer, CTA BPEP  
Mr. Asif Gul, Deputy Director, Beneficiary Participation Cell,  
DPE

#### **NGOs:**

SEHER  
SCSPEB-Society for Community Support to Primary Education in  
Balochistan

#### **NWFP**

Ms. Sarwat Jehan, Additional Director, DPE  
Mr. Fida Hussain, Acting Chief Technical Advisor PEP-CO  
Ms. Durre Shahwar, Community Participation Specialist, PEP-  
MCO  
Dr. Sauer, Chief Technical Adviser, PEP-ILE  
Mrs. Shahida Khattak, Chief Training Coordinator, PEP-ILE  
Ms. Carol Morris, DFID Adviser Community Participation, PEP

#### **NGOs:**

Khwendo Kor: Dir District  
AWARE: Peshawar

#### **PUNJAB**

Mr. Javaid Iqbal Awan, Special Secretary Schools

**NGOs:**

Bunyard Literacy Coordinating Council  
Sudhaar  
Society for the Advancement of Education (SAHE)

**SINDH**

Ms. Mehtab Rashidi, Secretary Education, Government of Sindh  
Mr. Anwar Zai, Additional Secretary Education, Planning &  
Coordination  
Ms. Baela Jamil, DFID Adviser Community Participation SPEDP  
Mr. Mashhood Rizvi, Sindh Education Foundation  
Mr. Nooruddin Merchant, Sindh Education Foundation  
Mr. Muhammad Saleem Khan, Bureau of Curriculum &  
Extension Work Jamshoro

**NGOs:**

Teachers Resource Centre (TRC)

**ISLAMABAD**

Ms. Shahnaz Wazir Ali, Educational Specialist, World Bank  
Mr. Masood Kizalbash, Federal SAP Coordinator

**NORTHERN AREAS**

Mr. Jonathan Mitchell, General Manager, Northern Areas and  
Chitral, Aga Khan Education Service.  
Dr. Hazel Bines, Educational Specialist, DFID.  
Mr. Syed Amir Husain  
Naqvi, Task Manager, World Bank, Northern Areas Educational  
Project.



## Appendix II

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## PUNJAB

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2. School Management Committees Booklet, DSD & Department of Education, Government of Punjab 1997.
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## SINDH

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2. Sindh Primary Education Program, "How to make the PTA Training Programme Effective?," BCEW, SEF, TRC and DFID, 1999.
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5. Sindh Primary Education Program, "PTA and School Development," BCEW, SEF, TRC and DFID, 1999.
6. Sindh Primary Education Development Program (SPEDP) and Bureau of Curriculum and Extension Wing, "Final (Draft) Report, Training of 1860 PTAs in Four Districts of Sindh," Technical Assistance by DFID, August 98 – December 98.
7. Bureau of Curriculum and Extension Wing, Jamshoro, "Provincial Level Experience Sharing Seminar under the 1860 Training Program in Karachi (South), Karachi (East), Shikarpur and Sukkar, SPEDP and DFID, June 1999.

## Appendix III:

### School Sampling

We started with a Society for the Advancement of Education (SAHE) directory of NGOs involved in education.<sup>15</sup> We soon realised this was not exhaustive, since a number of organisations had not been included. To supplement the SAHE directory, we obtained a copy of the Dataline NGO directories (one each for the four provinces and the Capital) from the Trust for Volunteer Organisations (TVO).<sup>16</sup> This directory had been compiled in 1991, and included NGOs that had registered by the late 1980s. Those that stated that they were involved in education were sent questionnaires to gauge their current status and involvement in education. This process was time consuming and the responses disappointing. However, we managed to complete this process for Balochistan, NWFP and Sindh.

The information sent back pertained mostly to the smaller NGOs and Community Based Organizations (CBOs). Since, we initially planned to include only the larger NGOs in the sample, we began a fresh to compile a list of larger NGOs, on the basis of the SAHE directory and the NGO grapevine. Our selection criterion was that the NGO be running formal primary schools (i.e. 5 years of schooling).

Initially, for financial and linguistic reasons, the study was to be restricted to the Punjab. It was thought that, as the largest province and with the largest number of NGO interventions, the institutional findings from this province would be, by and large, relevant for the rest of the country. After much searching, 50 NGO schools were selected from the Punjab. Because of the difficulty in finding formal schools, even smaller NGOs were included in the sample. Once in the field, we discovered that a substantial amount of the information reported was inaccurate, even though it had been given to us, in

most cases, by the senior management of the organisations in question. The main problem was that many of the primary schools were not running classes I-V as we required.

Because we were not able to find 50 formal NGO schools in the Punjab, we had to expand the scope of the study to include the rest of the provinces. Much of the sampling work had to be carried out on the basis of information received on site, i.e. through various education-related professionals and communities. Substitutions were made when those schools originally in the sample could not be surveyed -- generally because the school did not run five classes, was closed due to Winter break, was non-existent or too far away from a private school to justify a comparison between the two.

The schools finally visited are listed below in Table I-IV. As evident from this list, 7 out of the 43 school in the sample were those of NGOs operating only one school. For the Punjab multiple school NGOs on the list, we randomly selected about 30 percent of the schools in the Punjab. For the larger multi-school NGOs in the other provinces, the selection ranged from 22 percent to 55 percent. Once the NGO school was selected, we then visited the nearest government and private schools that ran classes up to class 5. Our objective in pursuing this method was to minimise location influences when comparing schools.<sup>17</sup>

*Table I.* Eligible, sampled and surveyed NGO schools in the Punjab

Sr. #	NGO	Total # of eli. schs.	# schs orig sampled	Report	Surveys conducted successfully (Phase I / II)
1	Tameer-e-Millat Foundation	12	5	Random, from list of schools obtained.	4 (I) + 2 (II)
2	Hira Taleemi Mansooba	29	10	Random, from list of locations dictated on the phone.	4 (I)
3	Sufi Foundation	1	1		1(I)
4	Anjuman Khudaam-e-Rasool Allah	1	1		1(I)
5	Awami Committee for Dev. (ACD)	10	4	Org. found to be existent only on paper – were not able to contact any of the members once on site	0
6	Baagh-e-Rahmat Trust	1	1	School was in urban area	0
7	Malik Maula Bakhsh Memorial Trust	71	29	Random, from list of schools obtained.	0
8	Roshni Foundation	1	0	CBO currently handling one ACD school	1 (I)
9	Shuaib Qadria Welfare Society	1	0	Used as on spot substitute in phase I	1 (I)
10	Qasim Bela Welfare Society	1	0	Used as on spot substitute in phase I	1 (I)
11	Anjuman-e-Hussain Secondary Association	1	0	Used as on spot substitute in phase I	1 (I)
12	Anjuman Farogh-e-Taleem	1	0	Used as on spot substitute in phase I	1 (I)
12	Mohd Yar Memorial Society	1	0	Used as substitute in phase II	1 (II)
<b>Total</b>		<b>135</b>	<b>50(I) +2(II)</b>		<b>14 (I) + 4 (II)</b>

*Notes:* Eli. = eligible  
Sch. = school  
Orig. = original  
Sub. = substitute.

By October 10, 1998, we had completed fieldwork in 14 villages of the Punjab referred to in the Table above as phase I. We found that the most substantial section of our sample -- the 29 schools being run by the MMBT -- were non-formal. At this stage we realized that sampling 50 schools would require extending the fieldwork to the rest of the provinces of the country.

A rough estimate for a provincial breakdown for these 50 schools that we decided on was as follows:

Punjab, 18;  
Sindh, 15;  
NWFP, 10;  
Balochistan, 5.

Thus under phase II of the fieldwork, we visited 4 more schools in the Punjab as indicated in Table I. After that, we had to search for NGO schools in Sindh, Balochistan and the NWFP. For this, we were able to make use of the questionnaires that had been sent back to us as a result of the mailed survey based on the TVO Dataline Directory (1994). Again, a vast majority of the returned questionnaires for all three provinces (and the Capital) indicated that the NGOs involved in education were mostly running non-formal schools. Also, most of these NGOs were running an average of two or three schools. The plan of sampling only NGOs running large networks of schools thus had to be dropped.

The sample selected for Sindh is reported in Table II below:

*Table II.* Eligible, sampled and surveyed schools in Sindh

Sr. #	NGO	Total # of eli schs	# schs orig sampled	Report	Surveys conducted successfully (Orig / Sub)
1	Thardeep Rural Dev. Prog.	2	2	One selected NGO school was too far from a private school	1 (Orig)
2	Sindh Graduates Association	9	5	Random selection from list obtained	3 (Orig) + 2 (Nearest Sub)
3	Sindh Education Foundation: Nowa Prabath: Naz Old Boys Association	10	5	All schools turned out to be non-formal	0
4	The Citizen's Foundation	22	7	Some schools didn't have class 5	3 (Orig) + 4 (Out of 16 eli: random Sub)
5	Ahle Bait	2	0	On-spot information	2 (Sub)
	Total	45	19		7 (Orig.) + 8 (Sub.)

*Notes:* As in Table I

The sample selected for Balochistan is reported in Table III below:

**Table III.** Eligible, sampled and surveyed schools in Balochistan

Sr. #	NGO	Total # of eli schs	# schs orig sampled	Report	Surveys conducted successfully (Orig / Sub)
1	Helper's Association of Pakistan	3	1	Random selection from list obtained	1(Orig.)
2	Tanzeem Idarah Bahali e Mutasireen	4	3	1 unsafe area 1 closed for winter	1 (Orig.)
3	Pak. Public Welfare Society	15	0	7 closed for winter 5 too far	1 (Sub.)
4	Tanzeem Welfare Society	1	1	No class 5	0
4	Balochistan Rural Support Programme	2	2	1 handed over to govt. 1 too far	0
Total		27	9		2 (Orig.) + 1 (Sub.)

Notes: As in Table I.

Fieldwork began in Balochistan on November 27, 1999. This meant that schools which were in the Winter Zone had started to close down for the winter break, which in some areas is eight weeks long. Also, because of the vast size of the province and the scarce roads and other infrastructure, travel was difficult.

The sample selected for NWFP is reported in Table IV below:

**Table IV.** Eligible, sampled and surveyed schools in NWFP

Sr. #	NGO	Total # of eli schs	# schs orig sampled	Report	Surveys conducted successfully (Orig / Sub)
1	Chinnai Welfare Organisation	3	3	Organisation found to be non-existent	0
2	Swabi Women's Welfare Society	2	2		2 (orig)
3	Swabi Education & Environmental Development Society	3	1	Schools found to be functioning as private, for-profit enterprises	0
4	Aga Khan Educational Service, Gilgit	23	5	1: no nearby pvt. sch. 3: closed for winter 1 completed	1 (orig) 2 (out of 18; random sub)
5	Hira Taleemi Mansooba	4	0	On spot information	2 (nearest sub)
Total		35	11		3 (orig) + 4 (sub)

Notes: As in Table I.

**Appendix IV:**

**SMC/PTA questionnaire**

*Name of the interviewer* \_\_\_\_\_

*ID Number*    \_ \_ \_ \_ \_    (*To be left blank by the interviewer*)

*Sr. No*         \_ \_ \_         (*To be left blank by the interviewer*)

*Village Name*                   \_\_\_\_\_

*School Type*

- 1 = Govt.*
- 2 = Private*
- 3 = NGO*

*School Level*

- 1 = Primary*
- 2 = Middle*
- 3 = High*

*School Gender*

- 1 = All Boys*
- 2 = All Girls*
- 3 = Mixed*

SMC1         How is the school managed?  
SMC = 01  
Purely School Admin = 02  
Parents & School Admin = 03  
NGO = 04  
NGO & Scchool Admin. = 05  
Other = 77

*IF SMC1 is not equal to 1, END.*



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SMC2	Who's idea was it to form the committee? Community members = 01 Notables = 02 Comm. Members & Notables = 03 School Admin = 04 Donor = 05 NGO = 06 Govt. = 07 Other = 77 Not applicable = 88
SMC3	What is the total number of committee members?
SMC4	List composition of SMC members. Teachers = 01 Parents = 02 Other Committee members 03 NGO Rep. = 04 Govt. Rep. = 05 Other = 06
SMC5	Representation of parents on the committee was determined by which of the following? Consensus of Community = 01 Notables = 02 NGO Rep. = 03 Govt. Rep. = 04 Teachers = 05 Voluntary action = 06 Other = 77
SMC6	Who is the most influential on the SMC? Teachers = 01 Parents = 02 Other Committee members = 03 NGO Rep. = 04 Govt. Rep. = 05 Other = 77

School Management Committees

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SMC7 Do others get some say in the making of decisions?  
[ask e.g., before noting answer]  
Yes = 1  
No = 0

SMC8 Have there been any conflicts within the committee?  
Yes = 1  
No = 0

If No go to SMC10

SMC9 If Yes, Specify. PROBE.

SMC10 Have there been any conflicts between SMC and  
Community?  
Yes = 1  
No = 0

If No go to SMC12

SMC11 If Yes, Specify. PROBE.

SMC12 How often does the committee meet?  
Every week = 1  
Every 2 weeks = 2  
Every month = 3  
Every 2 months = 4  
Other = 7

SMC13 Do parents leave the committee once their children are  
not in school?  
Yes = 1  
No = 0

SMC14 Has the School Admin./NGO/Govt. provided any  
assistance (e.g. training) for the efficient mgmt. of the  
school?  
Yes = 1  
No = 0

*If No go to SMC16*

SMC15      If Yes, has this been valuable to the efficient  
                 management of the SMC?

Yes = 1

No = 0

SMC16      Cite the main functions of the SMC

Ensure teacher attendance

Yes = 1

No = 0

Ensure student attendance

Yes = 1

No = 0

Ensure student discipline

Yes = 1

No = 0

Ensure prompt fee payment

Yes = 1

No = 0

Ensure proper school maintenance

Yes = 1

No = 0

Ensure adequate teaching materials and supplies

Yes = 1

No = 0

Generally ensure good quality schooling

Yes = 1

No = 0

Other = 7

SMC17      Is late payment of fee a big problem?

Yes= 1

No= 0

School Management Committees

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SMC18	Is teacher absenteeism a big problem in the school? Yes = 1 No = 0 <i>If No go to SMC 22</i>
SMC19	If Yes, has the SMC tried to tackle it? Yes = 1 No = 0 <i>If No go to SMC 22</i>
SMC20	If Yes, specify Talked to teachers = 01  Approached teachers through relatives in the community = 02 Reported the issue to the teacher's authorities = 03 Other = 77 Not applicable = 88
SMC21	Have these measures worked in curbing teacher absenteeism? Yes = 1 No = 0
SMC22	Is student absenteeism a big problem in the school? Yes = 1 No = 0 <i>If No go to SMC 26</i>
SMC23	If Yes, has the SMC tried to tackle it? Yes = 1 No = 0 <i>If No go to SMC 26</i>
SMC24	If Yes, specify Talked to students = 01 Approached relatives of the students = 02 Called for official action from the school against the students = 03 Other = 04 Not applicable = 88

- SMC25      Have these measures worked in curbing student absenteeism?  
Yes = 1  
No = 0
- SMC26      What are the major obstacles faced by the SMC in the conduct of its responsibilities?  
Lack of coop from parents = 01  
Lack of coop from teachers = 02  
Lack of coop from govt. = 03  
Lack of coop from community = 04  
Lack of funds = 05  
Other = 77
- SMC27      Rate how well do you think the SMC is doing in managing the school?  
Poor = 1  
Fair = 2  
Good = 3  
Very Good = 4

## Appendix V:

### List of training materials already developed

1. None available in Balochistan Province
2. NWFP; One booklet

Trainers Guide for PTA Training: Draft 1999

3. Punjab Province; Two booklets
  - a. School Management Committees Booklet, Directorate of Staff Development and Department of Education, Government of Punjab, 1997.
  - b. Training Booklet for Middle School Head Teachers, Unit 4, Community Participation, Punjab Middle Schooling Project, Directorate of Staff Development, Government of Punjab, August 1997.
4. Sindh Province; Five booklets
  - a. Formation of PTA
  - b. How to make the PTA Training Programme Effective
  - c. PTA and Social Mobilization
  - d. PTA and Resources
  - e. PTA and School Development

In addition, a video accompanied by a training manual and a set of four posters have also been developed.

**Appendix VI:**

**SMC/PTA Notifications**

**GOVERNMENT OF THE PUNJAB  
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**

NOTIFICATION

**II. CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEES TO  
IMPLEMENT SAPP**

NO. SO (SAP) 2-2/94. The following committee are constituted to ensure community participation in implementation of SAPP in particular and to carry out school development activities in general:

**1. SCHOOL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

There shall be a School Management Committee (SMC) for each Primary and Elementary School in Punjab. Constitution and functions of the Committee shall be as follows:

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A) Membership	
1. Head Teacher	Member/Secretary of the Committee.
2. Teachers other than Head Teacher (Not more than three)	Member
3. Learning Coordinator concerned	Member
4. Representative of the parents nominated or elected by parents	Member
5. 3 notables of the area including Councilor if he belongs to the village/towns/area where the educational institutions is located	Member
6. Retired persons of any department (not more than three).	Member

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President of the Committee will be selected/elected by all the members of the committee.

## **FUNCTIONS**

1. Increasing enrolment and motivate parents to send their sons/daughters
2. Decreasing and ultimately eliminating drop-out.
3. Managing all the affairs of the school.
4. Exercising a check on the absenteeism of the teachers and ensuring their regular attendance.
5. Supervision of the teachers that they are imparting class room instruction properly.
6. To generate funds in order to meet requirement of the school to make it self supporting. Those who are unable to contribute in cash can help in kind or in the form of labour etc.
7. To manage the budget received from the Government.
8. To organize the education, social and co-curricular activities in the school.
9. Regular academic supervision of the teachers at least to see that they are teaching regularly.
10. To arrange additional staff if required for the school by generating local funds as far as possible.
11. To motivate educated persons to come to school and help the teachers in organizing class room instructions and other activities of the school during the time when such educated persons are free. This will be considered a social service without any honoraria.
12. To attract good teachers to work in their schools by looking after their genuine needs/requirements. To provide proper incentive in the shape of residential accommodation if they belong to a place other than the one where school is located.
13. Protection of school property by repairing and maintaining it properly, stopping encroachment and not allowing stray animals to enter the school.

## **B) SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

The School Management Committees will prepare school development programmes for their respective schools. These plans will be developed in May to June, 1995. Funds required for their programmes will be indicated. The Committee will also indicate the source of funding including funds from Government and tapping of other local resources.



## IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of the programme through the Committee will start during 1995-96.

## ROLE OF PROMOTERS

Promoters will be recruited along with Graduate Primary School Teachers to increase enrolment and check drop out in areas where the schools do not have sufficient enrolment to justify a Graduate PST. These promoters will also be associated in motivating the communities to work for the betterment of school. Promoters will closely work with SMC to put the Committee into gear.

## NOMINATION OF THE MEMBERS CHECKS AND BALANCES

In order to strengthen the role of School Management Committee, support of the supervisory staff is essential. The role to the committee will be assigned officially and will be binding on the teachers as well as Supervisory and Administrative staff. Right from the AEO upto Director, everybody will monitor the progress of the Committees. If there are any problems, the same will be sorted out by the Supervisory and Administrative Staff. Basically the DEO will evaluate the working of Committees with the help of the Deputy DEOs.

If any member is not taking proper interest in the work of committee he will be replaced by another member. Non official members of the Committee will be nominated by the DEO with the help of the Deputy DEOs, AEO and the Head Teacher of the School. They will take proper care in selecting the members and would ensure that all sections of the population are properly represented.

The Committees will be given full role in all the affairs of the school including the checks on regular attendance of the teachers and to ensure that they are teaching their classes regularly. In the beginning, some problems like teachers not obeying the Committees may arise. The President or Secretary of the Committee will report such matters to the AEO in the first instance. The AEO may receive

reports about the irregular attendance of the teachers. He will have to take proper action within 10 days of the receipt of such complaints from the President or Secretary of the Committee taking proper care to see the genuineness of the complaints. A proforma will be developed by the EMIS Punjab on which AEOs will submit quarterly report to the Deputy DEO on such matters indicating the action taken. The Deputy DEO will be fully responsible for the proper functioning of the monitoring mechanism. He will also check the working of 50% of such Committees in a year and ensure that the actions were taken by the Supervisory tires against defaulting teachers and he/she will take all necessary measures to develop proper confidence in the committee so that ultimately these committees can work independently and the work load with regard to these committees on supervisory and administrative staff is decreased considerably. DEO will check 20% of the cases of malfunctioning of the teachers as complained by the committees and Directors will check 5% cases in the manner described above.

## 2. SCHOOL REPAIR COMMITTEE

### a) Membership

Same membership as indicated in case of school Management Committee.

### b) Functions

Functions of the committee shall also include the management of annual routine repair as well as special repair. The promotor along with Learning Coordinator will be particularly responsible to keep the committee going.

### c) Funding

Funds for these repairs will be provided by Government on sharing basis i.e. 50% funds by the Government and 50% by the community by way of donation, a levy of R. 5 per child per month could be introduced on Voluntary basis.

d) Accounts

A committee of three including head teacher and 2 non official members will be responsible for keeping the accounts of income and expenditure accounts of any materials donated, free labour or other services provided to ascertain the type and extent of community support.

e) Evaluation

- i Monthly progress reports to be submitted personally by DEOs.
- ii Bi-monthly meeting of Directors with DPI (EE).
- iii Mid term evaluation. March-April, 1995.
- iv Final report from each District End of May, 1995

f) Monitoring

- i Monthly progress report will be submitted by DEOs to the Directors and then to the DPI (EE) office.
- ii Bi-monthly meetings of the Directors with DPI (EE).
- iii Mid term evaluation: March-April, 1995.
- iv Final report from each District. End of May, 1995.

The divisional Directors and the District Education Officers are required to have these committees constituted under their personal supervision and report on the names of the committee members to this Secretariat through the DPI (EE) Punjab before 31<sup>st</sup> October, 1994

Sd/-  
(JAVED MAHMOOD)  
ADDITIONAL SECRETARY (P)  
Dated Lahore, the 26<sup>th</sup> September, 1994

**GOVERNMENT OF N.W.F.P  
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
Dated September 24, 1994, Peshawar**

NOTIFICATION

No. OPO/8AP/3-4/93. The Government of NWFP, is pleased to re-constitute the Village/City/Mohallah School Committees for each school in NWFP, consisting of the following members:

1. The Head Master/Head Mistress/Head Teacher Member/ Secretary
  2. Five representative of parents to be selected by Member other Parents.
  3. One retired Govt. Official Member
  4. One Village elder/Malik to be elected by 5-Representatives of the parents, elected
- 2) For construction of the Committees it has also been decided that:
- a) The chairman of the committee will be elected by member among themselves.
  - b) The committee will function for three academic years and will be reconstituted after completion of its tenure of three years.
  - c) The quorum required for holding meeting of the committee would be five members.
  - d) Modalities for operationalization of these committees would be worked out by the Directorate of Primary Education with in a month's time from the date of issue of this notification. It would however be ensured that unnecessary interference by these committees in the school affairs does not happen. The Directorate will further devise ways and means to make these committees more effective in

- 
- making suggestion for improving participation rate and quality of Education.
- e) These committees will also be associated in distribution of edible oil to the recipients in the district of Kohistan and Dir under the project “Promotion of primary education for girls in NWFP, (WEP assisted)”.
- 3) The committees will, among other things, perform the following functions:
- i Motivate parents to send their children to schools with a view to expanding coverage;
  - ii Help in reducing dropout rate and bringing the children back to schools;
  - iii Assist on reducing/removing teacher absenteeism;
  - iv Assist the teachers with feedback on quality of education being imparted and how it should be improved;
  - v To provide support in minor repair and maintenance of school buildings and other day to day requirements;
  - vi Make suggestions to the tehsil/district level and higher level education committees and government authorities for improvement of education, participation and quality;
  - vii To consider establishment of a school fund through community contribution for meeting non-salary inputs such as purchase of maps, charts, reading materials other than textbooks, financial assistance for books etc to poor students, student outings, sports facilities etc.
  - viii An incentive-based system would be evolved whereby those school committees which do well on established criteria with respect to such things as increased participation rates reduced dropout rates, improved teaching and education atmosphere as shown in improved quality,

- ix      improved results, establishment of school fund  
etc; are rewarded by the Government; and  
To assess, recommend and assist in expansion  
and improvement in the schools.

SECRETARY TO GOVT. OF  
NWFP, EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

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**Endnotes**

- 1 The authors are affiliated with the Sustainable Development Policy Institute and Society for the Advancement of Education respectively. Many thanks are due to Sajid Kazmi for valuable research assistance. Thanks are due to NORAD for funding the study and to The Asia Foundation for funding the fieldwork.
- 2 For a references to the literature on collective action and its application to rural water supply see Khan (1999). Community is loosely defined here to mean the village (thus village and community are used interchangeably). Homogeneity neither exists and nor is it implied. Participation and collective action is defined as all or a section of the villagers working collectively to deliver a service to themselves. This process could include voluntarism via a contribution in cash, kind or labor.
- 3 Serving on PTAs is not generally compensated and represents a real time cost.
- 4 Notifications issued by the GoPunjab and the GoNWFP are included as examples in Appendix VI. The other provincial notifications are similar.
- 5 The total number of government primary and middle schools is about 56,000 as reported by (MSU, nd.).
- 6 Government of Punjab / MSU (1998) has been drawn on for this sub-section.
- 7 Sustainability is viewed as key to cost effectiveness. A particular model may seem to be more cost-effective if it requires less up-front investment for the same goal, but if it will not survive, it is obviously not cost effective in the long run.
- 8 Government of Punjab / MSU (1998).
9. Thanks are due to Jonathan Mitchell for this information. There are a number of issues to consider in this regard. First, since, in our view, basic education is the government's responsibility, targeting the subsidy, as is being currently attempted, is not justifiable. There is a case for targeting books, meals or uniforms which are currently the parent's responsibility. Second, since subsidizing the private sector is not justifiable, these schools should be perceived as government schools. Third, the government needs to be aware that such subsidies create an incentive to overstate enrollments.
- 10 Husein (1999, p. 8) argues that the real problems in education are the lack of accountability, lack of discipline, poor working conditions, poor incentives and political interference and that SMCs/PTAs address none of these issues. In fact SMCs/PTAs are

expected to address the first three issues and, if they are truly empowered, they would also have some say in the last two.

11. When the Head teacher was to be replaced by a parent as the President of the SMC, the teacher unions went to court. As far as the government was concerned, they felt the notification was legal enough, but the unions took the plea that since the money was to be given to the SMCs and they were most likely to misuse it, the teachers would be penalized as government servants. There was no ordinance or law relating to the legality of SMCs. In early September 1999, the government issued an ordinance giving legal cover to the SMCs so the case filed by the unions became invalid. The present situation is that the rules are being framed and have to follow the usual procedures of being approved by the Governor. Whether the unions will then file another case will depend on the rules and remains to be seen.
12. The field-team comprised of an experienced man women team that had earned a post-graduate degree and spoke the local language.
13. Henceforth, SMC is used to represent PTA unless we need to make a distinction. Since only 4 private schools in the sample had an SMC, we ignored these since this represents a very small number of observations for quantitative analysis. Also, while many more government and NGO schools had SMCs, the numbers in absolute terms are still small and, therefore, numbers are reported in parentheses whenever percentages are used.
14. We owe this suggestion to Masood Qizilbash, the Federal SAP coordinator.
15. SAHE (1997).
16. TVO (1994).
17. About three-fourths (96 of the 129) of the schools were mixed, 18 were all girl and 15 were all boy schools.



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